

## Dangers of the Counter Offer

You've gone through the interviewing process and received a great offer - and a better opportunity - with a better company. You've analyzed and agonized over the decision to leave your current (good or bad) job, for what appears to be a better one, and you've accepted (or decided to accept) the offer.

However, upon resigning, your current boss asks you to stay and made you a counteroffer. Career changes are tough enough as it is, and anxieties about leaving a comfortable job, friends and location and having to reprove yourself again in an unknown opportunity can cloud the best logic. But just because the new position is a little scary doesn't mean it's not a positive move. Since counteroffers can create confusion and buyer's remorse, you should understand what's being cast upon you.

Counteroffers are typically made as some form of flattery, e.g.:

- "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 until now."
- "What did they offer? Why are you leaving? And what do you need in order to stay?"
- "Why would you want to work for that company?"
- "The President/CEO wants to meet with you before you make your final decision."
- Counteroffers usually take the form of more money:
- A promotion/more responsibility
- A modified reporting structure
- Promises or future considerations
- Disparaging remarks about the new company or job
- Guilt trips

But, while counter-offers may be tempting and flattering, there can be pitfalls that you need to be aware of. Ask yourself these 12 questions:

1. Will your loyalty always be in question?
2. If there are future cutbacks, will you be the first to go because of concerns about your loyalty? Will you be the victim of a grudge held about the "disloyalty" you showed?
3. If you accept the counter-offer for more money, are you just giving your employer the time they need to locate and select your replacement? And, why weren't you worth that extra money before you resigned? What kind of company has to be threatened to pay you what you are worth?
4. Will your career track remain blocked if you accept it?
5. Will your responsibilities be expanded?
6. Will you have to report to a person you don't respect?
7. Are you actually just receiving next year's raise or bonus early? After all, companies have strict wage and salary guidelines which must be followed. Will you have to quit to get another raise in the future?
8. Is the counter-offer a ploy to avoid a short-term inconvenience by your employer? Is their motivation to keep you driven by their priorities, with no concern for your career?
9. What are your realistic chances for promotions now that you have considered leaving?
10. Will your fundamental concerns about the company be addressed by this counteroffer?
11. Isn't accepting a counter offer an insult to your intelligence and a blow to your personal pride; knowing that you were bought?
12. Once the word gets out, what will happen to the relationship that you now enjoy with your co-workers? You will lose the personal satisfaction of peer group acceptance.

### Counter Offer Statistics

According to national surveys of employees that accept counter-offers, 50-80 percent voluntarily leave their employer within six months of accepting the counter-offer because of un-kept promises. The majority of the balance of employees that accept counter-offers involuntarily leave their current employers within twelve months of accepting the counter-offer (terminated, fired, laid off, etc.). Half initiate a new job search in as little as 90 days.

As attractive as counter-offers may appear, they can greatly decrease your chances of achieving your career potential.