



## **PERSPECTIVE ON CAREER DEVELOPMENT – PDF DOWNLOAD**

### **THE STRATEGIC CASE FOR CHANGING POSITIONS:**

There are many deeply personal reasons to change your employment situation. However, from a purely strategic point of view, there are four good reasons to change positions within the same (or similar) industry two to three times during your first ten years of employment:

*Reason #1-* Changing positions gives you a broader base of experience: After about three years, you have learned most of what you are going to know about how to do your job. Therefore, over a ten-year period, you gain more experience from “three times 90 percent” than “one times 100 percent.”

*Reason #2-* A more varied company background within your specialty creates a greater demand for your skills: Depth of experience means you are more valuable to a larger number of employers. You are not only familiar with your current company’s product, service, procedures, quality programs, inventory system, and so forth; you bring with you the expertise you have gained from your prior employment with other companies.

*Reason #3-* Changing positions results in an accelerated promotion cycle: Each time you make a change, you bump up a notch on the promotion ladder. You jump, for example, from project engineer to senior project engineer; or national sales manager to vice president of sales and marketing.

*Reason #4-* More responsibility leads to greater earning power at an increased pace: A promotion is usually accompanied by a salary increase. Since you are being promoted faster, your salary grows at a quicker pace, sort of like compounding the interest you would earn on a certificate of deposit.

While there is no denying the strategic virtues of selective job changing for the purpose of career leverage, you want to make sure the path you take will lead you where you really want to go. Your new position should offer you the means to satisfy your values. In that regard, the “best” opportunities are the ones in which your values are being satisfied most effectively. If career growth and salary advancement are your primary goals or values, then you may want to strategically change positions to further ‘build’ your resume and experience profile.

A word of caution: there is a big difference between selective and strategic position changes and that of a ‘job hopper’. Too many positions for too few years will raise concerns with target employers and will work against you. We recommend that your moves be truly selective and



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that they do strategically advance your goals. Further, by maintaining the work ethic of conscientiousness and exemplary performance with each of your employers, both sides benefit from your mutual association, while you develop your career.

## **THE ADVENTURE OF RELOCATION:**

Here's a predictable dilemma: you are considering an offer of employment or have recently accepted an offer and you or a family member are having second thoughts about relocating. This is a natural reaction and most often due to either fear-of-the-unknown or to complacency or comfort with your current situation. Of course, other family considerations can play into it as well.

As a family wrestles with the personal choice to relocate or not (often with the upshot of increasing the pace of their career advancement), they may want to view the relocation as an adventure. While the 'adventure' may offer its challenges, the rewards and the opportunities for enhanced personal experience frequently make up for it. Often the thought process of a strategic short-term 'sacrifice' for a longer-term gain can also be helpful in dealing with the challenges of relocation.

For example, you are considering an attractive offer of employment to another location and you are concerned about the challenges in making the move a reality and the fact that the location may not be your preferred choice. By asking yourself the question, *Does the short term 'sacrifice' of making this move make sense from the strategic desire to advance my career?*, you can determine if the move is justifiable from a stepping stone point of view. In this case, the individual can look at the relocation as a three to five year opportunity to further advance their career while providing sincere value to their new employer. From that perspective, they can do so with the understanding that their next move could allow them to relocate to a more desirable location, in a role with an even greater level of responsibility and earnings.

## **THE STRATEGIC CASE FOR RELOCATION:**

In the book, *Geographic Mobility, Family Impacts*, by Anne E. Green and Angela Canny, they state: "The rationale for geographic mobility has always been career advancement. It is made very clear that employees who are successful are those who have worked in more than one product area, in more than one function and in more than one company." Further the book suggests that, "the knowledge of the relocation process, gained through experience, does help in relocation." In other words, once an individual or family overcomes the initial resistance to change and actually does move to another part of the country, the more they realize they can do it again with relative ease.



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In the spirit of career advancement one is always looking for the performance edge over their 'competition' in the workforce. Recognizing that many individuals will choose not to relocate, one can strategically increase their opportunities for advancement and career growth by a selective willingness to relocate for the 'right' scenario. Ultimately, should the choice to relocate become a reality, maintaining a positive outlook with realistic expectations contributes to a more successful transition during the relocation process.

## **CAREER STRATEGY - IT PAYS TO STRATEGICALLY DIVERSIFY:**

Would it make sense to invest your entire life savings into the same investment? Likely, one would not invest everything in just one stock, as an example, because the risk would be too great. The smart investor strategically diversifies their investments. The same could be said for careers, though it is surprising how many individuals manage their career with a 'single stock' mindset.

Until recently, this approach made a lot of sense. Conventional wisdom dictates that if you do one thing really well, you will never be out of a position. However, times have changed, and so have strategies. While it is still true that a solid career is often built on a foundation of position-specific expertise, it has become increasingly important to maintain a balanced portfolio of experience.

When employers look for talent—especially in today's competitive market—they look for an adaptable employee whose broad-based set of skills crosses over into a variety of disciplines. By gaining knowledge in other areas within your industry, you will increase your overall market value. The more you can offer a multiple spectrum of knowledge—within your broader industry—the less likely you will be to paint yourself into a corner and limit your possibilities.

## **RESIGNATION PROTOCOL:**

Once you have accepted your new position, you need to consider your resignation. We recommend you approach the overall delivery and timing of your notice with professionalism and conscientiousness.

Typically, a two week notice is standard protocol. By remaining in your old position for no more than two weeks after you have announced your resignation, you will not be subjected to a protracted and uncomfortable separation. Frankly, once an employee has made a decision to leave, it is in both the employer's and the employee's best interest to move on.

Your resignation should be handled professionally, in person and in private, with your direct supervisor. When you announce your intention to resign, you should also hand your supervisor



a letter stating the same. The resignation letter should indicate the last date of employment with the company as well as a statement of appreciation for working with them. You should make it clear that you made your decision carefully and that you are not interested in counter proposals. In addition, you should provide a copy of the letter to your company's human resources department and ask them to include it in your personnel file. This way, the circumstances surrounding your resignation will be well documented for future reference if necessary.

## **EMPLOYER STRATEGIES UPON RESIGNATION (COUNTEROFFERS):**

Caught off guard with a resignation, most employers will naturally be concerned for themselves: loss of productivity, business disruption, missed deadlines, etc. The most common form of self-protection is the *counteroffer strategy*. Unfortunately, the strategy often works to the long-term dismay of the countered employee. Counteroffers are a short-term fix for both sides, but they rarely last and often end in regret. We recommend you review this subject prior to resignation by using your favorite internet search engine. By searching for the term 'counteroffers' or 'counter offers', you will likely be surprised at how many articles are available to broaden your perspective. We encourage you to read them so you can draw your own conclusions on their viability as a career development strategy.

Upon resignation, many employers will express disappointment but respect for your decision along with well wishes. While this is ideal, it is just as common for employers to try to protect their interest, often at the expense of the resigning employee.

The best way to shield yourself from the inevitable mixture of emotions surrounding the act of submitting your resignation is to remember that employers often follow predictable patterns when faced with a resignation:

*Common Tactic #1 - Guilt:* Your boss will express his or her shock. He or she might say, "You sure picked a fine time to leave! Who's going to finish the work we started?" The implication is that you are irreplaceable and they are hoping you will feel guilty about leaving.

*Common Tactic #2 - Distraction:* Your boss will start to probe. "Who is the new company? What sort of position did you accept? What are they paying you?" Your response could feed your current employer with 'ammunition' that he or she can use later. For example, he or she could badmouth your new employer: "I've heard some pretty terrible things about your new company" or, "They'll make everything look great until you actually get there."

*Common Tactic #3 - Empty Promises:* Your boss will make you an offer to try to keep you from



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leaving. "You know that raise you and I were talking about a few months back? Well, I forgot to tell you: We were just getting it processed yesterday."

It may take several days for this to play out, but it is often predictable. By being aware of the various tactics and even anticipating their use, one can resign in a dignified and professional manner and move their career forward with their next opportunity.

***For more information, we can be reached at 866-898-9911 or [cv@hensonpartners.com](mailto:cv@hensonpartners.com).***

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