**Beware the counter-offer**

Just as surely as the sun rises in the east every day, when it comes time to submit your resignation to your current employer, if you are a top-notch candidate (and we're assuming you are because we focus our attention exclusively on such candidates), then there is a better than even chance that you will receive a counter-offer from your current employer.

Usually, the counter-offer consists of a promised *increase in salary, a promotion, expanded authority*, etc. Before you even consider such counter-offers, you need to ask yourself this question: Why did it take a resignation to elicit such an offer?

Rarely does anyone search for a new career opportunity simply for increased income, a new job title or the chance to make a greater contribution. While money, position and opportunity for growth certainly are important to most of us, usually they are *not* the main drivers for seeking other career opportunities.

An employee usually steps out of his or her "comfort zone" for far different reasons. The boss is a jerk. The people they work with are difficult and sometimes even impossible to bear. There is a substantial lack of growth opportunity.

Oh, we know you might be sorely tempted to seriously consider accepting such a counter-offer from your current employer, but a word to the wise is in order here. Statistics show that, usually, accepting a counter-offer is tantamount to committing professional "suicide." **Nearly 80% of those accepting counter-offers are no longer with that employer at the end of just one year later.**

Why?

There can be many reasons. Even though your boss assured you at the time that you were too valuable for the company to lose, after some reflection, he or she may decide that you're actually a "traitor" or an "ingrate." The promised salary increase and promotion may suddenly be "side-tracked" because of "budget constraints." (You will have already passed up the "other" career opportunity, so you could quickly and easily find yourself "between a rock and a hard place.")

**Bottom line:** Sit down and take time to reflect upon the *real* reasons you sought out other career opportunities in the first place. Then, ask yourself this question: If you accept the counter-offer, will those same reasons continue to exist at your current employer? Will more income for you change the way others (including your boss) in the company interact with you in the future? Will a promotion make the corporate culture more acceptable to you?

We think you already know the answers to such questions.
Turning down a counter-offer is never simple or easy. We know and understand that. But handled with dignity and professionalism, things can go far more smoothly than you might perhaps imagine.

Tell whoever is making you the counter-offer that you genuinely appreciate it, but that you've given the matter considerable thought and have decided a career move is in your best interest. It's that simple. Also, tell them that you are grateful for the chance to contribute to the overall success of the company. Finally, assure them that you will do everything in your power to make the transition for your replacement as smooth and effortless as possible. End of story.

Remember this: It's your life and your career at stake here. If you don't take charge of them both, who will?