

Should you stay in your job when your colleagues are quitting?

New Zealand is currently going through a great job boom, with [record numbers of job ads posted throughout the start of 2022](#). These booming opportunities have increased demand for workers across industries, which, in turn, has seen higher-than-normal turnover rates in many companies.

In fact research for SEEK shows that 28% of people are looking to change jobs in the next six months.

But what does this mean for you? Should you be looking for opportunities beyond your current workplace, or is there a reason to stay put?

If you've seen colleagues come and go at an unusual pace in recent months, you probably understand the strains it can have on the workplace. Gaps created by turnover can mean heavier workloads, uncertainty and even restructures. However, among those disruptions, there are some potentially major advantages for employees who choose to stay on board.

If you're wondering whether you should stay or go, it's worth considering the following benefits of remaining in your role and practical tips for achieving them.

Potential advantages for staying when others leave

Although starting a new job can be exciting, the grass isn't always greener on the other side. Leah Lambart, Career and Interview Coach and Director of Relaunch Me, says that the decision to start looking for a new job shouldn't be taken lightly.

"I always recommend that employees consider their internal options first before seeking an external opportunity," she says. "This is particularly the case if they actually enjoy working for their current organisation, love the people that they work with and feel like most of their important values are being met."

There's arguably never been a better time to negotiate for opportunities that are important to you. Gaby Tedja, a Senior HR Advisor at GSK, says some of these potential benefits include:

- **A new role or duties:** "When people resign, it opens up opportunities for promotions, especially in mid-level roles that people may have been trying to get into," she says.
- **A better work-life balance:** "The pandemic has forced a lot of companies to consider hybrid and flexible workplaces, and there's a huge benefit to companies that adopt this," she says. "I would say that work-life balance is even more beneficial than a pay rise. These days it's not so much of a perk anymore, it's a fundamental." There is an

opportunity to ensure you're getting the best outcome for you.

- **Other benefits that aren't remuneration-based:** "Benefits like gym memberships, childcare vouchers and retail discounts can all be great, but they need to be considered carefully," she says.

And then, of course, there's the potential to ask for a pay rise. Tadjia warns that getting an increase in salary isn't always straightforward. "It depends on factors like how someone's pay compares to the current market scale, whether their pay is relative to industry standards and if their work has earned it," she says.

Lambart echoes this sentiment, saying that it's important to come prepared if you want to ask for more pay.

"If employees are looking for a pay rise, now is definitely the time to put in that request, especially if you are a valued employee with skills that your employer will not want to lose," she says.

"However, I would recommend that employees still do the necessary work to justify their requests."

Preparing to ask for what you want from your employer

With potential opportunities on the horizon, it's important to approach your employer in an appropriate – and realistic – way.

First off, keep in mind that not all companies will be in a position to offer exactly what you want upfront. But if you can display the high value of your work, it may be enough to discuss a short or long-term plan for attaining your goals.

Lambart suggests planting the seed as early as possible, and not expecting too much too soon.

"Managers don't like to be taken unaware, so start the conversation early and suggest to your manager that you are keen for any opportunity to start furthering your career," she says.

"Employees need to be aware that hiring managers and internal talent acquisition managers are doing it tough right now and are most likely under a great deal of pressure to find staff."

Consider going to your manager or HR department to discuss how you might be able to help out in some of the areas where there is a skill shortage. "If you are considering a career change, an internal move can often be facilitated much more quickly than trying to make a career move externally where you are an unknown quantity," says Lambart.

As well as approaching these discussions with transparency and openness, being prepared is essential, Lambart says. Her advice for people negotiating new benefits with their current workplaces – particularly pay rises – is to first document their achievements.

"This can include internal processes that you've improved to create efficiency, great feedback you've had and relationships you've built both internally and externally to help your team achieve

its goals,” she says.

Next, it’s important to understand current market rates and offerings, so you can make a comparable argument. “Do your research to understand what others are being paid to do your role elsewhere,” Lambart says. Using [SEEK's job search](#) to understand the salary range for your role is a great way to do this.

Although the job market is brimming with roles at the moment, that doesn’t mean taking the leap is necessarily the right move for you. Before you start to look for external opportunities, it might be worth checking in with your current workplace first. A great opportunity might be closer than you think.

Source: Independent research conducted by Nature on behalf of SEEK, interviewing 4000 Kiwis annually. Published April 2022.