



Is job-hopping becoming more acceptable?

...job hopping is on the rise and it doesn't look like the trend will be stopping any time soon!

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The traditional view might have been that having multiple shorter term positions on your resume raised a red flag to future employers that you aren't serious about their role/organisation. But is this true today?

We interview a lot of candidates and speak with a lot of employers, and the perception of job-hopping has changed over the past few years. As job-hopping increases in frequency, it appears that this more transient approach to employment is replacing the concept of climbing the corporate ladder.

Traditionally, job candidates who have bounced from employer to employer have generally not been welcomed by organisations, but as talent scarcity increases, recruiters seem more willing to accept shorter tenures as a sign of the times.

It appears that not only is the stigma associated with job hopping dissipating, but candidates who have executed logical shifts in their career are considered savvy careerists. It also seems that the youngest generation of workers are the most accepting of the new culture of job-hopping, citing that changing jobs every few years helps their career.

From the employer's perspective

Some employers don't want to risk bringing on a person who's likely to leave them in a year or two. But other employers have found that with the right management techniques, even someone with an inclination toward shorter tenures can make a strong, lasting impact on the organisation.

Someone who has a diverse background can be more attractive to a potential employer because they potentially bring new ideas and ways of doing things.

The organisation may also benefit by having workers who are far more adaptable to change – and even get bored without it.

The challenge is to decide what level of job-hopping is acceptable.

As job longevity becomes a thing of the past, employers and recruiters are beginning to have a different outlook on job hopping

From the candidate's perspective

It has always been difficult to move to the perfect job in one step, so it makes sense to think ahead about moving between organisations and/or roles. Therefore, job hopping can be extremely advantageous for some people – if they do it for the right reasons.

Gaining new skills

- It allows you the opportunity to gain valuable technical knowledge in different environments and cultures.
- Sometimes, you have to job hop to gain experience in a particular area - for example, if you are switching industries or seeking certain cutting-edge technical skills.

Having access to more information and resources

- Working in several different environments provides access to different resources – both human and informational – that you may not gain through a single employer.
- Different employers provide access to different networks in which to foster professional relationships for your future career.

Exposure to different jobs

- Job hopping gives you the opportunity to see what other jobs are out there.
- It's an opportunity to work out what you like and what you don't, so that when you are finally ready to settle down for several years, you know what you are looking for.

Experience a new corporate culture

- By working at multiple companies you will get to see ways that others are conducting business, while expanding your network to a whole new pool of professionals.
- The company culture at your current organisation isn't likely to change, and if you don't mesh well with it, you may need to move on.

Move up the career ladder faster

- You may look for the opportunity to get the promotion you want and that may mean you have to change companies.

Earning more money

- A change in employer may elicit a higher salary, provided you consider the total compensation package before heading out the door! Benefits such as telecommuting, flexi-time or additional bonuses can make up for a smaller base salary.



Drawbacks of job hopping

Job-hopping may still be viewed as risky behaviour. Changing jobs every three to four years is one thing, but more frequent moves could indicate the inability to dig into a role and therefore put the employer on guard. It can also have other drawbacks:

Your job may be less secure: If your employer is forced to lay off employees, you might be the first to go - given your track record of leaving companies quickly. Loyalty goes a long way from the employer's perspective. It gives them dependability that they can count on and your loyalty may help to strengthen your job security.

Employers may be hesitant to invest in you: When jumping from job to job, you are showing future employers that there may be a high likelihood that you will do the same to them. It is usually quite expensive to recruit, hire and train up a new employee and should they leave in a short period of time, it can be quite costly to an employer.

Conclusion

From the employer's perspective

Employers shouldn't discount the creativity, innovation and interpersonal skills that result from sensible job-hopping. They need to look at the candidate's resume; are they seeing an upward progression, what is the candidate's motivator for changing? Or is the candidate simply changing roles because they're not sure what they want to do next.

It's not unreasonable to have concerns about candidates who haven't stuck around at previous jobs for very long, but employers who are not big fans of job-hopping may simply have to accept candidates who have changed jobs fairly frequently or run the risk of losing promising talent.

From the candidate's perspective

There are many benefits and drawbacks to job-hopping, but if you do it for the right reasons and maintain healthy relationships with past employers, the benefits should outweigh the cons and you'll be seen as a flexible, resourceful candidate.

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