

Should you accept a counter-offer from your employer?

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After securing a new job, the next step is to submit your resignation to your current employer. But what happens if your employer counters with a compelling offer to make you stay? Is it wise to respond to this?

The statistics behind counter-offers

According to the annual salary survey conducted by Swiss recruitment firm Robert Walters, 51% of professionals would accept a counter-offer. The primary reasons for considering a counterproposal include a pay raise, a promotion, and increased flexibility.

War for talent

The competition for talent remains fierce. Organizations are struggling to attract and retain top talent, and when a highly valued employee decides to leave, employers often go to great lengths to retain them. Finding new staff is time-consuming and costly, so many organizations opt to make counter-offers in hopes of persuading employees to stay.

Why accept a counter-offer?

The most recent Robert Walters salary survey reveals that 18% of Swiss professionals have accepted a counter-offer in the past, and 51% would consider accepting one from their current employer. Key motivations include:

- **Pay raise:** 84% of respondents cited a pay increase as a decisive factor
- **Promotion:** 44% of respondents were enticed by opportunities for career advancement



- **Increased flexibility:** 32% of respondents valued increased flexibility. This could include flexible working hours, the ability to adjust work schedules to better suit personal commitments, and options for part-time work
- **More paid annual leave:** 31% of respondents found more paid annual leave appealing. Additional leave allows for better work-life balance, providing more opportunities for rest, travel, or spending time with family and friends
- **Remote work:** 24% said the opportunity to work remotely full-time could make them reconsider leaving
- **Additional training:** Access to extra education and training can be a significant incentive for 16% of Swiss respondents.

Christian Atkinson, Country Director at Robert Walters Switzerland, explains: "While the allure of immediate benefits like a pay raise or promotion can be strong, it is crucial to weigh these against your long-term career goals and job satisfaction."

Why decline a counter-offer?

Despite the attractive aspects of a counter-offer, 49% of professionals choose not to accept them. Reasons include:

- **No guarantee of future satisfaction:** 24% believe that a counter-offer does not ensure future job satisfaction
- **Long-term goals:** For 15% of respondents, the current job does not align with their long-term career aspirations.

Christian adds, "It's important to reflect on whether the reasons that led you to seek a new job in the first place will truly be addressed by a counter-offer."

The risks of accepting a counter-offer

Interestingly, 16% of employees who accepted a counter-offer leave their job within a year, while 23% remain with their employer for more than five years. This suggests that while some counter-offers may provide long-term solutions, they often do not.



Salary isn't everything

Before accepting a counter-offer, consider all factors carefully. Ask yourself:

- **Recognition:** Did you feel valued and recognized before announcing your departure?
- **Job satisfaction:** Will the increased salary compensate for the lack of job satisfaction?

"A higher salary may seem very attractive at first, but it should not be the sole deciding factor," Christian advises. "If you are not happy in your role, the extra money will not keep you satisfied in the long run."

Be selfish

Consider who benefits more from your stay: you or your employer? Don't be afraid to be a little selfish and choose the option that is best for your future career.

"Ultimately, your career decisions should prioritize your professional and personal growth. Compare all the advantages and disadvantages a counter-offer presents, and ensure your decision aligns with your long-term career aspirations," Christian concludes.

More information

For more tips and advice on career development, read Robert Walters' career tips and discover your worth with the digital Salary Survey tool.

Career tips: <https://www.robertwalters.ch/en/insights.html#cat=career-advice>

Digital salary survey tool: <https://www.robertwalters.ch/en/our-services/salary-survey.html>

About the Author

Christian Atkinson, Country Director at Swiss recruitment specialist Robert Walters, brings a wealth of expertise in executive recruitment and talent management to his role. His involvement on the Samba leadership council underscores his commitment to fostering professional growth and global networking for MBA graduates and alumni.

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