

Is job hopping bad for my resume?

Back in the day, once you left school or your place of education, you went out and got a job to pay your bills and to live your life. You didn't need to like what you did let alone love it. You fronted up every Monday to Friday morning, did your hours, ticked the box and collected your pay. You stayed at the job pretty much forever.... How miserable!

Thankfully most of us weren't born then. These days, you are more likely to have 17 different jobs over 5 different careers. That's a new job every 2 or so years. We have also realised that given we spend almost one third of our life at work, doing something that we actually enjoy makes for a much better life. If you can make good money doing it, even better!

However, moving jobs raises a number of questions. How will this look on my resume? If I have moved roles too many times it won't look great, will it? How long do I stay in a job I'm not happy in for the sake of how it will look on my resume?

To start, let's just acknowledge that resumes don't look the way that they used to. As an interviewer and employer, historically I tended to look for stability and loyalty. A resume that flowed with jobs that had alignment and a connection. In my view, this is not as important anymore. Let me put a disclaimer in here that every employer looks at a resume differently. I am a very people based leader -so what I look for will differ from what others looks for. In saying that, here is what is more important to me than years of tenure and job hopping:

1. Leaving reason vs reaching the 1-year mark

For some reason, many people feel they need to hit that the 1-year mark despite knowing they have made a wrong decision and are in the wrong job. This is a big mistake! As an employer, staying the 12 months is so much worse than only being there 3 months or less. After 12 months the company has poured a lot of time and training into you. You should be at the point where you are now actually independently doing the work that you've been getting paid to do all along. To leave after 12 months means your employer has to start all over again with recruiting, training and investing time and money. I would much prefer you leave at the 3-month mark. It is better to acknowledge that the role and/or company is not for you and go on your way not wasting anymore of your time or your employer's resources. Explaining this on your resume is what is really important. I love seeing people put the reason they left a job below the time spent there. It demonstrates decisiveness, transparency and confidence - all great traits to have.

2. Results

What did you actually achieve or deliver in your role? Anyone can go in each day, do the bare minimum and collect a pay packet. What is it that you worked for and delivered? Use numbers and statistics. What size portfolio did you look after? Did it grow? What were the results? Who did you look after? Explain why you were a great employee for the company!

3. Your Personality

Be yourself – on paper and in person. This is simply through choice of words. Anyone can fill pages with corporate buzz words or fancy over the top titles. I want to get to know you as a person and understand how well you will fit the culture of the team and business. What are your work ethics like? In what environment do you best work? What will you bring to the team and why are you the best person for this job? Be yourself, for both you and your employer's sake! Faking a personality in an interview is the worst thing you can do. You can't continue to fake your personality 5 days a week so make sure you are going to fit in and be happy before you take a job.

4. Innovation and Change

This is the future of every job! Your ability to innovate and improve things and your ability to create change and adapt to change is paramount. Highlight how you have done this in the past not just inside of work but also outside of work. Outside of work is the best way to demonstrate your innovative side as that is where you have complete control over what you want to do and how you want to do it. If you struggle in this area I suggest stop what you are doing right now and work on ways to improve this. I'm not even joking, THIS IS THE FUTURE! Don't be left behind.

5. Build Your Skill Portfolio

Stop chasing job titles or a pay packet. Spend some time to do an analysis of your core skills and tasks - work out which ones you love doing, which ones you don't mind doing and which ones you hate doing. You need to really understand yourself and find your passion. Once you truly understand what you love doing, it's a matter of getting more of those core skills in your job and increasing that percentage as high as you can until you are in your dream job doing what you love.

So, worry less about staying in a job just to reach an arbitrary time period or about how it will look on your resume. Put some time into you and work out what you truly love doing and how to get there. Then you'll find chasing a job title, packet and so-called job hopping is irrelevant after all!

When you meet or interview someone who really understands what they love doing, and better yet gets to do it every day, their whole face lights up. You can see the passion and excitement running through them! I find that these people always perform well – after all they have strongly invested every piece of themselves into doing what they love!

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