



Land the Perfect Job

A Talentlab Job Seeker Guide

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This guide will help you avoid the most expensive mistakes smart people make when looking for a new job. It contains concepts and strategies that could easily save you thousands of dollars in lost opportunities.

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How to Decide When It's Time to Leave

Are you happy with your current job? Do you look forward to going to work each day? Do you feel appreciated, nurtured and encouraged there? Although there are no cut and dried ways to decide if you should explore other employment opportunities, there are a few tell-tale signs that will indicate that you might want to consider moving on.

Consider These Questions

- Are you in a learning environment? Do your co-workers and managers encourage you to learn new skills, seek creative ways of doing things and novel ways of looking at problems?
- Is your workplace progressive? Do they encourage fresh thought and thinking outside of the box?
- Is your work challenging you or do you find it too easy? Do you get a feeling of accomplishment and satisfaction from what you do?
- Do you get along with your co-workers? Do your co-workers get along with each other, or is there a lot of interpersonal conflict and office politics in your work environment?
- Are you getting paid what you should for what you do? Are your co-workers getting paid what they're worth?

Take the time to answer these questions thoroughly. A great job is not about just one or two of these things. A great job needs to have most, if not all, of these things to be truly engaging and worthwhile.

Some Suggestions

- Talk about it with your family or a close friend. They can tell if you're happy with your job or not.
- Make a list of the pros and cons involved in your current job. Then make a list of the pros and cons involved in getting a new job. See where the balance lies.
- As long as it's not based on one or two isolated events, trust your gut feeling. You know whether you need to move on.
- Consult a Career Counsellor. An objective third person who can assess your skills and work experience would be an invaluable help when deciding if you should leave your current job.

Wondering if you're in the right job right now? Please call us at Talentlab because we have years of experience under our belts, and we'd be glad to share that with you. Call us at 613.271.8181 to schedule your free career consultation. It can be in person, or over the phone... you decide.

How to Find a Great New Job in as Little as 24 Hours

1. Go to www.talentlab.com
2. Register as a candidate.
3. When new jobs come in that fit your skill set, TalentCentral™ will inform our Talent Agents that you are a match, and then they can contact you to discuss the position further.
4. The system is active 24 hours a day, so as soon as a suitable position opens, we will know about it and will contact you right away.

Recommended Reading

- *JobJoy™—Finding Your Right Work Through the Power of Your Personal Story* by George Dutch
- *What Color Is Your Parachute?—A Practical Manual for Job-Hunters & Career-Changers* by Richard Nelson Bolles
- *The On-Purpose Person: Making Your Life Make Sense* by Kevin McCarthy

How to Find the Perfect Job

So you've decided that the time is right to leave your current job and look for a new, more fulfilling one. It's a scary realization and at times may seem like a daunting task. No one enjoys the feeling of being out of control.

The 3 Ways Most People Find a New Job

Respond to Ads

Though often the first place people look, ads are usually the last resort of companies looking for people. It may feel like a "controllable" source of job opportunities, but often it's not the best place to find amazing jobs.

Search Websites & Newsgroups

This is a better choice because results are so instantaneous; however, this method requires a "hit or miss" sort of approach. You can send out your resumé to numerous places and hope for the best, but often a human won't even see your resumé in the sea of searching people.

Go to a Search Firm

Because of the personal approach, and the fact that most companies go to search firms first when looking for people, search firms are the most efficient means of finding that perfect job. Also, you can be assured that your resumé will be seen and responded to.

Here's where Talentlab® can be a great help. You don't need to scour the newspapers for new jobs, go to multiple interviews, and stress yourself out over finding that perfect next job. Why not? Because Talentlab® is the most effective way to find your perfect next job.

1. We have the best technology jobs out there. The companies looking for people regularly look for people, and are usually searching for the best methods of finding people. Because of our personal approach, they find us to be the best way to get great people.
2. Talentlab® is not in the business of finding jobs for people, we're in the business of people. Though it sounds trite, we are concerned about the people we represent and do everything we can to find the perfect jobs for them.
3. We deal directly with the hiring managers. You won't have to give your resumé to someone and hope that it will find its way

to the person who's hiring. We will have a direct relationship with the manager and can give your resumé straight to them.

4. There will be no calling back and forth between you and a company that is hiring. You simply give us your resumé and show up for any interviews that are scheduled.
5. We help prepare you for your interviews with companies. Because we've often dealt with these companies before, we have an idea of what they will ask you, and what kind of response they're looking for.
6. Negotiation of any job offer is the most important part of the process. Again, because we deal consistently with these companies, we are in a great position to negotiate with them. We will get you the best deal possible, with no stress for you.

3 Questions to Ask a Search Firm

Can I see some references?

Find out how successful the search firm was with other people in the same situation as you. How pleased are other people with the search firm's performance?

How are your employees paid?

It may seem to be an unimportant detail, but if the search firm is using a commission based model, you may find that their agents are more concerned with making the deal than they are with making sure you're happy.

What companies do you work with presently?

This will give you an idea of the calibre of work that is done by the search firm. Obviously if reputable companies put their trust in the search firm to find them good people, they're also worthy of your trust in them. If a search firm seems to work with a very limited number of clients, that may be a warning sign. They will not be as successful as other search firms in finding good placements for you.

We have great jobs available right now that might fit your specific skill set. Call us at 613.271.8181 and request your free career consultation. We can suggest ways for you to find your perfect job and show you how to apply for the jobs that we currently have available in our own database.

How to Write an Amazing Resumé

In preparing to write your resumé, remember that you can only count on an employer to spend twenty seconds scanning your resumé before deciding whether to review it further or put it aside. The key is to design it in such a way that it leads the employer's eyes to words that speak to his or her needs. Effective resúmes are developed by individuals who have thoroughly researched the organizations they want to work for, have identified the specific job they want, and have figured out what they have to offer. Well-designed resúmes have these characteristics in common:

- Visual appeal, easy-to-read layout and high-quality reproduction.
- Highlights strengths and links them to the employer's needs; minimizes or excludes irrelevant experience.
- Presents the most important information first.
- Entirely free from any errors: spelling, typographical, punctuation, or grammatical.
- Is succinct, organized and does not exceed two pages.

3 Things Employers Love

Tell Them What You Want

Make sure your resumé clearly states what kind of position you want.

Tell Them What You Do

What are the specifics of your skill set and how long have you been using each of those skills?

Tell Them Who You Are

What is your career and life's purpose and what kinds of things do you do in your spare time?

Constructing Your Resumé

Ronald and Caryl Rae Krannich's book *Dynamite Resúmes* point out that the categories of information you include on your resumé should provide answers to these questions:

- Contact section—Who are you and how can you be reached?
- Objective statement—What do you want to do?
- Experience section—What can you do?

- Employment section—What have you done?
- Education section—What have you learned?

Sequence the categories according to what is most important to the employer and your career objective. A recent college graduate with limited experience should usually put the education section first since it is the most significant qualification. Education should also be listed first when education is a qualifying requirement. In a situation where an applicant wants to emphasize significant work or extracurricular experience or when an employer seeks to fill jobs in fields such as sales, or public relations the experience or work history category may be listed first.

Here's How to Get Help with Your Resumé

Give us a call and book your free career consultation. Your resumé is one of the many things that we can talk about. We can look over it with you and give you useful tips on how to make your resumé stand above the rest. We'd like you to call us at 613.271.8181 and book a career consultation with us.

Recommended Reading

- *Dynamite Resumés—101 Great Examples and Tips for Success* by Ron and Caryl Rae Krannich
- *101 Best Resumés* by Jay Block and Michael Betrus
- *The Complete Idiot's Guide to the Perfect Resumé* by Susan Ireland

A Resumé Template

Tim McAllister
123 Muskoka Avenue, Apt. 12
Huntsville, Ontario 1A2 B3C
Phone: (123) 456-7890
Email: tmcallister@email.zzz

Objective

Seeking a position as a Visual C++ Software Developer that would utilize my skill set and enhance it so that I can contribute to the growth of an organization.

Skill Summary

I have over 3 years of Software development experience. I have worked in teams programming in C++/Visual C++, Microsoft Foundation Class Library and Crystal Reports in a Windows environment. I have good project analysis, design and development concepts utilizing Object-Oriented methodologies. These include designing the user interface, designing the classes in C++, implementing the programs and maintaining the code for fixes and updates. Also, I have programmed in dBase and FoxPro in a DOS environment.

Skills Experience

C++ / Visual C++ / MFC	2 Years
Analysis/ Design/ Programming	2 Years
Crystal Reports	2 Years
SQL/MS Access	2 Years
GUI Design	2 Years
Windows NT 4.0 and 95	2.5 Years
DBASE / FoxPro	1 Year
WIN 32 API	Training
COM / ATL	Training
ODBC	Training

Work Experience

08/97 - To Date

Company 1, Ottawa, ON.
Software Developer

- Programming in Visual C++ 5.0 for company Project Enterprise, Advanced Invoicing, and Time and Billing that are Project Costing software products of this company
- Designed and Developed over 150 reports and queries for this company's Project Costing software using Crystal Reports Professional 5.0 and MS Access 97.
- Training, Consulting and Custom Programming for Clients in Canada, The United States of America and England in Crystal Reports and Visual C++.
- Operating Systems: Windows NT 4.0, Windows 95
- Environment: Visual C++ 5.0, ActiveX, CodeBase 6.2, Crystal Reports Professional 5.0, MS Access 97.

08/95—12/96

Company 2, Kanata, ON.
Computer Programmer/Operator

- Developed and operated a module of the in-house software for the Production Department in FoxPro 2.0.
- Developed a drawing module in MS Visual C++ 2.2 as a trainee in the Research and Development team.
- Operating Systems: DOS, Windows '95
- Environment: FoxPro 2.0, dBase III+, Visual C++ 2.2

Personal Skills

- Good communication skills
- Well-developed organizational, interpersonal skills
- Team-oriented

Education

Present—Doing the course titled “Designing and Implementing Desktop Applications with Microsoft Visual C++ 6.0” for getting a Microsoft Certified Professional certificate. My goal is to get the title of “Microsoft Certified Solutions Developer” in Microsoft Visual C++.

1997—Completed the following two courses of the Object-oriented Programming Certificate Program from IT College, Ottawa, ON.

1. Object-oriented Analysis and Design.
2. Object-oriented Programming using C++ .

1995—Bachelor of Computer Science, December 1995—
University of Ottawa.

Hobbies

Skiing, hang-gliding, reading, cross-stitch, and hockey.

References

Available upon request.

Why the Best Jobs Will Never Be Advertised and How to Find Them

1. Because of time constraints, the best jobs are often filled internally. Why advertise for a new position when the right person may already be working for you?
2. If a suitable person is not found internally, a search firm is often the next step. Search firms have a lot of contacts with great people. Also, companies are always looking for the best process with which to find great people. Why constantly put out ads for new positions when a search firm can take care of any need a company has?
3. Often, due to competitiveness between companies, a company may not want their competition to know that they are looking for a person for a given position lest they give away valuable information about new products and services.

How to Have Your Best Interview

The most critical step of the job searching process is the actual interview. The interview is the platform from which you are able to represent yourself and express your expertise and skill set to your prospective employer.

Preparing for the Interview

Interviews are essentially a sales call. Most of us may not have much experience or confidence in promoting ourselves. It is important that you're aware of some of the basics involved in "self-selling" to give you an edge over other candidates seeking the same position.

Entering an interview educated and well-read on the industry, the company, and the team is a critical step in making a strong first impression and being perceived as a solid match for the position. According to C.B. Bowman in *Reduce Your Interview Anxiety* (National Employment Weekly), there are some key ways of preparing for an interview, that will help you to manage the process. Bowman recommends that you become familiar with the industry trends, the company and its competition. Some ways of doing this are by...

- Checking web sites (the company and its competitors).
- Learning the proper terminology for the position you are seeking. Industry terminology can be subtle; however, not using the proper terminology may mean you will not be considered for the suitable position.
- Locating an insider who knows your prospective interviewer and can tell you about his/her background. Any investigation will aid in uncovering useful information to help you manage interview anxiety.

Know Your Worth

Having a clear idea of your monetary worth will aid you in being straightforward and confident while discussing salaries, bonuses, and options etc. Here are some suggestions to find out how your skill set measures up...

- Determine the average salary and bonus level for the position that you are seeking and any other useful pay information.
- Find out the market value for your skills at similar size companies in your prospective industry.

- Consult industry and professional journals that conduct and publish salary surveys.

3 Ways To Net Yourself an Extra \$50,000–\$250,000 When You Negotiate Your Next Job

- Don't be the first to state a desired salary or salary range. Tell the employer how much you make now, and let them come back with an amount first, instead of saying, "I'd like X amount."
- Try to negotiate more stock options. The difference between 3,000 and 5,000 stock options right now could mean thousands of extra dollars for you in the future.
- A training budget, extra vacation time, an expense account, or a personal computer budget will represent a real worthwhile benefit for you, but might not seem like such a stretch for the employer.

Know Your Own Resumé

"Owning" your resumé is a fundamental step in representing yourself successfully. Here are a few tips that will help you stay consistent with your resumé...

- Always write your own resumé. Having a professional complete it for you can be convenient, but going through the process of composing your own resumé provides you with a deeper understanding of your achievements, thus helping you to communicate these achievements to decision makers.
- If you're having a hard time writing your resumé, consult a professional career coach. However, put your resumé in your own words. Credibility in an interview will quickly diminish when your language, style, and personality are not aligned with your resumé.

Practice Communicating & Thinking Fast

An interview is a two-way conversation. Beyond answering questions from the interviewer, you will be required to state essential points and ask appropriate questions during the meeting. The following suggestions will help you to prepare for the part of the interview where you are driving the conversation:

- Have a friend or colleague drill you with unexpected interview questions. Try to answer on the spot, without hesitation. Accept constructive criticism to try and improve your responses.
- Search libraries and local bookstores, and review job-search and career guides. These publications often have chapters devoted to potential interview questions. Answer the questions on your own before reviewing the recommended responses. And remember... career guides are just that... guides. Do not use these responses verbatim in your interview. You will likely come across as insincere or rehearsed.
- Become conscious of your body language and practice presenting yourself professionally. Try having a friend/family member video tape you during a mock interview. Notice how poor body language can distract the interviewer from what the interviewee is saying.
- Make a list of questions that you will ask the interviewer. Asking questions demonstrates that you are an active participant and indicates that you are interested in the company.

Back To The Basics

There are right and wrong ways to get the job you want. Some tips...

Good

- Communicate your goals respectfully
- Contact decision-makers or designated representatives only
- Be clear and concise
- Be flexible
- Be creative about negotiating
- Provide your committed interest in the company and outline how you can contribute to the company.

Bad

- Demand what you want
- Go around the decision maker
- Be indecisive and vague
- Be rigid and demanding
- Be myopic about negotiating
- Exaggerate and overstate your accomplishments
- Ask why you should be interested in working for the company; providing only self-interest.

Although elementary, here are some basic rules to help make the best impression possible.

- Get a good night's sleep, reduce stress by exercising, and eat properly, avoiding caffeine the night before the interview.
- Select clothes that you feel comfortable and confident in and make sure that they are clean and pressed.
- Arrive approximately fifteen minutes early to the interview. By doing so you can become familiar with your surroundings and can also visit a rest room to check your appearance.

These guidelines can be helpful in making you more confident and assured in an interview. But to go even further we'd like you to call us at 613.271.8181 and schedule a career consultation. It will give you a chance to practice these interview skills in a less intense situation and will also give us a chance to give you some face-to-face pointers on how you can make your interviews even more successful.

How to Land the Job You Want

You are an active participant in getting the job you want. Instead of feeling passive and at the mercy of the interviewer across the desk from you, you must demonstrate that you want this job. Answering the interviewer's questions is only one part of the interview. You are representing yourself, and therefore need to be clear and up front that you are the ideal candidate for this position. Show them you are eager to become a member of their organization. Here are some tips that will help you land the job that you want.

Getting Ready

Preparing for the interview will always provide you with more confidence in the overall interview process. By preparing answers for common questions, you are much less likely to be put on the spot and left gasping for words. Instead you will appear well-prepared and proficient in your field.

It is also important to develop and practice your “message”. Your message is a summary of what you have done in the past and how that can be translated into what you can do for this company now. Essentially, it is the impression that you want left with your interviewer. The message should be believable, persuasive, and to-the-point. There should be nothing vague about your message. If you are confused about your value to the company philosophy, creed, etc. you can add some of the company's fundamental beliefs into your own message.

Turning Around Objections

Often the interviewer will present an obstacle, which, if not countered could mean the loss of the position. A common objection is, “you are overqualified / underqualified”.

Whatever the objection, it is important to take the negative statement and turn it into a positive one. For example, if the interviewer says, “you are too overqualified”, you might respond, “that may be true but I feel that would put me in a position to become productive that much quicker”. Always try one more time.

Ask Good Questions

Having good answers during an interview is not the only way to get the job. Asking the right questions is a very useful strategy in demonstrating

that you are the ideal person for the position. By asking the right questions, you...

- Create an opportunity to demonstrate that you have a sound knowledge of the industry.
- Demonstrate that you have researched the company, are curious, and are interested in solving problems.

Asking the right questions draws the interviewer into your territory and gives him/her the opportunity to listen to how you think. Express Yourself

Expressing interest in the job for which you are being interviewed is essential in the interview process. Make sure that you create a portion of time within the interview to present a clear message that states how you are excited about the possibility, what you feel the positive attributes of the company are and what you think you could do for them. Leave the interview assured that the interviewer is clear that you want the job.

Some people are not used to being in an assertive role that can be somewhat uncomfortable if it is out of character for their personality. Here are some tips on how to prepare to be up front with your interviewer to let him/her know that you want the job and that you feel you are an ideal candidate for the role.

- Think positive. By expecting success and thinking positive you are likely to create desire from within. Get rid of negative thoughts and problems before you enter the interview and be confident and courageous. It takes nerve to come right out and say that you want the job and think you are the ideal candidate for the position.
- Don't hide the truth if you have more than one opportunity on your plate. By presenting yourself as in demand, more likely is the chance that the employer will not want to let you get away.
- Realize that you can't win them all, and that there is always the chance that the employer is not looking for your particular set of skills at that time.

Helpful Do's & Don'ts

Do

- Try to have your interviewer positively answer as many of your questions as possible. For example, if in the interview you can pick up on some of the interviewer's concerns, you might ask, "I have encountered this problem before and solved it by... would this help here"? Having your interviewer answer yes throughout the interview increases the possibilities of him/her seeing you as a good match for the position.
- Allow for periods of silence. By doing so, the interviewer may feel compelled to fill the void and tell something vital. Do this discreetly; too many silences can be awkward. Know how to pace yourself with the interviewer.
- Make the interviewer think about you in the role that you are applying for. At the end of the interview ask the interviewer, "If I were to begin on Monday, what would be the top five priorities that you would have me working on?" When you do this, the interviewer will be forced to begin thinking of you as part of the team. It also sends the message that you are serious.

Don't

- Do not talk too much or you can end up talking yourself out of an opportunity. Know when to stop selling yourself. Listen and give the interviewer an opportunity to hire you.

Everything is academic until it comes down to landing that job. The guidelines in this booklet will be helpful in most aspects of your job search, but when it comes down to landing that job, you're going to need all the help you can get. We'd like you to call or email us and book a free career consultation. This consultation can be done over the phone or in person, and only takes a few minutes. We want to see you use these concepts to find that perfect job, but more than this, we want to do all that we can to help you land that perfect job.

How to Resign

Once you've landed the job, the next step is to inform your present employer about your decision, and to then pursue your long-term objectives. You need to make sure your transition is as smooth as possible while maintaining strong relationships with your current employer. Here are some tips on how to resign on a positive note, and maintain a strong rapport with your now ex-organization.

When to Deliver Your Resignation

The best time to present your resignation to your employer is not Friday afternoon! Although this is typically thought of as the best day, there are a few reasons why this may not be the ideal time for delivery...

- This gives your boss time over the weekend to craft a counter-offer strategy, which can make things complicated.
- At the end of the day on Fridays, the "in" basket is dwindling and this gives your boss time to question you about where you are going and why.

The ideal time to provide your resignation is Monday or Tuesday afternoon about 4:00 pm. Here's why...

- The beginning of the week is generally a time when the to-do list is long. This means that your boss is less likely to have time to develop a counter-offer strategy.
- You will not have to spend the rest of the day explaining to co-workers and your boss the reasons and details about your decision.

It is best to keep a low profile about your departure in order to cause as little disruption as possible.

The Resignation Letter

Your resignation letter should convey necessary information and be used as the starting point of the meeting with your employer. It needs to be short, to the point, offer no apologies or thank-you's and does not have to provide details about where you are going, what you will be doing, or why you are leaving, etc. It should outline that you're leaving, when you're leaving, and that you want to make the transition an easy one.

Sample Resignation Letter

This is an example of a resignation letter which you might find useful as a reference...

Dear Employer,

Please accept this letter as my official notice of resignation. I appreciate the work we have been able to accomplish over the last (#) of years at (Company Name). However, I have made a commitment to another organization and will begin my work with them in two weeks' time.

It is my intention to work diligently with you over the next two weeks to make this transition as smooth as possible. I am willing to accept any suggestions on how this goal can be best accomplished, and hope that you will share your thoughts with me, as I am eager to leave on the most positive note possible.

Sincerely,

Tips On Deflecting Uncomfortable Questions

If you find yourself being asked questions from your current boss that you feel uncomfortable answering, remember that you are not obliged to provide details which may not be appropriate. It may help you to use a response such as the following to help deflect uncomfortable questions:

I know that you might be curious about my departure, but it's not my intention to discuss where I am going or why. My decision is made. I have a commitment to another organization which I plan to keep. If it is really important for you to know where I am going and why, let's talk about it when it is not an emotional issue for us, say a couple of weeks from now. Today, my goal remains to discuss how to make the transition as smooth as possible.

Explaining To Your Co-Workers

Explaining your resignation to your co-workers can be an awkward situation, especially if you are part of a team where the absence of your contribution may mean overtime or delayed vacation, etc. for your colleagues. The following provides some tips on how to deal with your co-workers on the issue of your resignation...

- Choose an appropriate time to speak with your co-workers. This should not be a time that disrupts productivity for the day. For example, speak with them during a lunch hour or after work.

- Let your co-workers know that you are eager to make the impact of your absence as minimal as possible.
- Do not compare the benefits of your new position to your current position.
- Don't talk down your current company, boss, or co-workers now that you are leaving.
- Explain that you are looking to achieve your long-term objectives, and to accomplish this, you need to go to another organization.
- Thank your co-workers for having had the opportunity to work with them.

The Feelings Associated with Resignation

Resigning from a position can create a variety of mixed emotions. Although you are leaving for reasons that are positive, there are also other feelings that are common and of which you should be aware:

- **Guilt**—It is natural to experience feelings of guilt when you resign from a position. Your absence will inevitably cause some initial disruption that will impact your boss and co-workers. Guilt is a natural reaction when you separate from established groups to move forward.
- **Loyalty**—Working for an organization for any significant period of time naturally builds loyalty. Resigning from a position feels like you have betrayed the organization, and can cause feelings of disloyalty.
- **Fear**—Leaving an environment of familiarity for something new and unknown can generate a sense of fear in anyone. New beginnings create stress and should be recognized as part of the natural process of adjusting to an unknown environment.
- **Excitement**—Don't forget that this is an exciting time as well. New challenges, new relationships and more confidence await you in a new job. Don't forget to be happy and excited about this change.

Ensuring Confidentiality

Ensuring your confidentiality to the employer is a very important way of maintaining a strong rapport after you leave the organization. Intellectual property is entrusted to employees to be safe-guarded while they work for an organization and beyond.

By re-stating your commitment of confidentiality to your employer when you resign, you demonstrate your trustworthiness and eliminate any suspicion your employer may have - especially if you are going to a competitor company. You want to maintain a strong relationship because you never know when you might work with a former employer again.

Resigning can be a very difficult thing. In a very short time, you move from doing almost anything to please your boss to having to do something that will very much not please your boss. Talentlab® is here to help. Simply call us and request a free career consultation, and we will give you some helpful pointers on resigning and maintaining a positive relationship with your former employer.

How to Deal with Employer Reactions

As you prepare to tie up loose ends at your current job and begin your new position, you will have to deal with the inevitable reaction of your current employer. These reactions can be an uncomfortable thing to deal with, especially if you have not anticipated and prepared for the possibilities beforehand.

Three Main Reactions

There are three main ways in which your present employer may react to your decision to pursue a position somewhere else. You need to be prepared for all of these reactions:

1. “Finish up and go”—The most desirable of these options sees your employer accept that you’re leaving, simply telling you to keep working until your last day. Essentially he/she will try to get as much work out of you as possible before you go.
2. Counter-Offer—For reasons explained below, employers may try to put together a package that will induce you to stay. They may bump up your paycheque, or offer you some stock options or some extra vacation time.
3. An escort to the door—Surprisingly, this is a rather common reaction for employers. When the company is engaged in some especially important or competitive work, the employer does not want to see their people distracted. Someone leaving the team for whatever reason can be an intense distraction. By dealing with your resignation right away, the damage and distraction may be minimized. Remember that though it may seem so at the time, this is not personal. It’s business, and your employer is just trying to keep a sharp focus.

Presenting Counter-Offers

Being prepared for typical counter-offers can eliminate some of the confusion of being thrown into a situation where you have to make a decision again. Counter-offers are generally attached to some form of flattery and tend to express your value to the company. Here are some typical statements your employer may present with a counter-offer...

- You are too valuable, and we need you.
- You can't desert the team/your friends and leave them hanging like this.
- We were just about to give you a promotion/raise and it was confidential until now.
- What did they offer, why are you leaving, and what would make you stay?

Counter-offer proposals usually come in the form of...

- more money
- promotion or added responsibility
- future commitments
- derogatory remarks about the new company/position, etc.
- guilt trips

The Nature of Counter-Offers

Seeing through the niceties and flattery associated with counter-offers is one way to stay focused on your long-term objectives. Here are some underlying realities that will often be the driving force behind counter-offers:

1. Employers do not like being fired. Resignations can be taken as a reflection of your boss' ability to provide an enjoyable and challenging work environment. Although you may have been a critical resource to your employer, their first concern is often how inconvenient and hurtful this is to them.
2. Your absence may jeopardize a current project, cause overtime for colleagues, and disrupt vacation plans, etc. Realize that these are short-term problems that can be ironed out with relative ease. Don't put your long-term objectives on the line for short-term disruptions.
3. It is more cost-effective for your employer to keep you on even at a higher salary and it is more convenient for your employer to let you go within their own time schedule.

When Considering Counter-Offers

1. Once a counter-offer is accepted there is always a degree of damage that will have been done. Accepting to stay on for “something more” can easily tarnish the perception of your commitment to the company.
2. Accepting a counter-offer does not necessarily mean that your role, who you report to, or the climate of the company, etc. will change. If you were considering leaving for some of these reasons, it is wise to be aware that some things will not change, even if you are receiving a healthier paycheck.
3. Where did the money come from to lure you to stay? Were you not deserving of this on your own merit? Accepting a counter-offer can easily leave you questioning your employer’s sincerity and fairness.

Whether you are presently working or are looking to change jobs in the near future, we hope you have found this guide useful. Once you’ve made the decision to advance in your career, you need to stick with that decision. If you’ve decided that you’re ready to make a career move, but are feeling pressured to stay with your current job, give us a call. We can give you a free career consultation, discuss your concerns, and help you work through them. We hope to hear from you soon!