

What Are the Signs That I Should Leave My Job?

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Give serious thought to the reasons why you're looking for another job.

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If you're thinking about leaving your job, don't act on a whim. Take time to observe your co-workers, the organization's leadership and any management changes. Also, if the workplace culture is changing, give it time to evolve before you start updating your resume. Don't follow the crowd, even if you notice a mass exodus of colleagues with whom you've developed professional relationships. Avoid leaving for purely tangible reasons, such as more money, unless you're seeking a benefits package that's just not offered by your current employer. Pay more attention to the intangible and more meaningful factors in your decision to leave.

Turnover

When employees leave, it's not always a sign that you should leave, too, but it could signal poor job satisfaction among your co-workers. The fact that co-workers are leaving isn't the only reason you might consider leaving, however. Increased turnover means the company will be forced to spend more money on recruiting new employees to replace those who left. Because most companies don't have bottomless coffers to pay for recruitment activities, training and providing raises for employees who stay, the trickle-down effect of the company spending money for replacement workers could affect your compensation and the company's overall profitability.

Business Demand

Whether business demand spikes or drops significantly, it's time to think about your career. If demand for the company's products or services increases, but the company isn't planning to hire additional staff, it could create a hardship on current staff. Mandatory overtime, added responsibilities and stress could be reasons to consider looking for employment elsewhere. On the other hand, when business demand plummets for reasons that aren't readily apparent, it might be a sign that the organization is in one of the final stages its life cycle. The Institute for Social and Economic Development identifies Stage 6 and Stage 7 as the time for business turnaround decisions or business closure via planned exit strategy or unplanned downfall.



Professional Growth

If you're looking for professional development and your company doesn't offer the challenges, training and mentoring you believe are necessary for your growth, you should consider looking for an organization that will invest in you. Smart employers invest in their employees because employers actually reap the rewards of satisfied workers with newly acquired skills and capabilities, according to "Forbes" magazine contributor Lisa Quast, in her May 2012 article titled, "Want Your Company To Succeed in the Future? Invest in Employee Skills Training Like Deloitte LLP." Before you jump ship, talk to your manager or the human resources manager about opportunities for advancement. If the company is open to suggestions, develop a plan for your career. But if your employer is resistant to the idea, explore places where your skills and aptitude will be appreciated and nurtured.

Low Engagement and Satisfaction

When the thrill is gone, you can become restless, and your engagement level and job satisfaction could drop. All of these are possible contributors to diminished performance, burnout or boredom. Instead of allowing your job performance to deteriorate to the point where you could jeopardize your employment status, seek opportunities for exciting work or at least work that challenges you. Employee tenure hovered around a median 4.6 years in 2012, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. It's certainly not what it was decades ago, when employees stayed with the same company for their entire careers. There's no longer a stigma attached to leaving a long-term job for a new one, so you won't be shooed away by prospective employers if you look for another job.

