

THE EPIC FAIL SERIES: Quitting Gone Wrong



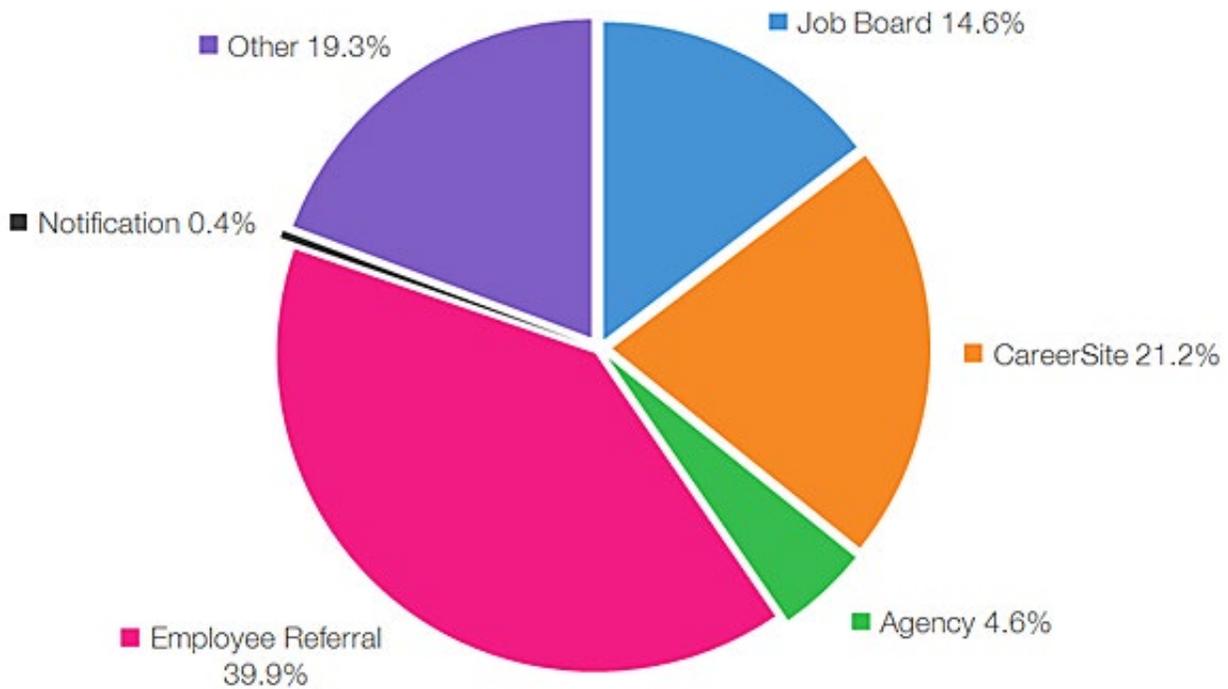


Introduction

Things not working out at your current job? Don't sweat it—it happens to everyone at some point. Maybe your salary is stagnant, or you don't get along with your boss. Maybe the daily grind just bores you, and you landed something more engaging elsewhere. Whatever the reason, there comes a time when every employee must bid farewell. And while you might be tempted to write "I QUIT" on a paper airplane and send it soaring into your manager's office, you've got to restrain yourself.

Why? Because the next gig might fizzle too, and you could be out pounding the pavement again sooner than you think. Only *relationships* endure, for better or for worse. That's why referrals account for almost 40% of all hires.¹ And that's why—no matter what's gone down at the workplace you're leaving behind—you need to make your exit in the most gracious, forward-looking way possible.

The following eBook outlines a few common and potentially hazardous mistakes people make when quitting their jobs. See how these errors may jeopardize your future—and learn why giving notice appropriately might be your ticket to getting ahead down the road.



¹ <http://www.jobvite.com/resources/jobvite-index/>



Mistake 1. The quick getaway

If you're unhappy in your current work environment, and you have someplace better to go, it's tempting to reveal your news and run. Rip it off quickly, like a Band-Aid, right? Wrong. Assuming you are a skilled worker who bears worthwhile responsibilities, you likely have unfinished business you will leave behind—and while you can't stay indefinitely to complete everything on your plate, you need to honor some commitments.

- Common work etiquette dictates that you provide a minimum of two weeks' notice. Only a few rare circumstances, like a new job that requires relocation, won't allow for that courtesy. Otherwise, stick out the two weeks.
- Don't leave anyone in the lurch. If you have time-critical or company-critical tasks remaining, step up to the plate. You can't walk out two days before a product launch or a big sales demo without planning ahead. Create a feasible timeline and delegate appropriately, so your colleagues are confident your projects will be wrapped up successfully after you depart.
- Suck it up and stay longer if you need to. Bear in mind that the work you were doing up until the moment you dropped the bomb was (and probably still is) valuable. Finish any projects you can, train your replacements, and do whatever's within your power to make for an easy transition. You're trying to keep professional contacts—which requires that you act professionally.

Mistake 2. The lying liar who lies

Pretending to quit may sound like a great idea. Whether you jumped the gun and were positive you'd get an offer, or maybe you just hoped for a counteroffer, don't give your boss a song and dance about leaving if it's not the straight truth.

If you're just feeling undervalued or afraid to divulge your real motives, resist the urge to lie.

- Never pretend to quit just to get more money. Not only are you endangering your existing job, but dishonesty discredits you and demeans the people with whom you work. If the fact of the matter is that you feel you deserve a higher salary, schedule a discussion with your manager. It's not quitting time yet.
- If you really are planning to leave, give your employers—you know, the people who took a chance on you and believed in you—the respectful truth about why you want to go. Whether you get a counteroffer or not, you maintain your integrity and a professional relationship with people who can have a tangible impact on your reputation.



Mistake 3. The manifesto

We have all been in work situations where we felt let down, walked on, and underpaid. The older we get, the more we understand how to manage these situations appropriately—but no matter your age or experience, you're bound to be faced with an incident that inspires you to throw down the gauntlet and dramatically storm out. Perhaps while making a speech.

- Let's be serious, though. Unless you were truly wronged—in a moral or legal sense—do yourself a favor, and don't play the victim. Quitting is a voluntary action. No one made you do it, so if you're committed to leaving, just go quietly and respectfully. Your decision stands. (But if you were morally or legally wronged, contact HR immediately.)
- Quitting is also a pretty permanent action. Be sure you have put honest and reasonable thought into the decision. Impetuous actions come from impetuous employees. Is impetuous the look you're going for on LinkedIn?

Mistake 4. The social tirade

We live in an era of social connectivity, where we share everything from pictures of breakfast to our political opinions on a daily basis. Announcing big life changes, like quitting, may seem like a justifiable announcement too, particularly if you are craving social support or vindication. Except that social statements are never really private.

- If you don't want former employers posting stuff about you online, do them the same courtesy. Word of mouth is fast, and the Internet doesn't forget. When your #iquit rant is trending, worldwide or even just within your network, you've overstepped a boundary.
- Be a good sport. If you're really itching to post something, do it like DeMarco Murray. When the talented NFL running back recently opted to leave the Dallas Cowboys for the Philadelphia Eagles, he thanked his former city and his fans on a giant billboard in Downtown Dallas. He also tweeted his gratitude—even when naysayers were publicly decrying his decision. But of course you don't have to buy a billboard to keep it classy, just don't #LiveTweet your exit interview.

* <http://www.sportingnews.com/nfl/story/2015-03-18/demarco-murray-dallas-cowboys-philadelphia-eagles-nfl-billboard-thank-fans>



Mistake 5. The flip-off

If you've heard the country classic, "Take This Job and Shove It," (or maybe its Dead Kennedys counterpart), you've likely been tempted to say it a time or two—particularly when you're fed up with what you were doing, you have a new job secured, or you'll be making more money. But bite your tongue. Sit on your hands. Remain calm.

- Burning bridges might feel satisfying, but it's rarely practical. Remember, you are never set for life. Even if your skills are in high demand now, labor markets change.
- If you become a job seeker again—and you probably will—you will be in the business of relationships. You never know when you will need a referral or a recommendation from someone you have worked with in the past. You have to be personable and respectful at all times.

Now...Learn from your mistakes

No one wants to be a "quitter." There's a negative connotation to the word, an implication that people who quit aren't up to a task and can't perform well. But you can change that perception. If you are voluntarily leaving one job for another, do so positively. Show people that you can be optimistic about where you're headed and appreciative of the investment others have made in you. You'll be seen as a person who makes things happen, and a contact worth keeping.

For more information on job seekers, their needs, and the technology that brings them to the right employers, visit www.jobvite.com