

Randstad Employment Tips

Evaluating a Job Offer



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Now that you've successfully parlayed your skills, knowledge and experience into a solid job offer, you probably think the hard part of your job search is over, right? Not so fast. Deciding whether to accept or wait for another opportunity can be a difficult choice. Although it's tempting to jump at the offer immediately, it's important to be rational—this decision can impact your career. Use these tips to determine if a job is right for you.

The first step in evaluating a job offer is to acknowledge your own values and priorities. Remember, what may seem like a dream job to a recruiter or your best friend may be your worst nightmare. Think back on your past experiences, tune in to what's most important to you, and be certain of how negotiable those items are.

Next, make sure you have all the facts you need to make a smart decision. If you have unanswered questions or you're unclear about certain aspects of the job or the offer, call the employer and ask. If it's appropriate, request the details in writing.

Finally, do a thorough and honest evaluation of what the job offers, compared to what you're trying to accomplish in your career. To help you get started, here is a list of questions and resources many candidates have found useful:

- **Is the company financially stable and considered a good place to work?**

Good sources of information are the Internet, the annual report, Standard & Poor's Register of Corporations, news articles and college career centers. If possible, work as an employee on temporary assignment to get a first-hand look at the company before accepting a permanent job.

- **Does the company's business or activity match your own interests and beliefs?**

You'll be happier and more successful if you're enthusiastic about what the organization does.

- **Does the position match or move you toward your career goals?**

A job is only “good” if it allows you to do what you want and presents the challenges you’re seeking.

- **Are you comfortable with the company’s size?**

Larger firms often provide more opportunities for training and advancement, but smaller ones can offer broader responsibility and the chance to make a bigger impact.

- **Do the job and the company offer opportunities to enhance and build skills?**

The employer should be able to give you an idea of the growth and career path opportunities available. Training courses such as those offered at Randstad University are excellent investments in your future marketability.

- **How often will your performance be evaluated and by whom?**

Find out how the company’s review system works to make sure you can reach your goals in a reasonable period of time.

- **How long do people in this job usually stay with the company?**

Beware of high turnover in the job you’re considering, or in the company in general. It may signal dissatisfaction with the work or the environment.

- **Does the salary meet your expectations?**

Do your homework so you know what the job should pay, and take into account any overtime pay, bonuses, commissions and non-pay perks you can expect.

- **What about benefits?**

Benefits can add to your base pay, but they also vary widely. Make sure you understand what the package includes, and what costs you have to bear yourself.

- **Do you feel good about the work environment?**

Is the atmosphere relaxed? Formal? Unstructured? Does it fit with your nature and work style? One of the benefits of working as an employee on temporary assignment is the chance to “try out” different environments before making a permanent commitment.

- **Will you be happy with your manager’s work style?**

Predicting what someone will be like to work for can be difficult. Discussing expectations, likes and dislikes, and past experiences may give you some clues.

- **Does the corporate culture appeal to you?**

Corporate culture is defined as the attitudes, values, goals and practices that characterize a company. For example, a “win at all costs” philosophy or expectations of 50-hour workweeks may or may not be for you.

- **Does the job provide the security you need?**

While there are no guarantees in any business, jobs in high-growth industries may offer longer-term prospects than those that are downtrending. Another factor to consider is how critical your specific job is to the core business.

- **Is the job in a desirable location?**

Consider issues such as commute times, neighborhood safety and travel requirements.

- **Are the hours compatible with your lifestyle?**

Make sure you know what the regular hours are, as well as the expectations for working overtime to meet deadlines or production goals.

Evaluating a job offer is much like any other task—the harder you work at it, the better the results will be. So do your homework, and keep in mind that working in temporary assignments can give you an extra advantage when the time comes to pursue a permanent position. After all, what better way to evaluate a job, company and culture, and learn something about yourself in the process? It’s your move. Make it a wise one.

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