

Counter Offer Tips



A recruiter has approached you or perhaps you have responded to an advertised position. You've gone through the interview process and received a great offer and a better opportunity with another organisation. You then make the decision to accept the new offer.

However, upon resigning, your current boss asks you to stay and makes you a counter offer. A career change is tough enough as it is, so anxieties about leaving a comfortable job, friends and location and having to prove yourself again in an unknown environment can cloud the best logic. Counter offers can create confusion and play with your emotions.

Counter offer flattery

Counter offers usually take the form of flattery such as:

- "You're too valuable. We need you."
- "You can't desert the team/your friends and leave them hanging."
- "We were just about to give you a promotion/raise, and it was confidential till now."
- "What did they offer? Why are you leaving? What do you need in order to stay?"
- "Why would you want to work for that company?"
- "The Managing Director wants to meet with you before you make your final decision."

Types of counter offer

Counter offers usually take the form of more money, including:

- A promotion/more responsibility
- A modified reporting structure
- Promises of future considerations
- Disparaging remarks about the new company or job
- Guilt trips

It is important to recognise all the emotions at play and consider questions like “Where did the additional money or responsibility being offered come from? Was it my next pay increase or promotion—just given early? Might a cheaper replacement be sought?”

A rule of thumb among recruiters is that more than 80% of those who accept counter offers leave, or are terminated, within six to twelve months. Half of those who accept counter offers reinitiate their job search within 90 days.

Reasons not to accept a counter offer

- You have now made your existing employer aware that you are unhappy. From this day on, your loyalty will always be in question.
- When promotion time comes around, your employer will remember who is loyal and who is not.
- When times get tough, your employer may begin the cutbacks with you.
- Where is the money for the counter offer coming from? All companies have wage and salary guidelines that must be followed. Is it your next pay increase coming early?
- Your company may start looking for a person at a cheaper price.
- The reasons for you wanting to consider an employment change will repeat themselves in the future, even if you accept the counter offer.
- Once the word gets out, the relationship that you now enjoy with your colleagues may never be the same.
- What type of company do you work for if you have to threaten to resign before they give you what you are worth?

