



Before You Quit Your Job

Everybody has the occasional impulse to quit their job out of anger. But just as most marriages don't end because of a single argument – and let's face it, jobs are a lot like marriages in many ways – neither should your job.

Easy, Don't Overreact

It's not always easy to get along with everyone at work. You may feel you have been treated unfairly. Or personality clashes may have caused anger and resentment. But if the reason you feel you want to quit is more a reaction to something that happened to you or around you, rather than a carefully thought-out decision based on the future of the relationship, then think it over before you take that step. Impulse is the worst reason of all to quit your job. You'll almost always regret it later if a life changing decision is fueled by pure emotions, especially if you feel as though you can't change your mind after telling everyone your quitting.

The Wrong Reasons to Quit

The first thing to ask yourself is this: am I quitting for emotional reasons, or for reasons that have more to do with my future? If the incident that has made you angry or hurt your feelings is an isolated one, then let things cool down before you make any job-related decisions. You may find that a calm conversation with the right person can put your feelings to rest. And, it may result in a change going forward. Too often anger or the need to lash out and gain attention for yourself brings consequences you will later regret. So find another productive way to express your immediate feelings – including taking some time off – and put off any career decisions until you see things with a clearer head.

The Right Reasons to Quit

The decision to quit should never be an impulsive one. Rather, it should be based solely on your future. Will you be able to work with the people around you going forward? What are the chances that things will change, either about your environment, your co-workers or your ability to handle things? Will your job take you forward toward your goals? How does it fill your immediate needs? These factors have nothing to do with anger or resentment.

Consider the Consequences of Quitting

Never has the old saying, "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush," been truer than it is about having a job. Unless you already have a new job arranged, quitting puts you in a crowded market full of other job seekers. The stakes of quitting are high, so make sure you make your decision not only in consideration of your future, but of your immediate financial needs, as well. Take time to talk to someone else in the organization about your decision, because they may be able to see past your emotions in a way that you can't, and might offer helpful advice that affects what you do next.

Most important, if you do decide to quit, do it professionally. A bad reference is almost impossible to overcome in the job market, so be sure you leave your current job with adequate notice and a professional letter of resignation. Burning bridges hurts only you, never the employer you're leaving behind. If you can keep emotion and attitude out of it completely, chances are good that you won't get bad marks when your next employer calls for a reference.