

# Take This Job and...Re-staff It

By Linda Matias

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Deciding to leave a job isn't easy. In fact, quitting a job requires courage, especially in today's soft economy when the unemployment rate has reached 6.4%. However, in a tight job market, some people consider leaving their jobs without having another "lined up".

When after a careful evaluation of emotional and financial considerations you determine that leaving your job is your best option, you may find that you will have a hard time getting support from your family, friends and colleagues. The moment you tell others that you are considering leaving your job, their immediate reaction will be, "Don't leave your job if you don't have another to go to."

Yes. The ideal situation is to leave a job when you have a perfect career opportunity. But life doesn't always hand you a magic bullet. Sometimes you have to take a risk, and that's when conventional wisdom must be put aside to improve the prospects for your career.

Your decision to leave should be based on the expectation that better opportunities await you. You may be ready to move on when:

- \* The organization's culture has shifted, and no longer matches your work values.
- \* You have outgrown your position, and the only way you will get promoted is if someone leaves.
- \* The price of staying (e.g., increased anxiety and loss of self-esteem) is greater than the price of leaving.
- \* You no longer care about the company, and it is reflected

in the way you perform your job.

\* Your career goals have evolved, and you are ready to pursue new opportunities.

Once you have made the decision to resign, plan for the following:

\* Write a letter of resignation. Keep the letter short and to the point. The letter should mention two key points (1) the date of your last day of work and (2) a thank you to your immediate superior for having provided you with the opportunity to work for the organization.

\* Prepare for an exit interview. This is not an opportunity for you to provide a laundry list of pet peeves. Instead, use this time to offer objective and constructive feedback.

Possible exit interview questions include: What were the factors that contributed to your accepting a job with our Company? Were your expectations realized? Has that changed? What constructive comments do you have for management with regard to making this a better place to work? Why are you leaving? What would have kept you here? What do you expect to find somewhere else?

\* Go the extra step. Ask your manager what you can do to make the transition easier and, if possible, offer to train your successor.

\* Extended yourself. Be available for a certain time after your last day to answer any questions your employer may have.

Most important of all, do not burn your bridges. Keep your resignation professional and brief.

Recognized as a career expert, Linda Matias brings a wealth of experience to the career services field. She has been sought out for her knowledge of the employment market, outplacement, job search strategies, interview preparation, and resume writing, quoted a number of times in The Wall Street Journal, New York Newsday, Newsweek, and HR-resource.com. She is President of CareerStrides and The National Resume Writers' Association. Visit her website at [www.careerstrides.com](http://www.careerstrides.com) or email her at [careerstrides@bigfoot.com](mailto:careerstrides@bigfoot.com).

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