

## Candidates Chronicles - When Opportunity Knocks, Is It Knocking for You?

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Maybe you were thinking about a job change when the recruiter called - and maybe not. In any event, opportunity seems to have knocked.

Let's assume you are not the proverbial "tire kicker" - the kind of person who likes to check out the market periodically but has no real interest in switching jobs. Let's assume the potential new position is neither a lateral move nor a step backward. And let's assume it has some genuine excitement attached.

You don't want to anger the recruiter by feigning interest where none exists, or by continuing to pretend interest after you have ruled out the opportunity. That's a good step toward career suicide, see *Working with a Sanford Rose Associates Recruiter, Volume II Issue I*. So at each phase of the interviewing and acceptance process, you have to decide whether to keep going or to call the whole thing off. But how?

When considering a career move (as opposed to a job hop), candidates are well advised to focus first on what it is about their current position or employer that would make them want to leave.

Despite the fact that employees are changing employers with ever-increasing frequency, that doesn't mean you have to. You may have the perfect job with the perfect boss in the perfect company in the perfect location. You have been promoted frequently, earn more money than you had ever dreamed and are on a fast track to corporate stardom. Being fired is not a worry, because you are guaranteed a terrific severance package and your reputation precedes you in the world of executive search. And on top of everything else, you love your job. If that describes your situation, think twice before leaving. In fact, think three or four times.

On the other hand, perhaps your job is less than perfect. Your boss is a power-hungry egotist, unwilling to share recognition and acknowledge your many contributions. Or the company, once the market leader, has become an also-ran and the shareholders are restless. Or the thought of another winter in Fargo is more than you can stand. Perhaps you have been denied promotion or given a salary increase that must have been designed as an insult. Maybe life in a cubicle is not what you had in mind upon graduation from college some years ago. Given any one or more of those circumstances, you may be ready for a new job. The only question is which.

### **Here are a few tips for proceeding.**

1. As discussed above, make a list of what you dislike about your current job. If you need to remind yourself, make a separate list of what you like about the job.
2. Describe what would be the perfect next job for you - whether at your current employer or somewhere else. Be as specific as possible in terms of responsibilities, reporting relationships, company, location, compensation package (including benefits), promotional opportunities, etc. If this pretty much describes your current career path, stay put unless someone offers you a million dollars.
3. Evaluate the new job opportunity from two standpoints. First, will it solve all or most of the problems you described in Point 1? Second, how closely does it match your ideal job description in Point 2? If the shoe fits, consider wearing it. For a more in-depth discussion on evaluating the new opportunity, see the next issue of Candidate Chronicles, Volume II, Issue V.



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4. Be honest about your family situation and include them in the decision-making process. (Don't come home some night and say, "Guess what, honey? We're moving to Cedar Rapids.") When talking to the recruiter, don't gloss over potential conflicts such as a working spouse, sick parent or daughter in her final year of high school. Get them out in the open and address them; your recruiter may have good advice to offer.

If each day you - and your family - are growing more excited, that's a good sign. If the opportunity grows dimmer over time, let go of it and let your recruiter know. You will be appreciated for your honesty and candor and will be considered as other opportunities arise.