

Look before you leap at chances

You've identified new career opportunities and have been through a series of interviews with several companies and are now ready to evaluate all of the job offers that you have received.

Where do you start? How do you determine which is the best job for you to accept for your personal career path? We offer some practical advice to consider and review before you sign the offer letter.

Review the company's past and present success as it relates to your experience.

Do they have a good reputation in the marketplace?

Do they value their employees?

Does the job description match what you are searching for in a career change?

Do you fit in? Visit with employees of the company, not just the hiring manager, to get answers to your questions and concerns.

Review your short-term and long-term personal and career goals.

Are the company's goals in line with your present and future career growth path? Does the position define and meet your goals?

Explore all of these areas to understand what is expected of you and your position.

Review the management staff.

Do you see eye-to-eye with the management staff? Can they help you in your career? Are you comfortable with their style and professional accomplishments?

Look within and inquire about their reputation as well as their work ethic. Their success will determine the company's promotion path: Were they promoted from within the organization?

Review your financial status.

Are you looking to make a career move for a substantial pay increase? Are you looking to be compensated fairly for your knowledge and experience or has a company promised you a large salary increase for their short-term gain? The matter of money is always a deciding factor and can be a difficult objective to investigate but needs to be explored. Is there a hidden agenda for the company to gain valuable information from you to meet their short-term objectives or is the company you are currently employed with underpaying you for your expertise? This subject can be tackled but must be done very diplomatically.

Review the job offer. Make sure you fully understand the compensation plan as well as the benefits being offered. Ask until you fully understand each detail: percentages, bonus opportunity and fringe benefits. Are the company goals realistic? Are they asking you to sell your soul for valuable information? Don't compromise your principles.

Review your past experience, training received and future advancement. Have you risen to your current level because you have received valuable training or education? Did you personally incur the cost? If so, then you know how valuable and costly this training can be. Don't discount this piece of the job offer because you don't think that you need it. Perhaps there will be valuable, costly training you will receive that will advance your employment status rather than a monetary reward that doesn't boost your career experience. Employers are to be applauded for investing in their employees.

Ultimately this is your decision. Review and question all of the details until you feel comfortable with your decision.