



# SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO?

## SURVEY: WHAT PEOPLE REALLY WANT FROM THEIR EMPLOYERS

### WHY YOU SHOULD READ THIS

- In the last year, 79% of participants in our proprietary survey thought about leaving their current employer.
- A combination of pay, opportunity, and work environment are keys to attracting and retaining people.
- Leaders' and managers' day-to-day actions can support attraction and retention—or the reverse. Either way, every manager's action either supports retention or frustrates it.
- The spate of recent M&A activity and stock run-ups in the energy industry has created a new class of employee – the working wealthy. Key to retention is continuing to make their work interesting and challenging.

The energy industry faces a significant decline in skilled staff. As a result, attraction and retention of employees is a critical issue.

In November, we surveyed selected clients and contacts of our firms, and of the Ross Smith Energy Group. Recipients were also encouraged to email the survey to other potential participants. All respondents were granted anonymity to protect their privacy and encourage forthright answers.

Participants who had joined a new employer told us about their decision to move, while those who had stayed with their present employer explained what had kept them loyal. Please see the Appendix of this report for detailed findings and data.

### AUTHORS

#### **Coleen McKeon, MBA, CHRP • President • McKeon People Strategies Ltd.**

Coleen has a BA from the University of Western Ontario and an MBA from Queen's University at Kingston. Coleen's consulting firm specializes in People Strategy/Total Rewards design, development and implementation. Her company has worked with a variety of organizations, predominantly in the energy industry, to help align reward practices with business strategies. Specifically, she has worked with many companies by developing long-term incentive plans to ensure effective retention programs in the competitive oil and gas industry.

( 403-998-0212 • cmckeon@shaw.ca )

#### **Lia Bosch, MSOD, CHRP • Founder • Lead Consultant • Creative Edge Consulting & Books**

Lia has 24 years of experience in human resources and management helping organizations identify innovative ways to optimize both business and human potential. She is contributing author in Lessons from the Field: Applying Appreciative Inquiry, and has authored articles for local and international journals. Lia holds a Master of Science Degree in Organization Development from Pepperdine University, California. ( 403-286-2050 • bosch@creativ-edge.com )

### ENERGY INVESTMENT HANDBOOK

Carey Arnett, B.Comm.  
Business Development Manager  
Energy Investment Handbook  
403-294-6495  
carnett@rseg.com

Samir Kayande, MBA, PEng.  
Analytics Manager  
Energy Investment Handbook  
403-294-6491  
skayande@rseg.com

**ROSS SMITH ENERGY GROUP LTD.**  
403.294.9111

### WHY MOVE?

First, let’s look at those participants who changed jobs in the last year. Why did they move? Could their employers have prevented the loss?

We know that pay matters to all employees; that consideration being relatively equal, what other factors become tipping points for employees considering a move?

In the survey we invited free-form answers regarding participants’ attractions to a new employer. Only one individual listed pay as the sole factor. Most cited a combination of factors – including pay, talent management and work environment. About 40% of respondents cited a combination of fixed pay (base salary), benefits (health plans, vacation, etc.) and variable pay (bonus, options, etc.).

#### WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO A NEW EMPLOYER?

**SURVEY SAYS:**

Job Characteristics/Factors	Percentage
Talent Management	26%
Variable Pay	18%
Work Environment	18%
Benefits	16%
Business Strategy	11%
Fixed Pay	7%
Other	4%

However, the majority of participants listed pay along with other issues – such as interesting work, flexibility and career opportunities – as the reason for their moves. For example, one individual summed up the reason for his/her move as “career path, development opportunity, the right kind of work, and compensation.”

“Better opportunities for advancement or growth” at the new employer figured in 26% of comments. For example:

- an opportunity to lead an exploration group;
- greater ability to work on different resource plays within a larger sized company;
- diverse opportunities for interesting and autonomous work; and
- the specific requirements of the job.

These answers confirm that an opportunity for using one’s talents coupled with appropriate pay makes the difference. Every employee defines good opportunities differently, which is why talent management and work environment are so critical to retaining and engaging employees.

These answers complement years of exit interviews conducted by the authors of this report. People will state that they have left an organization simply for more money elsewhere (either base salary, bonus potential or stock options), as this is tangible and more easily communicated. However, when we dig deeper, the fundamental reasons often are related to the

## SUGGESTION BOX

### Talent Management

- Assign an aspiring geologist currently in a technologist role the task of prospecting in an area that has a greater chance for success.
- Encourage a financial analyst to lead the meeting on the new financial practices that he/she was responsible for researching and developing.
- Allow employees to select and attend the training course of their choice.
- Have employees share learnings from a course with the rest of their team.
- Ask employees what project they are interested in working on and then help them become involved with that project.
- Encourage cross-discipline learnings – have a geologist be a guest speaker at an IT meeting; have a finance person speak to an operations team about ‘the bottom line’.
- Make career development part of every annual performance review
- Actively involve more junior employees in presentations to senior management and/or customers.

perceived or real lack of growth opportunities down the line – and correspondingly to earn the level of compensation the individual feels entitled to. Another common response relates to work environment (communication, leadership, etc.).

In a competitive labour market, such as the energy industry is experiencing in Alberta, Texas and Colorado, a competitor will exploit the employee’s discontent by offering one or a combination of incentives – more money, a more appealing picture of future possibilities, an alternative work culture. A minority of people will move only for the money; most will move for more money and the perceived opportunity to improve their job prospects and/or work environment.

Interestingly, current employers may have been able to retain these employees by recognizing and addressing their concerns.

**WHY STAY?**

When we asked participants to tell us about what keeps them around, pay (variable, fixed, benefits) topped the list at 34%. However, in comments submitted by participants, pay was almost always coupled with other drivers such as talent management and/or work environment. Talent management was next-highest on their lists (22%), with “interesting work” and “challenge” quoted most often.

The “other” category, which accounted for 24% of comments, reflected a variety of issues that fell outside the typical reward elements. Within this category, answers ranged from valuing co-workers to

accepting a lucrative retention package offered during a merger or takeover. Unfortunately, many of the latter plans compel people to stay only until they have been paid out – then all the other factors described previously come back into play. Retention plans can work if designed with careful individual consideration – rarely does a retention bonus blanket approach deliver the long-term retention goal.

Many employees who ultimately stayed with their employers admitted that work environment issues had caused them to think about leaving. Business strategy decisions were high on the lists, with participants citing company direction, performance and growth, and frustration with integrating merged organizations.

Note that the key factors that keep people around are the same as those that motivate people to leave – talent management, pay, and work environment.

Employers are able to retain more talent by managing these factors effectively. Manage them poorly though, and they’ll drive people right out the door!

**Money**

Energy companies offer very lucrative compensation packages by comparison to most other industries. People employed within the industry set high standards of living for themselves. Consequently, compensation is an important factor in employee retention. We coached an unhappy employee of a mid-size producer who repeatedly said that he can’t afford to leave despite being unhappy about his role; the stock options were worth too much for the individual to leave on the table. Several respondents to the survey said the same thing. One person said, “I won’t leave until we sell.”

Depending on career stage, other wealth accumulation items, such as pension, factor into move consideration. In one situation, a company had a line on a great fit – and the person wanted to join. However, once he calculated the commuted value of his pension in his defined benefit plan, there was no way he could leave as the hiring company simply could not justify making up

**WHAT MAKES CURRENT EMPLOYEES STAY?**

**SURVEY SAYS:**

<b>Job Characteristics/Factors</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Other	24%
Talent Management	22%
Variable Pay	19%
Work Environment	13%
Fixed Pay	8%
Business Strategy	7%
Benefits	5%
Performance & Recognition	2%

the difference of what would have been 'left on the table.' Clearly this was not an optimal working relationship for the incumbent organization. This person wanted to be elsewhere. The golden handcuffs, although effective at retention, weren't likely going to be effective in the aftermath of his decision in terms of engagement or output.

On the other hand, many of the employees we coach also weigh the intangible benefits of the current employer. For example, one manager struggling with the decision to move to vice-presidency with another employer felt reluctant to leave because of her faith in the management team of the current employer. She felt that the current employer would eventually come through on the same type of promotion. Clearly, strong and effective relationships had been built that could carry this individual over the rough patches.

**Thinking of  
Greener Pastures...  
20% of participants  
who stayed with  
their employer in the  
last year either  
said they "constantly"  
or "often" think  
about leaving,  
while 59% said they  
think about it  
"occasionally."**

## Working wealthy

The high number of mergers and acquisitions in the last few years, and also the value of stock options during a prolonged period of share-price increases, have created another phenomenon in the industry – the working wealthy. People don't need the money but stick around because they are having fun at work. These people want to be paid fairly but ultimately the challenge of the work gets them to stay. One very wealthy CEO of a small E&P company once said, "When I stop having fun, I'm out of here."

## Environment

In addition, when people focus less on compensation, they have more time and energy for business issues. The survey indicated that work environment issues were high on their list. More people were also focused on business performance and growth. They want to be part of a winning team. If they don't see a future for the company, they don't see a future for themselves.

## THE ROVING EYE

The survey results confirm our findings over the years: A company's attraction, retention, and engagement strategy will be more effective if it focuses on three key employee desires: to be paid competitively, for talents to be nurtured, to work in a respectful environment.

It bears repeating: focusing on base pay alone won't achieve satisfactory results. The totality of employee experiences at a company will drive decisions to stay or leave. That said, a great environment will rarely compensate for sub-standard pay.

Of these three issues (pay, talent management, work environment), pay is the easiest to manage on a day-to-day basis. Talent management and work environment issues require intense daily focus and often behavioral changes on the part of managers – and that's not easy

### **Pay (including bonuses, stock options, benefits)**

Employees in the energy industry tend to have a strong network of friends and colleagues who share information about compensation programs across companies. Like all rumor mills, the accuracy is hit-and-miss. While communicating base pay is easy, bonus programs are often harder to understand. For example, in the past two years, companies that base bonuses on market performance have had higher payouts than companies that use operational metrics (such as cost containment or reserve replacement).

### **Rumors**

Ongoing internal communication of these differences is critical to prevent employees from becoming upset and

examining options. When it comes to pay, the old saying “information is power” rings true. Base pay increases over the past couple of years have been higher than many long standing trends. Finticky markets have a major impact on stock-option programs. Sustained high prices positively hit bonus programs where income related measures prevail. Therefore in this industry it is also critical that companies undertake regular (at least annual) reviews of their overall pay-related programs to ensure they are competitive. Annual and long-term bonus programs must be competitive in design and possibility for payout.

Most energy companies participate in local market surveys. Many also participate in industry networks. However, employees and front-line managers are not always aware of the efforts and results of the competitive studies. While the results of these studies are often confidential, non-confidential summary data often provides meaningful information.

## **SUGGESTION BOX**

### **Communicating Compensation Programs**

- Send a memo to all employees from the CEO that outlines the company’s pay philosophy and commitment to rewarding competitively, supported by evidence and statistics rather than platitudes.
- Senior managers can meet with employees specifically to discuss compensation matters, particularly during the regular pay-increase cycle.
- Use whatever communication media works in the organization
  - audiovisual (at a town hall meeting)
  - print (brochures, letters, memos)
  - personal (large or small gatherings; one-on-one meetings)
  - electronic (e-mail, kiosks, voice-mail, personalized total compensation statements).
- Include information about pay philosophy, market study participation, general findings, market intelligence, etc.

### **Communication**

Candor is important. Employees ought to know that the company participates in surveys. They also need to understand a few basics about the findings – such as some companies paying more for a given position and some, less.

The free-form survey comments indicated that employees don’t often understand how their compensation is determined.

### **Talent Management**

People want to know that what they do is meaningful: that it impacts positively on someone else, the team or company results. Talent management has two important elements:

- (1) aligning meaningful work with employee talents; and
- (2) effectively communicating employee importance.

From one view, such frou-frou issues distract managers from their core job of running the business; in another, managing these issues is running the business.

## Work Environment

Often, managers wait until people have decided to leave to find out what would have kept them around, gaining information from the exit interview.

A proactive – rather than reactive – practice that we have found useful is the “retention interview.” Every couple of months, managers ask people about how things are going. Sample questions include:

- What do you think about the direction the company is heading?
- What else do you need to know about that direction?
- What’s the greatest challenge you face with your current work? What ideas do you have for solutions?
- How can I support you in your work or goals?
- What do you need from me?
- What would you like to do next?
- What do you value most about what the company offers?
- What else would make you happier and more productive?

These interviews need not be formal or lengthy; in fact, they need to be part of the normal work day. An informal chat over coffee can be effective as long as the topic is approached intentionally.

As with all feedback, the key is to act – sometimes that means telling someone that the company just can’t meet his/her expectations, then preparing for the consequences.

Work environment and culture are often seen as somebody else’s responsibility, or as expensive, time-wasting activities such as picnics and parties. We believe that work environment starts at the top of an organization, permeates throughout, and manifests itself in thousands of day-to-day interactions. Not all organizational cultures are suited to all potential employees. But even a hard-driving, results-focused culture benefits from regularly checking in with employees and adjusting. In our experience, manager behaviors such as the “Day-to-Day Checklist for Leaders” improve engagement and aid retention.

## SUGGESTION BOX

### Basic Communication

- Have new employees meet one-on-one with senior management.
- Once a month ask your staff: “What one thing could I do better for you.”
- Get together with employees you interact with the least
- Enter and leave by different routes so you interact with people you wouldn’t otherwise see.
- When someone starts a new project, assign a specific time to get together to talk about it.
- Show you are listening with body language and facial expressions.
- Affirm understanding verbally.
- Ask for clarification and use “we” and “us” rather than “I” and “you”

## DAY-TO-DAY CHECKLIST FOR LEADERS

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### Today, have you...

- Told someone you appreciated their work on a job well done?
  - Asked someone what they think about the direction of the project they are working on?
  - Encouraged someone to make their own decisions about how they do their work?
  - Asked someone how things are going for them personally?
  - Told someone to go home early for a well-deserved break?
  - Taken actions to help someone learn something new or increase the challenge or responsibilities in their work?
  - Asked someone what they thought about the company's direction, vision and/or values?
  - Communicated your expectations of someone's work?
  - Outlined the company's and/or your team's direction?
  - Asked someone what would make them happier and more productive in their jobs?
  - Asked someone why your company is a great place to work?
  - Asked someone how you can support them in doing their work?
  - Checked that you have been fair and equitable in your compensation practices?
  - Simply said, "Thank you".
  - Let someone do what they needed to do.
  - Recognized that one thing that makes someone unique and valuable to your team/company?
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## DAY-TO-DAY EMPLOYEE CHECKLIST

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### Today, have you...

- Told your manager you appreciated his/her support?
- Asked about your performance?
- Told others what you need from them in order to be most effective in your job?
- Appreciated at least one thing that your company offers?
- Told someone you appreciated their work on a job well done?
- Asked about the company's direction, vision and values?
- Asked how your work can support the company's growth and success?
- Told others about the great things your company has to offer?
- Volunteered to take on a project or assignment beyond your current abilities?

## **SURVEY ON ATTRACTION AND RETENTION**

As stated previously, our survey found that **total compensation issues** rank very high among employees' reasons for leaving. However, we also found that **talent management and work environment** played a major role in employee's decisions. The lesson that we drew is that pay must be competitive, but opportunities and culture could tip the balance between leaving and staying.

The older our survey respondent, the more important soft issues such as workplace culture seemed to be.

In our experience, employees have a wealth of ideas and knowledge about what's working well and what's not. Most also want an opportunity to make things better. Those companies that listen, learn, and let their people act on that knowledge understand the secret to keeping people engaged.

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## APPENDIX

### Why move, why stay?

In the survey, we asked participants to tell us about their employment experience in the last year. For those who had joined a new employer, we asked questions about their decision to move; while for those who had stayed, we asked about what kept them around.

### Survey Says...

A total of 109 people responded to the survey, of which 27% said they had joined a new employer in the last year or so and 73% had stayed put.

A large part of the participants (71%) were over 40 years of age and primarily male (67%). Almost half the respondents (49%) were employed by large E&P companies, with the next largest group (22%) employed by a varied group related to the energy industry including government, consulting, pipeline, and investment research and banking. Sixty-nine percent of the companies in which respondents were employed were publicly-traded firms.

Survey participants represented a broad range of disciplines and positions. Those with supervisory, management and executive responsibilities accounted for 37% of participants.

Although there were several common themes among these groups, each brought a unique perspective. The findings outlined below describe the common themes and the significant differences among various groupings of participants.

### Competitive Pay is Essential

When we examined the job characteristics most important overall to participants in the survey, three key pay elements made the top-five list – base salary, equity incentives, and bonus potential. “Feel” of the company and flexibility/autonomy were also on the top-five list, which indicates that the employment experience is not all about pay. However, in the context of attraction and retention and in this aggressive marketplace, pay needs to be competitive as a starting point.

## SAMPLE SURVEY QUESTIONS

### Moved to New Employer in last year

- What attracted you to the new employer?
- What three things could have your former employer done to keep you around?
- How satisfied are you with your current employer?

### Stayed with Employer

- In the last year or so, have you considered leaving your current employer?
- What is the single most important factor that keeps you at your current employer?
- What three other things should your current employer do that would ensure that you stay?

## PARTICIPANTS BY DISCIPLINE/POSITION

Position Grouping	Percentage
Executive	19%
Administrative Professional (Land, HR, Legal, Financial)	19%
Management/Supervisory	18%
Engineering, Geology & Geophysics	18%
Support (Technical and Administrative)	17%
Other	8%

*Employees who switched jobs* ascribed greater importance to vacation time, moving flexibility/autonomy out of the top five. The importance of vacation time and company “feel” has much to do with the job-search process. For example, it is accepted practice to negotiate vacation entitlement when moving to a new employer, especially for experienced employees.

Vacation is a tangible benefit that employees value highly. When joining a new firm, they want to remain at least at that same level of holiday entitlement. Some managers will do what it takes to get someone on board. In one company with a strict vacation policy, when vacation was a “make-or-break” deal in hiring new employees, managers were willing to make side deals with new employees to grant additional vacation days beyond official company policy. Until people join the company, they are concerned with the base employment deal, i.e. the terms of the role (and sometimes title) and of the compensation package, including vacation.

### What’s Important to Different Positions?

Once again, base salary topped every group’s top-five list. The most significantly different group was support staff (both technical and administrative positions). Pay and benefits topped this group’s list.

The top-five lists of the other three groups – supervisory, technical professionals, and non-technical professionals – reflected a mixture of pay, work environment, and talent management issues. Equity incentives were high on the lists at either No. 2 or 3 for all three groups. Non-technical professionals tended to care more about work environment issues than the other groups.

In our coaching work, the biggest complaint we hear from technical professionals such as geologists is that they are encumbered by processes and meetings. They often say, “just leave me alone and let me find oil and gas.” In the 1980s, the majors in the industry were the first to create separate career ladders for technical or management focused people. Those who stayed in the technical ladder expect to get paid well, continue to grow in their responsibilities and have the freedom to work on technical problems. The survey shows just that.

Those people who choose to be on a management track see the world from a different perspective. There is always a next rung for these people to strive for and hence career progression is highly valued. The people we coach in management roles often strategize with us about how to get into the coveted executive circle. However, their effectiveness in that circle depends on their fit with the company and its culture. One up and coming manager stayed with the takeover company because he felt that his skills were well suited to the role they created for him. In addition, he liked the culture of the takeover company. Two years later, he is still there and has said, “I love this place and believe in its future. I know I can make a difference in this company.”

In our compensation consulting work, we have seen a rise in broad based equity compensation plans that extend participation to technologists and administrative support positions; however,

#### JOB CHARACTERISTICS MOST IMPORTANT TO PARTICIPANTS

Participants Overall (106)	Mean
1. Base Salary	18.3
2. Bonus Potential	11.5
3. Equity Incentive	11.3
4. “Feel” of Company	10.8
5. Flexibility/Autonomy	9.0

Participants who Joined New Employer (26)	Mean
1. Base Salary	18.0
2. Bonus Potential	12.6
3. “Feel” of Company	11.7
4. Vacation	11.2
5. Equity Incentive	9.9

Participants who Stayed with Employer (80)	Mean
1. Base Salary	18.4
2. Equity Incentive	11.8
3. Bonus Potential	11.1
4. “Feel” of Company	10.5
5. Flexibility/Autonomy	9.6

#### JOB CHARACTERISTICS MOST IMPORTANT TO PARTICIPANTS (BY POSITION)

Supervisory (40)	Mean
1. Base Salary	18.3
2. Equity Incentive	12.9
3. “Feel” of Company	12.3
4. Career Progression	11.3
5. Bonus Potential	10.5

Non-Technical Professionals (26)	Mean
1. Base Salary	17.8
2. “Feel” of Company	12.8
3. Equity Incentive	10.4
4. Career Progression	10.2
5. Flexibility/Autonomy	9.8

Technical Professionals (20)	Mean
1. Base Salary	17.1
2. Equity Incentive	14.1
3. Bonus Potential	12.6
4. Team Members	11.5
5. Flexibility/Autonomy	10.8

Support (20)	Mean
1. Base Salary	19.7
2. Bonus Potential	15.0
3. Vacation	14.8
4. Benefits	9.9
5. Team Members	8.2

Note: Green shading means that at least three of the groups ranked the characteristic in the top five.

these positions still receive a relatively small part of the compensation pie in relation to technical and management positions. People in these positions are still trying to achieve the level of compensation they feel they deserve. The survey confirms the importance of compensation, although again the intangibles show up. It seems that regardless of organizational level, people need to see a future possibility, feel part of the culture and environment and know they are paid competitively (even if it's not as high as they would like!).

### Expectations Change with Age

As expected, when we reviewed the job characteristics results by age groups, we found some differences in their top-five lists. Career progression was higher on the list of younger employees. Career progression dropped off the list for those over 50.

Vacation made the top-five list only for the 18-30 year olds – and was high on their list at number 3.

Older employees have usually maxed out on allowable vacation time, and it is standard for them to retain vacation allotment when switching employers. Equity incentives moved way up on the list at No. 2 for the 41-50 year olds, while it dropped just below No. 5 for those over 50. Although base salary and bonus potential made their top-five list, also important for the over-50 group were work environment issues such as feel, team members, and flexibility/autonomy.

These results are consistent with a normal career progression. Younger employees starting out seek opportunities. As these employees reach their 40s they have typically established a stake in an organization and focus more on wealth accumulation, hence the focus on equity incentives. This period is also considered their maximum earning potential years. In addition, it is finally occurring to them that retirement is no longer just a possibility – it will in fact one day happen. Suddenly pension plans carry more value than in their earlier years.

As employees move into their 50s, the opportunities for career progression get fewer and perhaps they are more financially secure. As a result, this group may look for a better fit with the company and its work

environment. For example, the marginal utility of additional compensation declines with increasing compensation: the difference between \$150,000 and \$170,000 is less than the difference between \$40,000 and \$60,000.

“It’s now or never,” a 40-year-old man once told us about making a move to a start-up. He perceived this opportunity as his last chance to become a key player in a small company with great upside potential though stock options. Thinking about building a nest egg for retirement was higher on this person’s mind rather than career progression.

At the other end of the spectrum, a 55-year-old employee at a mid-sized company turned down a promotion choosing to stay in a mentorship role for more junior geologists. In turning down the promotion, his response to the Vice President of Exploration was, “The company has been good to me. It’s time for someone younger to have the chance.”

#### JOB CHARACTERISTICS MOST IMPORTANT TO PARTICIPANTS (BY AGE)

Ages 18 – 30 N = 12	Mean
1. Base Salary	15.4
2. Career Progression	15.1
3. Vacation	12.5
4. Equity Incentive	10.3
5. Flexibility/Autonomy	8.8

Ages 41 – 50 N = 42	Mean
1. Base Salary	19.5
2. Equity Incentive	13.1
3. Bonus Potential	11.9
4. “Feel” of Company	10.6
5. Career Progression	8.5

Ages 31 – 40 N = 19	Mean
1. Base Salary	16.3
2. Bonus Potential	13.1
3. Career Progression	10.1
4. Equity Incentive	9.7
5. “Feel” of Company	9.4

Ages 51 Plus N = 33	Mean
1. Base Salary	18.7
2. “Feel” of Company	13.0
3. Team Members	11.7
4. Bonus Potential	11.5
5. Flexibility/Autonomy	10.5

## QUOTES FROM SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

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### What attracted you to the new employer?

- More fun/opportunity/leverage in small company.
- Multi-national employer, excellent people and opportunities.
- Dynamic, growing, exciting, lots to learn.
- Start-up, flexibility, style.
- Salary, pay for performance, profit sharing, 10-year expiry on options. Interesting, autonomous work.
- Multi-national employer, excellent people and opportunities.
- Increase in base salary, larger size company meant greater ability to work different plays.

### What 3 things could your former employer have done to keep you there?

- Nothing. The company culture was not good although the people were great. It was all about the shareholders and not the employees which I do not agree with.
- Better option plan. Real office instead of cubicle. A pay-for-performance plan.
- Performance feedback; open communication; more respect for employees.
- Give advancement opportunities. Share the incentive pie outside of management. Taken an interest in individual people.
- Opportunity for senior advisory position. Evidence of project success and funding.
- Promote. Manage. Resolve issues.

### What would make you happier and more productive in your job?

- \$100 oil.
- Knowing that management has a clear and achievable strategy for success, allowing me to concentrate on what I need to do to play my part.
- Having more staff - good help is hard to find.
- More responsibility, busier work day.
- Too many companies are being run (ruined) by HR. We're being killed by things like diversity training, sensitivity training, touchy-feely training, safety meetings, meetings, meetings - goal setting meetings - oh and did I mention meetings? Enough with the meetings!!!
- Working for the good of the company not just the employee.
- More flexibility, better wages.
- The company has struggle financially under the burden of some strategic decisions that have not worked out. I don't like being on a losing team, even if our division is succeeding.
- As a result of being taken over by a larger company in 2Q 2006, I will be much happier when the transition is completed and I will be more productive if we adopt the best business practices of the two organizations.
- More proactive business development strategy.
- I have a reasonable base salary, full autonomy in what I think is important to pursue/accomplish and I choose not to get involved in office politics. Thus, I require nothing more at this time.

- Higher salary, more trusting senior management.
- Clearer expectations.
- If all employees were treated equally and fairly – our company only rewards the people who they feel directly impact their bonus and the bottom line, ie; geologists, geophysicists, engineers and managers. The rest they couldn't care less about.
- More recognition for going above and beyond my identified job function.
- Knowing that the company I am working for appreciates the effort and quality of work that I do and is willing to compensate me for that.
- Clearer role definition – it is defined but there seems to be overlap with others that can cause frustration.
- More resources to properly do my job and enable a better work/life balance.
- I find I'm not challenged anymore.
- More autonomy from the parent company.
- Less painful 'processes.'
- A more considerate CEO.
- Better communication from management regarding policy and direction.

### **What is the single most important factor that keeps you at your current employer?**

- Golden handcuffs: excellent salary and benefits.
- Great people to work with.
- Money.
- Belief in the organization, business plan and people.
- Feeling appreciated by the employer.
- Strong desire to grow organization. Personal challenges. Treated with respect.
- The fit with the job.
- Pension & work/life balance.
- Challenging role with lots of variety.
- excellent remuneration, largely good co-workers, and meaningful projects to work on.
- International and strategic exposure.
- Company is a nice size, work is varied and I get to know everyone also the company has a good reputation.
- Autonomy, opportunity to make a difference.
- Belief in company and their position in the market. Vision, mission and values of company. Ownership options available. Love the environment at work.
- I am on a transition team that is holding a very nice severance package on it at the end.
- Going to give the acquiring company a chance to show me what they stand for and if it is a place that I would like to work.
- Commitment to project completion.
- My supervisor - he supports and appreciates me and I trust him. He challenges me and inspires me.
- Manager - actually cares about employees.

### **What 3 other things should your current employer do that would ensure that you stay?**

- Offer incentives to everyone in the company Respect everyone in the company Stop micro-managing every step we take and let us do our jobs.
- Show that I am appreciated i.e. reward for performance Ownership of challenging projects Supervisory experience.
- Enable me to progress, grow, take on more responsibility - do not put limits on my role. Reward individual's contribution to the company fairly and less selectively. Retain my supervisor - if he leaves then I will more than likely leave as well.
- Give me a role I enjoy (i.e. I feel I contribute to the company in a meaningful and productive manner). The current company is too bureaucratic - motivation killer. This could be improved. Lay me off with the full severance package. Sweet!
- Don't mess with what's working now, change what needs changing
- Maintain current culture Maintain opportunity for involvement in decisions Maintain salary/bonus/options structure.
- Cut through needless process and red tape. Treat all employees fairly and equitably. Ditch the cubicles.
- Communicate directly with all team members as a leader and a 'person', not just those who make the majority of the decisions in the group. Value all employees no matter what level, and prove this in bonuses/salary raises/etc.
- More equitable employee practices across the organization. More actively align culture with stated values and objectives Improve performance management practices to provide better ways to reward performance.

### **Why have you or have you not considered changing employers?**

- Being in transition sucks.
- The company I was employed by has been purchased by a larger competitor whose management has made it clear that the only employees they value are the professionals - administrative support are not important and not worth retaining.
- Company is too big, and doesn't treat people equally, doesn't understand teams.
- Calls from headhunters and uncertainty regarding the current employer.
- Don't like where the company is headed.
- Better opportunities and career growth.
- its a hot market wonder what other opportunities are out there
- Frustration with employer.
- Occasional inter-personal conflicts and spectacular offers from other companies.

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