

# Evaluate employee buyout with head, heart

**The issue:** Employee buyouts.

**The scenario:** I have more than 15 years of service with a firm that is offering a separation package. There have been multiple years of cuts. I don't think I am on any "list" to go. I would like suggestions about how I can evaluate whether or not I should raise my hand.



Doyle

**Coach:** Kelley Doyle.

The good news is you have a choice, at least for the time being. One obstacle is that many people become paralyzed by choices. The status quo is easy, you already know that. The unknown often causes fear. I respect your courage to consider your choices, and not have external forces choose for you.

For a moment, forget the job. What are your aspirations?

■ What do you value in your profession? For example, you may value meaningful work, de-

veloping others, solving complex problems. Does your company meet those values?

■ Are you ignoring any dreams? Do other vocations interest you? This might be a good time for a transition.

■ What are your career ambitions? Can they be fulfilled where you are? Do you have good mentors at work that know your ambitions and support you in this area?

■ Does your job fit your life plan? If you don't have a plan,

maybe it's time to start it. There are different methods, but most begin with life purpose and vision. Similar to a business plan, it breaks down these overarching issues into manageable stages. A qualified coach can help you.

Now, on the other hand, let's be pragmatic.

■ Money influences our decisions. Do you have a financial cushion? Consult your financial adviser before making any big financial decisions.

■ Are you comfortable taking risks? Do you crumble at the idea of looking for a new job, or does it invigorate you? Do you have a strong network you can tap in your search?

■ How close are you to retirement age? Does it make sense to begin a new career or job now?

■ Do the terms of the separation package address your needs? Is it adequate severance pay? Will you have health care insurance? Careerjournal.com is a good resource for how to negotiate a fair separation package. (Try searching the site using the keywords "negotiate severance.")

■ Many company separation

documents look comprehensive and routine, but enlisting an attorney and accountant may help ensure that the package is fair to you. For instance, some packages can have significant restrictions in issues such as "noncompete" agreements.

I refer to this kind of decision-making as the "heart (aspiration) and head (pragmatic) process." People tend to make decisions based on feelings, then back it up with logical reason. Therefore, it makes sense to look at both.

In my years coaching, I have met several people who were laid off involuntarily and landed on their feet and today are happier in a new job or their own business. You have the benefit of evaluating what is the best choice for you. Weigh your options and choose wisely with your head and heart.

Kelley Doyle is owner of Kelley Doyle Coaching LLC and a member of the International Coach Federation, Charlotte Chapter. Contact her at (704) 759-3698, or coach@kelleydoyle.com. Web site: www.kelleydoyle.com