9 Telltale Signs It’s Time To Quit Your Job

By Travis Bradberry, Ph.D.

If you’re like most people, you spend more of your valuable waking hours at work than you do anywhere else. It’s critical that you spend your time at the right company, pursuing the right opportunity.

Choosing to leave a job can be a gut-wrenching decision. You need to know that you’re making the right choice.

Here are the telltale signs that it might be time to move on:

You dread going to work.

We all get a case of the Mondays from time to time, but if even thinking about your job fills you with dread, it’s probably time to leave. Don’t keep telling yourself you’re having a bad week if what you really have is a job that’s a bad fit.

You know more than your boss.

It’s frustrating to work for someone you believe to be less skilled or knowledgeable than you are, but the real issue is deeper than that. If you can’t trust your company’s leadership to make good decisions and steer the ship in the right direction, you’ll be living in a constant state of anxiety. And, if you’re right that your bosses don’t know what they’re doing, you could find yourself out of a job when the company goes under.

The company is circling the drain.

A recent study showed that 71 percent of small businesses close their doors by their tenth year in operation. If you’re worried about your company’s health, there’s a good chance you’re right. Watch for clues, like suddenly needing management approval for even minor expenses, an increase in closed-door meetings, or an increased number of upper-management departures. If you suspect that the business is in trouble, it may be time to leave. If you wait until the company closes, you’ll be in the job market competing against your former co-workers.

You’re out of the loop.

Does it seem like you’re always the last one to hear about what’s going on at work? If you’re left out of meetings, rarely get face time with upper management, and have never even heard of the big project everyone else is so excited about, that could mean that your bosses just see you as a body filling a desk, rather than as a valuable contributor. That’s bad news for your career and may mean it’s time to leave.

You’ve lost your passion.

Even if you love the company, your boss, and your co-workers, it’s not worth the effort if you hate the work. Passion is a necessary ingredient for success. If you’re unenthusiastic or even indifferent about the work you do, it’s time to reassess your career.

You have a bad boss who isn’t going anywhere.

Bosses come and go, which is why conventional wisdom says that it’s best to just wait a bad boss out. But that’s not always the right move. If you have a bad boss who’s well-liked by upper management, it may be time to leave. In addition to making you miserable every day, a two-faced manager who’s loved by the higher ups can wreak havoc on your career by taking credit for your work, bad-mouthing you to others, and blaming you for things that go wrong.
There’s no room for advancement.

It’s easy to get stuck in a job and, if you love what you’re doing, getting stuck can be comfortable. However, it’s important to remember that every job should enhance your skills, and add to your value as an employee. If you’re not learning anything new, and are just puttering around doing the same old thing while people around you get promotions and plum assignments, it’s time to look elsewhere.

Your health is suffering.

No paycheck is worth sacrificing your health. Job stress can lead to depression, insomnia, headaches, frequent illness, and worse. Don’t let this happen to you.

Your personal life is suffering.

Whether you work too many hours or you’re stressed and miserable when you come home, it’s time to leave when your job starts affecting your personal life.

Bringing It All Together

Staying in a bad job for too long can be very harmful to your career. If you’ve tried everything you can think of to make things better and haven’t seen any big changes, it may be time to move on.

If you do decide to leave, be smart about it. Don’t burn bridges by venting about all of the reasons you’re leaving. That accomplishes nothing, and could even haunt you later. Instead, simply explain that you’re leaving to pursue another opportunity, and then do so graciously.

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Dr. Travis Bradberry is the award-winning coauthor of Emotional Intelligence 2.0 and the cofounder of TalentSmart® the world’s leading provider of emotional intelligence tests and training serving more than 75% of Fortune 500 companies. His bestselling books have been translated into 25 languages and are available in more than 150 countries.