

A GUIDE TO ACCEPTING AN OFFER AND PROPER RESIGNATION

ACCEPTING THE OFFER

Once you have received an offer from TRC and the prospective employer, there are some important things to remember and a proper way to handle the situation.

First – switching jobs can be scary, so it's important that you don't let that emotional fear hold you back from what can be a very positive decision for your career and family.

Think about this:

Why were you looking in the first place? Are any of the things that originally prompted you to look likely to change if you stayed? How much will your skill set be worth 3-5 years from now once you've added this new set of skills to your resume? Is it fear of the "new" that's making you hesitate, or is there something tangible that is causing you to move forward?

The fear of change can cause hesitations – don't let it hold you back

As you walk through the answers to these questions, what you will most likely discover is that it is really the fear of change that's causing the hesitation and not anything specific about the potential new employer.

5 TELL-ALL QUESTIONS

Here's the bottom line. Ask yourself these five questions:

1. Would this move improve me financially?
2. Would this move improve my quality of life both at work and outside of work?
3. Would I gain new responsibilities by accepting this position?
4. Would this be a step forward in my career? (If it's not a step up in title, would I be more valuable later having taken this position?)
5. Would it keep or get me back to "home"?

If you answered "yes" to 4-5 of these questions, you should accept the position and enjoy your decision.

ONCE YOU'VE SAID YES – NOW WHAT?

Once you've made your decision to accept the new position there are several steps you need to take:

1. Notify TRC Staffing Services right away. The more immediate the response, the better that employer feels about making you the offer and having you join their company. It starts you out on the right foot.
2. Fill out and return any documents that require your signature.
3. Pick a start date (if one was not already given to you) – usually no more than two weeks from your date of resignation.
4. Resign from your current position.

RESIGNING WITH GRACE AND DIGNITY

When it comes time to resign from your current employer, you need to be prepared to understand what their reaction is likely to be. Here are some tips for smoothing out the process:

Your Boss's Reaction

Be prepared for your boss's reaction. Whenever someone resigns from a company the first thing that happens is your boss worries about how your resignation will reflect upon him/her – typically they are not concerned with whether or not this is the right move for you. Most of their actions will be fairly predictable. Here are the reactions you will get from them, and if you watch, you'll see most of them in this order:

1. Shocked and Amazed – “I can't believe this is happening; I didn't see it coming.”
2. Saddened – “I hate to see you go; you've been such a good employee to the company.”
3. Questioning your Thought Process – “Have you really thought this through? What about...”
4. The Hidden Promotion or Project – “Boy, the timing of this couldn't be worse. I hadn't told you about it yet but I've been thinking of moving you into...”
5. Stalling Tactic – “Well let's not do anything permanent until I have a chance to talk to some people.”

What to Say

Don't say much more than you are leaving. Emphasize the positive and talk about how the company has benefited you, but, mention that it's time to move on. Offer to help during the transition and afterwards. Don't be negative. There's no point – you're leaving and you want to leave on good terms. Make them aware your decision is final and do it in writing. (See page 6 for resignation template letter) It needs to be simple and straightforward.

You Don't Need to Give Them More Than Two Weeks

If your employer asks you to stay longer than two weeks (or the time period in your contract), you have no obligation to stay. Your new employer will be expecting you to start as scheduled and in a timely manner. What you could do is offer to help your previous employer, if necessary, after hours via email or on the phone.

Ask for a Reference

Before you leave, ask for a letter of recommendation from your manager. As time passes and people move on, it's easy to lose track of previous employers. With a letter in hand, you'll have written documentation of your credentials to give to prospective employers.

Don't Forget the Details

Find out about the employee benefits and salary you are entitled to receive upon leaving. Inquire about continuing health insurance coverage through COBRA, collecting unused vacation and sick pay, and keeping, cashing in, or rolling over your 401(k) or other pension plan.

Return Company Property

Return any company property you have, including keys, documents, computers, phones and anything else that doesn't belong to you. The company doesn't want to chase you to get it back, and you don't want to be held responsible if it's not returned in a timely manner.

DEALING WITH A COUNTER OFFER

Many employees who give notice will receive counter offers from their current companies to encourage them to stay. These proposals can include one or more of the following:

- A pay increase
- A promotion and/or added responsibility
- A promise of a future raise, promotion or other incentive
- The creation of a new, more appealing reporting structure or organization

An employer may accompany its offer with an added motivator, such as a special call or visit from the Vice President or CEO and other flattering gestures. They may even try to manipulate a departing employee by heaping on a false sense of guilt.

In general, it is not a good idea to accept a counter offer. Here are some reasons why:

1. Ask yourself, if you were worth X dollars yesterday, why are they suddenly willing to pay you Y dollars today when you were not anticipating a raise for some time?
2. Consider the fact that your present employer could be merely "buying time" with this raise until they can locate a replacement. Suppose you were given an annual raise as a counter offer of \$3,000 – when they find a replacement for you in, say, 60 days, then the actual cost to them is only \$500.
3. Realize that you are now a "marked" person. The possibility of promotion could be limited for someone who has just "given notice". The company is vulnerable; they know it and will not risk giving more responsibility to someone who was previously committed to leave.
4. Is just more money going to change everything in your present job? Consider the new opportunity you will be giving up that looked to favorable when you accepted it.
5. When economic slow-downs occur, you could be one of the first to go. The National Employment Association confirms the fact that over 80% of those people who elected to accept a counter offer and stayed were no longer with their company six months later.

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WRITING A RESIGNATION LETTER

When you announce your intention to resign, you should also hand your supervisor a letter which states your last date of employment with the company. Let him know that you've enjoyed working with him, but that an opportunity came along that you couldn't pass up, and that your decision to leave was made carefully, and doesn't reflect any negative feelings you have toward the company or the staff.

Keep your resignation letter short, simple, and to the point. There's no need to go into detail about your new job, or what led to your decision to leave. If these issues are important to your old employer, he'll schedule an exit interview for you, at which time you can hash out your differences. Be sure to provide a carbon copy or photocopy of your resignation letter for your company's personnel file. This way, the circumstances surrounding your resignation will be well documented for future reference.

See next page for a Resignation Letter template.

Resignation Letter Template

Your Name

Your Address

Your City, State, Zip Code

Your Phone Number

Your Email

Date

Name

Title

Organization

Address

City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name:

I am writing to announce my resignation from Company Name, effective two weeks from this date.

This was not an easy decision to make, on my part. The past XX years have been very rewarding. I've enjoyed working for you and being a part of a very successful team dedicated to a quality product for our customers.

Thank you for the opportunities for growth that you have provided me.

I wish you and the company all the best.

Sincerely,

Your signature

Your typed name