

Doctors Orders
10 Things to Consider Before You Take a New Assignment

1. Do your homework on “you”

- Have I taken a realistic inventory of my personal interests and skill sets
- Is this new job or assignment really a good fit for me and my personality
- Make sure you know what you really want in your next job before moving too fast

2. Do your research on “the company”

- Go online or to library
- Understand basic company history, facts and current competitive situation in marketplace
- Know the key leaders of the firm

3. Know the history of the job

- Find out if there is an incumbent in the job you are considering
- If so, understand reasons position is open or being filled with new player
- Investigate the reporting structure – who is above and below you

4. Make sure you are a good cultural fit

- Incompatibility with corporate culture is #1 reason for job failure – not knowledge or experience
- Be realistic with yourself and insure you are comfortable with new company policies/values

5. Know who your new boss will be – insure good chemistry upfront

- Spend time with the new boss
- Make sure you are his/her choice for new position – not inherited or forced hire (Disney)
- Spend time with new boss in and out of office environment prior to starting new job
- Make sure you truly feel comfortable with new boss
- Make sure new boss is well liked and respected at current firm – he/she leaves and your dead

6. Understand the expectations for the new role

- Exactly what does the firm expect you to accomplish and how quickly
- Make sure you truly have what it takes to succeed in new role – don't fool yourself or oversell yourself into something you really can't or do not want to do
- If someone previously left the role, understand where they failed

7. Meet as many folks as possible

- If not offered by firm, ask to meet with peers and subordinates in advance of accepting new role
- Get wide array of attitudes and observations about your prospective new job from these meetings
- Try to get a feel for peer group receptivity to you and to you possibly being in this new role
- Be sure you are selling these folks just as you need to do with decision makers – they too may be part of the decision team

8. Ask lots of probing questions

- Make sure you understand what is and has really gone on in this role before you got there
- Folks from other departments can be key stakeholders in your ability to do your job – ask them what they think the key issues are that will impact you
- Be sure to have a complete perspective on what has gone on in your role prior to your candidacy

9. Get goals agreed to in advance

- Make sure you know *metrics of success*
- Clearly understand what you will be expected to accomplish
- Make sure you feel you will have the tools you need to succeed

10. Get it in writing

- Remember, money is won or lost before you get in the door
- Get as detailed a contract or offer letter as possible
- Consider every possible situation that can impact you unexpectedly:
 1. Merger or change in corporate ownership
 2. New boss
 3. Change in originally agreed upon duties
 4. *“It simply is not a good fit”*

