

Should I Leave My Current Job before Starting My New Job Search?

*By Nicole Callahan,
Recruiter*

Question: Should I leave my current job before starting my new job search?

Answer: The summer is wrapping up and people are starting to think about the long haul between Labor Day and Thanksgiving with no holiday away from work. [It is no surprise that people are getting back into the grind of work after the lighter days summer sometimes brings and the vacations summer often brings.](#)

What has surprised me the past two weeks, however, are the number of calls I have received from people who left their jobs and "took the summer off" before beginning their searches for new jobs. This is not good. The old adage is true - it is better to look for a job when you have a job. [You should NOT leave your job](#) (if possible) [before you begin your search for a new job.](#)

The most common reason people leave their current positions before looking for a new one is the fear of repercussion if your superiors learned that you were looking for a new job. You could be terminated, you could hurt people's feelings because they take your wanting to leave personally, and/or your work life could be made miserable by the people you (unintentionally) made unhappy. Despite these fearful possibilities, it is better to be employed when job searching.

Having a job makes you more attractive to a potential employer. It shows that you, at the very least, are indeed employable and capable of holding down a job. Additionally, it is an indication that you have qualities that are desirable to an employer, that you can get along with others, and that you are motivated to work.

Companies want to hire the best possible employees, and law firms are no different. Law firms want to bring the best [attorneys](#) they can to their team. And, there is an assumption, however true or untrue, that if you are not employed you are not the best.

This stigma against the unemployed can often outweigh other fantastic credentials a candidate may have. You may have graduated in the top 10% of your class from a top 10 law school, have great experience from a well-regarded firm, and present yourself impeccably during an interview. But, lingering in the back of an employer's mind is that terrible question - "Why did he leave his job?" Or worse - "Why was he forced to leave his job?"

Of course, there is also a big practical reason to stay at your current job until you find another one - money. Finding a new position that is a good fit for you can take time. Having to take the first offer that comes along, or take a job that you really do not want because you need a steady stream of income again may put you in a worse position than you were in previously. In addition, quickly looking for a new position again will make you look like a job hopper, which is not attractive to an employer.

Having a job when you are looking for a job puts you in a position of strength. You can confidently search for a new position, and take time to do so if needed. So, anyone out there considering a job move - don't quit your current job and "take the holidays off." Keep working, and start your job search now.

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