

The Counter Offer

Counteroffers are given because many times the employee does a poor job resigning. He/she does a poor job because they have feelings of guilt, deceit, or concerns of feeling disloyal. Turn the box a little and remember you are moving on for a better opportunity and no one can blame you for taking the opportunity to improve your career. Don't drag it out. Tell your boss within the first 10 seconds and start by saying, "I'm resigning."

No matter what kind of relationship you had with your boss before your resignation, some of the following thoughts are now going through his/her mind:

- This couldn't have happened at a worse time!
- Boy, this will really screw up the vacation schedule.
- I can't lose one of my best people. It will destroy morale in the whole department.
- I already have one opening in my department now. I don't need another one.
- I don't have time to interview, hire and train a new employee.

A counter offer sounds like:

"This raise was supposed to go into effect next quarter but we'll start it the first of the month instead."

"I've been meaning to tell you about our plans for expansion, (which, of course, include you), but it's been confidential and I couldn't tell you before now."

"I'm really shocked! I thought you were as happy with us as we are with you. Let's discuss it before you make your final decision."

We like to think employers give counteroffers because you are the greatest employee ever and they can't live without you. A recent study shows that employers make counteroffers because:

- It's cheaper (and easier) to keep you on board until they can find a suitable replacement for you.
- The boss felt like the employee misinterpreted their intention to increase the scope of their job.
- The boss overreacted
- The boss knew that was what the employee wanted to hear.

A helpful exercise is to write a letter to your boss that you will never send and that your boss will never read. In that letter, spell out why you are leaving, why you are unhappy and why you want to move on. Read it and re-read it until you can confidently state your resignation to your manager.

Counteroffers are made only because someone plans to quit. Will a person have to solicit another offer and quit every time he/she wants a raise or a promotion?

- Before even contemplating that tempting counteroffer, consider the results of a study recently published in the Wall Street Journal. In this study conducted in a three-year period, over 50% of the individuals receiving counteroffers after turning in their resignations accepted them.
- Within eighteen months, 93% of those accepting counteroffers had left, some voluntarily and some fired. All of the remaining 7% were actively seeking new employment.

Points to Ponder on Counter Offers

- Any situation, in which an employee is forced to get an outside offer before being offered a raise and/or promotion, is suspect.
- No matter what a company says when making a counteroffer, the person who stays will always be questioned in terms of loyalty. He/she is no longer considered to be a team player and will usually be the first to go.
- Counteroffers are nothing more than stall devices to give the employer time to find a suitable replacement.
- Decent companies don't make counteroffers...ever! Their policies are fair, equitable, and clearly stated and implemented.
- Employers hate to lose people this way because: It's bad for morale for someone to quit. There's never a good time for someone to quit. It makes them look bad. They might have to work a little harder.