

Getting more out of less – do you have a good deal?

If you're in a business that's made some redundancies it's more than likely that those who remain will be expected to pick up the pieces. But how do you know when to be flexible and when your employer is taking liberties?

Michelle Lucas, our resident Career Coach shares some of the top tips she uses with her clients, asking the same questions

When times are tough, flexibility is key for an organisation as inevitably they have to try to get the same or more out of the resources they have. So if you are thinking about leaving simply because your organisation is expecting more from you than they used to, think again....the situation is likely to be the same in most other companies.

To manage these extra duties and stay on top of the situation, you need to be clear about your own priorities. For most people there's little point in keeping a job and losing a relationship because you've been working excessive hours. Consider what your limits are, so ask yourself ...

- How many hours can you work each day or week whilst maintaining your energy and enthusiasm for what you do and at the same time, giving your family enough of yourself too?
- How many times are you prepared to do lower grade work before it becomes demeaning, erodes your confidence and causes you to question or lose sight of your career goals?
- How much extra responsibility can you take on before you get sleepless nights or before you feel exploited?
- How much uncertainty can you cope with before you feel so unsettled that you can focus on little else?
- How much can you put up with from your boss or fellow workers before you think people are simply being rude?

Everyone's limits are different – there's no norm – but there is what feels right or wrong for you. So put some time aside to consider what your boundaries are. As you observe things changing make a note about the incident – so you can objectively track how things are shifting. Try to get regular reviews with your boss and ensure they are aware of how these incidents are impacting on you. Clarify how you would have preferred to have been treated and be clear about your tolerance levels.

In times of change managers are often overloaded themselves - so it's not that they don't care what happens to people, simply that they are so focused on other things that they overlook the impact it has on individuals. However, the good news is that when tackled appropriately most managers would rather adjust their behaviour than lose a good employee!

Whilst now is a difficult time to decide to leave employment - there will be a point where your sanity is more important than your job security! To avoid getting to this point, communication is key – yet if the organisation is not willing or able to listen then maybe it is time to vote with your feet and take your chances elsewhere?

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