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## Counteroffer Acceptance

Counteroffers are simply used as an inducement from your current employer to get you to stay after you've announced your intention to take another job. We're not talking about those instances when you receive an offer but don't tell your boss. Nor are we discussing offers that you never intended to take, yet tell your employer about it anyway as a "they-want-me-but-I'm-staying-with-you" ploy. Interviews with employers who make counteroffers, and employees who accept them, have shown that as tempting as they may be, acceptance may cause career suicide. Consider the proper perspective.

### What really goes through a boss' mind when someone quits?

- "This couldn't happen at a worse time."
- "This is one of my best people. If I let him quit now, it'll wreak havoc on the morale of the department."
- "I've already got one opening in my department. I don't need another right now."
- "I'm working as hard as I can, I don't need to do his work too."
- "Maybe I can keep him on until I find a suitable replacement."

### What will the boss say to keep you in the nest?

- "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."
- "I've been meaning to tell you about the great plans we have for you"
- The V.P. has you in mind for something exciting and expanding responsibilities."
- "Your raise was scheduled to go into effect next quarter but we'll make it effective immediately."

Managements gut reaction is to do what ever has to be done to keep you from leaving until they are prepared. Unfortunately, it is human nature to want to stay until your work life is abject misery. Career changes, like all ventures into the unknown, are tough. That's why bosses know they can keep you around by pressing the right buttons.

Before you succumb to a tempting counteroffer, consider these universal truths:

- Any situation in which an employee is forced to get an outside offer before the present employer will suggest a raise, promotion or better working conditions, is suspect
- No matter what the company says when making its counteroffer, you'll always be considered as a fidelity risk. Having once demonstrated your lack of loyalty, you will lose your status as a "team player" and your place in the inner circle.
- Counteroffers are usually nothing more than stall devices to give your employer time to replace you.
- Your reasons for wanting to leave still exist. Conditions are just made a bit more tolerable in the short term because of the raise, promotion or promises made to keep you.
- Descent and well-managed companies don't make counteroffers... EVER! Their policies are fair and equitable. They won't be subjected to "counteroffer coercion" or what they perceive as blackmail.

**If the urge to accept a counteroffer hits you, continue to clean out your desk as you look forward to the next step in your career!**