



TIME TO RESIGN

You are considering a change because your present position and/or company does not offer the potential for growth you seek. You have looked at your decision to change both logically and emotionally, and it is the emotional decision that is the hardest. That old axiom “don’t let your heart rule your mind” is much easier said than done. But the fact remains, your needs are not being satisfied. Sure, the company has helped you progress professionally; sure, you have made many new friends; sure, you even feel comfortable because you can handle the job well. However, your objectives and goals are secondary to those of the company, and it will always remain that way. As soon as you thought about changing jobs, subconsciously you knew this was true.

Top executives agree that the days of the gold watch for 30 years of faithful service are gone. In fact, experience at several good companies is considered an asset because your horizons are expanded. Today, changing jobs is a necessity if you expect your career to grow.

CAUTION: Your changes cannot be too frequent and you must be able to demonstrate that your changes were due to growth opportunities and enhancing your background.

CAUTION: Do not resign until you have another position. Experience has shown it to be easier to find a job if you are presently employed.

THE COUNTEROFFER

You have just returned from a fantastic interview. You’re walking on air and mulling in your mind the salary offer and the benefits that you will receive when you join this company. After a careful analysis, you accept the offer and are now giving notice to your employer.

Let’s face it, it is natural to resist change and avoid disruption, and your present employment is no exception. If you are doing a good job, your employer will not want to lose you, and you can expect a counteroffer in an attempt to get you to stay. That’s what a counteroffer is -- an attempt to get you to stay after you’ve announced that you have another job. So long as you have not started your new position, the company and your boss are going to entice you. You will be lured with more money, more options, you may receive, or at least be promised, a promotion. The appeal will be emotional in nature. There will be an apology made in the form of not knowing of your dissatisfaction. Your boss may even enlist the President/CEO of the company to help convince you that you are making a mistake. You can be certain you will hear the following in some form or another:

1. “We’ve got great plans for you that will come to fruition the first of next month. It’s my fault for not telling you sooner. Can we discuss this further before you make any decisions?”
2. “I shouldn’t do this, but I’m going to let you in on some confidential information. We’re in the process of reorganizing and it will mean a significant promotion for you within six months.”
3. “We’ll match your new offer and even better it by X percent. This raise was supposed to go into effect the first of next quarter anyway, but because of your fine record, we’ll start immediately.”

TIME TO RESIGN-CON'T

COUNTEROFFER IMPLICATIONS

A counteroffer can be a very flattering experience. Your emotions may be swayed; you may lose your objectivity; you are going to be tempted to stay; “buyers remorse” will set in; that apprehension of change will urge you to reconsider your decision. You may feel that if you leave now you may be disloyal to your company. You may even feel obligated to stay. Your employer tells you that he really needs you. This move couldn't have come at a worse time. He really needs your expertise. The department's morale may go down if you leave.

CAUTION: Accept the counteroffer ONLY if you can answer “NO” to the following:

1. Did I make the decision to seek other employment because I felt a new environment would provide me with the opportunity to enhance my career?
2. If I decided to stay after giving notice, will my loyalty be suspect and affect my chance for advancement in the future?
3. If my loyalty is questioned, is there the possibility that I will be an early layoff or terminnee if business slows down?
4. Is the raise that they are offering for me to stay or is it just my annual review coming early?
5. The raise I was offered is above the guidelines for my job. Does this mean they are “buying time” until a replacement can be found within the acceptable compensation guidelines for my job?
6. I got the counteroffer because I resigned. Will I always have to threaten to quit each time I want to advance?

What are the reasons behind an employer's counteroffer? Why wasn't the raise or promotion given before? Any offer is suspect when the employer is forced to give a raise, promotion or improve working conditions.

Your loyalty will most likely be questioned from now on. You are no longer considered a team player.

Sometimes counteroffers are just stall tactics for cheaper solutions. Is this a stall device so that the employer has time to get a suitable replacement? Or is it because your manager does not want to look bad because his valued employee is quitting? It may not be a good time for the company to lose an employee because of the workload or vacation schedules.

Will they really make you an officer or change your job description, give you a raise, or is it just a promise of things to come?

TIME TO RESIGN-CON'T

SHOULD I ACCEPT A COUNTEROFFER?

Trust may be irrevocably lost as management becomes aware that you were looking.

Changes may satisfy you for a while, but the dark monster that was lurking before is still there and statistics have shown that even those who accept a counteroffer usually end up leaving or are terminated within 5 months to a year.

LOGIC MUST PREVAIL

As a professional, your career decisions must be made objectively; free of the emotional pressures you are likely to experience. Others will try to influence you, but sometimes only you know things are not right and will not get better. Are you expecting your company to be sorry to see you leave and to make some attempt to keep you? Their response should be considered flattering but it is too numerous to risk.

It is up to you to end your relationship as professionally as you began it. Write a letter that expresses your thanks for the opportunity they extended and tell them you enjoyed your relationship, but that your decision is irrevocable. Put it in your own words and either mail it personally or hand it to your immediate supervisor. Be pleasant but firm. Your new employer is anxious to have you start, so remember, two weeks notice is almost always sufficient.

A counteroffer is really a belated confirmation of the contributions you have made. Move ahead to your new job knowing you have made the right decision. After all, if you do not look after your future, who will?

10 REASONS FOR NOT ACCEPTING COUNTER OFFERS

1. What type of company do you work for if you have to threaten to resign before they give you what you are worth?
2. Where is the money for the counteroffer coming from? Is it your next raise early? All companies have strict wage and salary guidelines which must be followed.
3. Your company will immediately start looking for a new person at a cheaper price.
4. You have now made your employer aware that you are unhappy. From this day on, your loyalty will always be in question.
5. When promotion time comes around, your employer will remember who was loyal and who wasn't.
6. When times get tough, your employer will begin the cutback with you.
7. The same circumstances that now cause you to consider a change will repeat themselves in the future, even if you accept a counteroffer.
8. Statistics show that if you accept a counteroffer, the probability of voluntarily leaving in six months or being let go within one year is extremely high.
9. Accepting a counteroffer is an insult to your intelligence and a blow to your personal pride; knowing you were bought.
10. Once the word gets out, the relationship that you now enjoy with your co-workers will never be the same.

COUNTER OFFER BUYBACK FACTS

If you were worth X dollars yesterday, why are they suddenly willing to pay you X+Y dollars today?

Your present employer could be merely “buying time” with this raise until they can locate a replacement. Usually the reason you are made the counteroffer is because they need you now. When this vulnerability is rectified (and they will see that it is done as fast as possible), your position within the company will not be very strong.

The company may feel that they are being “blackmailed” into giving you a raise. If they really recognized your worth, why did it take your termination announcement to produce some action? Will you have to go through this every time you want a significant raise or promotion? If they are really interested in your true value, they would have given you the added income or advanced position before now.

Realize that you now are a marked person. The likelihood of further promotion is extremely limited for someone once they’ve “given notice”. You have already indicated your consideration of leaving, so even if you actually stay on, it is only natural that you would probably be one of the first to be laid off in a slack period.

Is more money going to change everything at your present job? Consider again the new opportunities that look so favorable with the new employer.

It is interesting to note that the National Employer Association reports that of all the people who accepted buybacks from their employers, 80% were not on the job 6 months later.

Think carefully about all these facts before making a final decision. It is your career, your livelihood. One imprudent decision at this time could be very costly in terms of your professional growth.

RESIGNATION COUNSELING

STEPS IN THE RESIGNATION PROCESS

Write a resignation letter and have it typed.

Meet with your boss (direct supervisor). “Do you have a minute?” is more effective in avoiding counteroffers than a pre-set appointment.

Hand the letter to your boss in a sealed envelope with his/her name on it. Noting PERSONAL/CONFIDENTIAL.

Express to your boss that you have accepted another position and you will be leaving the company effectively (date). Thank him/her for teaching you a great deal during the time you’ve worked together and for making a real contribution to your career development. Mention you hope you can do everything possible during the next (two weeks/time frame given) to make your transition out of the department a smooth one.

If your boss tries to engage you in a conversation about the nature of your new job or the offer or bring up a counteroffer, pre-empt his comments by saying: “I think you know I really respect our relationship a lot and I know that this comes as a surprise to you, but I’d really appreciate it if you would not try to make this process of my resignation anymore difficult than it has to be.”

Close the conversation by saying “I’ve taken the liberty of writing up a list of all the projects I am working on and their current status. If you could take a moment to review them in the next day or so, I’d be happy to do anything I can to complete them or hand them over to someone else during the next (two weeks/time frame given).”

SAMPLE RESIGNATION LETTER

Date

Company
Address
City, State, Zip
Attn: Direct Supervisor

Dear _____,

Please accept this letter as my resignation of the position of (title) effective on (notice date).

I really appreciate and will always remember my experiences in working with you in the (department name). Thank you for what you have taught me over the last (years, months) and for the many contributions you have made to my personal and professional development. I truly hope that we can stay in touch from time to time in the years ahead.

I will also have very positive memories about the professionalism and commitment to the quality here at (company name). Please express my thanks to (your direct supervisor's boss) for creating the kind of environment that made my career development possible.

Sincerely,