

The Strategic Case for Changing Jobs



There are many deeply personal reasons to change your employment situation. However, from a purely strategic point of view, there are four good reasons to change jobs within the same (or similar) industry three times during your first ten years of employment:

Reason #1: Changing jobs gives you a broader base of experience: After about three years, you've learned most of what you're going to know about how to do your job. Therefore, over a ten year period, you gain more experience from "3 x 90%" than "1 x 100%."

Reason #2: A more varied background creates a greater demand for your skills: Depth of experience means you're more valuable to a larger number of employers. You're not only familiar with your current company's product, service, procedures, quality programs, inventory system, and so forth; you bring with you the expertise you've gained from multiple companies.

Reason #3: A job change results in an accelerated promotion cycle: Each time you make a change, you bump up a notch on the promotion ladder. You jump, for example, from RA Sr. Specialist to RA Manager; or RA/QA Manager to RA/QA Director.

Reason #4: More responsibility leads to greater earning power: A promotion is usually accompanied by a salary increase. And since you're being promoted faster, your salary grows at a quicker pace, sort of like compounding the interest you'd earn on a certificate of deposit.

Many people view a job change as a way of promoting themselves to a better

position. And in most cases that is true. However, you should always be sure your new job offers you the means to satisfy your values. While there's no denying the strategic virtues of selective job changing for the purpose of career leverage, you want to make sure the path you take will lead you where you really want to go.

For instance, there's no reason to change jobs for more money if it'll make you unhappy to the point of distraction (i.e. longer commute, no new challenges, difficult boss). On the other hand, if a job represents several other aspects that would improve your situation, then taking a job for the same money would be a good move.

The "best" job is one in which the key aspects of the job match up well with what you value in a job; whether that be career growth and advancement, smaller/bigger company environment, shorter commute or more money. Working with a Recruiter that takes the time to learn what's important to you and matches new opportunities with your criteria in mind can help ensure that your next move is the right move.