

YOU'VE decided to quit your job in search of greener pastures. You've applied for other positions and have even signed on the dotted line for a new attractive job offer.

So you tender your resignation — and your boss makes you a counter offer. It's markedly more money, so you'd be a fool not to take it, right? Wrong. Here are some key reasons why accepting a counter offer is bad for your professional development.

● **The odds are against you**
Research has shown that over 80% of people who chose to accept a counter offer and stayed with their original company were no longer in its employ six months later.

● **Your loyalty is now questionable**

Your intention to leave the company has already been made known to your superiors and possibly your colleagues as well. If a promotion was in the pipeline before you resigned, the likelihood of you getting it has decreased significantly because your employer will simply not want to invest the resources to groom you.

Likewise, should there be an opportunity for a salary increment come appraisal time, the company will think twice. In fact, since the counter offer was not planned or budgeted for, the extra money they are throwing at you to get you to stay on will probably be factored into your pay increment for next year.

● **The offer may be selfish**
Sometimes, employers make a counter offer for selfish reasons. They may "need" you to carry out your regular responsibilities as there is no one else who can take over your duties immediately. In the meantime,

Once you say, 'I quit' ...

... don't accept any counter offers — here's why



Provide feedback at every opportunity about your experience working in your current company, - Bloombergpic

they may already be searching for your replacement, or grooming someone else to take over your position. Then, once the other person is ready to come onboard, they will let you go.

● **There's no real change**

Many people leave their jobs because they cannot get along with their bosses, or because the company culture doesn't sit well with them. Perhaps your boss' leadership style is too top-down and there's no autonomy in your job.

The fact of the matter is that your increased compensation may placate you initially but soon, you will realise that the reasons that prompted you to resign in the first

place will resurface.

Chances are, you have already brought up your grievances to the management and nothing changed. Do you really want to work for a company that only "values" you and gives you what you are worth only when you threaten to resign?

● **Your relationships will change**

You may have confided in some of your colleagues about your intention to resign. Once word spreads, your colleagues may perceive you as "blackmailing" the company into giving you a salary hike or even a promotion.

Even if this was not a premeditated move on your part, it is natural for colleagues

to conclude that you suddenly changed your mind and decided to stay on because you were offered more money.

● **Your name may be blacklisted**

The fact that you have received a counter offer means you have already submitted your resignation to your current company. It is probably also safe to assume you have done so after signing the letter of offer from the new company.

If you accept the counter offer from your current company now, it will mean having to renege on your agreement with the new company. Once you sign on the dotted line, it's a binding contract.

Your reputation is at stake

because the new employer might blacklist you for not honouring the deal. And if your professional paths cross again sometime in the future, they are likely to view you negatively.

● **Manage grievances**

How best then to handle grievances before they escalate into a situation where you feel forced to pack your bags? Provide feedback at every opportunity about your experience working in your current company, during formal appraisals and informal one-on-one sessions with your supervisor.

If you want more opportunities to take on bigger projects or to alter your job scope, communicate this to your superior in a professional manner. In the worst-case scenario, you can approach the HR department about your concerns, asking for confidentiality, if necessary.

Try to salvage the situation early. If that fails, remember why it's never a good idea to accept a counter offer. Exit with professionalism and grace and start afresh with a new employer.
- Source: ST/ANN

■ **ARTICLE** by Kathleen Chew, assistant vice-president (Operations) of the Achieve Group.

■ **FOR** more on jobs, refer to category 515 in *Metro Classifieds*.