

## PSYCHOLOGY OF A JOB CHANGE

The biggest obstacle to making a job change is that it often means a stand against the conventions of security.

**"How can you throw away your job security?"**  
**"You have a promising career ahead of you here."**  
**"You're too far along in your career to make a change."**

Changing positions isn't easy, but the decision should never be considered an absolutely final choice. Life is a learning and growing experience. People mature and develop new awareness of their needs, and career choices should be re-evaluated in light of those changes. It is an unfair trap for individuals to feel their career decisions are cast in stone.



Prior to an interview, you have no problems in making a job change. You've decided it's in your best interest to look at new opportunities. For some reason, your present situation does not offer you exactly what you want now or in the future. After the interview, your interest is high and you state, "If they make me a reasonable offer, I'll take it." After an offer is made, you're on the spot and need to make a decision.

This is what happens: You start to have feelings of loyalty and obligation to your present employer, and feelings of apprehension about the new employer and the new job. After all, your present employer has been good to you. You have seniority, and they do think highly of you. It wouldn't be right to leave them in a bind.

The normal reaction is to delay action. "I need some time to think it over and discuss it with my friends." What you are really doing, is searching for reason (and almost any reason will do) to justify turning down the job. You need to justify it, because deep down you know it's in your long-term best interest to accept the position. If you look long and hard enough, you can find that reason. What you are going through is the "Psychology of a Job Change."

These feelings are normal and, fortunately, also temporary. Even if your current employer gives you a raise and promotion, it does not change the work environment or your long-term odds for advancement. Once you understand your feelings and why you are searching for reasons to reject the job, logic will return. You can then decide what is in your long-term best interest. You can then make an unemotional evaluation of the new position!

### **EVALUATING THE JOB OFFER**

Although a job offer might arrive in the mail, most likely it will come in the form of a phone call. If it meets your expectations, don't agonize over a decision that has already been made, accept it. Ask for a confirmation in the mail and start planning your new career.

If on the other hand, you would like to think about it for a day or two, thank the caller for the offer and say you will call back with your decision in a specified period of time. Remember, the sooner you respond, the more favorably you'll be viewed. Call me immediately and apprise me of the offer. If there are items you feel require negotiation, discuss them with me and jointly we can plan how the negotiations should be approached. It is normally better for you to let me negotiate with the company than to get involved yourself.

### **HOW DO YOU DECIDE?**

Before you accept or decline the position, you owe it to yourself to take the necessary time for a thoughtful and logical evaluation. Deciding to accept or reject the job offer may have significant impact on your career. Remember, the person losing the most is the one who remains in a position for which he or she is ill-suited. By remaining in your current job, the losses are plentiful and are measured in time, satisfaction and personal development.

To make this evaluation, you must first know which questions to consider. Where do you begin? To find the most meaningful answers, a nation-wide search firm retained a consultant with a background in industrial

psychology and personnel. He conducted interviews with executive search firms, senior personnel administrators and industrial psychologists. He discovered the best indication that you should change positions, is when you feel ambitious and eager for greater opportunities, but unexcited about future prospects at your present company.

He also found there are ten checkpoints which are universally applicable in a thorough job evaluation. Each checkpoint consists of one or more related questions.

## **YOUR TEN CHECKPOINTS FOR EVALUATION**

Ask yourself:

1. Do I like the nature of the work I'll be performing? Will I be adequately challenged? Will I be happy working there?
2. Can I do the job or be trained to do the job in a reasonable period of time?
3. Are the resources available to do the job (manpower, space, management support, money, advertising, etc.)?
4. What is the reputation of the company? Is the company/division stable? Will my position be stable?
5. Is the chemistry between me and my associates appropriate?
6. Will the company pay me a fair wage? Fair benefits? Fair commissions or bonus? Fair relocation?
7. Will the opportunity for growth be in keeping with my personal goals?
  - Financial: Can I earn more in the future?
  - Professionally: Can I learn more?
  - Career-wise: Can I move up the career/corporate ladder?
8. Will the geographic location of my position be satisfactory? Will it be convenient to travel to and from work?
9. How will working there affect my mate's career or education?
10. How will living there affect my family's lifestyle? Are the educational, religious, cultural, medical, and recreational opportunities adequate? Can my family adjust to the climate? Is adequate housing available?

If this is a good opportunity for you, don't fall into the trap of rejecting a job offer to see what else is out there.

Your evaluation is the beginning of the decision-making process. Bringing this process to the best possible conclusion for yourself will require much interaction between you and me. Don't hesitate to ask questions and share your feelings. I can and will assist you in reaching the career goals you've established, but only with your help.

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