

Job-Hopping Vs Stability and Your IT Career



As more IT businesses grow increasingly receptive to employees with varied and transient job histories, the concept of 'job-hopping' has become more acceptable throughout New Zealand. However, when it comes to your career, is it better to periodically change jobs every few years or find stability with one employer?

Of course, how you answer that question would depend on what stage your career is in. For example, research from [Statistics New Zealand](#) found that the average tenure for 25-34 year olds was only three years, whilst employees aged between 55 to 64 stayed with a single employer for more than three times longer. Whilst this isn't surprising, it does highlight that your career stage could change your view on tenure. We've created this guide to help you understand the benefits of each approach and whether job-hopping or greater stability could help you move your career forward.

Long Tenure

Working with one or two businesses for several years can provide great benefits to your IT career but also come with its own challenges. Sticking with a single company for a long period of time can promote commitment and loyalty with that employer and in return, can give better job security, particularly during an economic downturn. Your commitment could also be financially rewarded, as a [survey](#) found that Australian employees with five or more years' experience in a single company received higher raises compared with those who job-hop.

A key risk, however, is that professionals with long tenure can often be negatively perceived as having stagnating careers or difficulty adapting. To ensure this isn't the case when you're looking for your next role, it's crucial that your CV reflects how you've evolved. Over the span of your career, your role's

demands, responsibilities, challenges and success indicators would have changed and you may have moved around the business as a result. Showcasing how you've reacted to these changes, whether it was through changing roles or taking on more important responsibilities, can help show prospective employers your potential, adaptability, and ambition.

Job-Hopping

As expectations and attitudes change within the workplace, more employees are deciding to take a hands-on approach to their career and reshaping their relationship with employers. In fact, **half of New Zealand employees** who earn salaries or wages have been in their current role for less than 18 months, with a higher rate of turnover in younger workers. The reality is that the national skills shortage has created a candidate-centric market, which means most people who job-hop find plenty of opportunities, but many employers still perceive those with short-term tenure as unreliable or untrustworthy.

If you've worked for several companies within a year or two, it's important to ensure you're presenting yourself in a way that highlights your achievements, skills and qualifications, and not just your tenure. When you're discussing your previous work history, put yourself in a prospective employer's shoes and ensure you cover for any shortcomings. This includes using your cover letter to address any problems by connecting the experience you have with what the advertisement has asked for, and also highlighting any actions that you're taking to develop skill gaps. This could include explaining each role's purpose, responsibilities and outcomes, and your motives behind key moves and how the new position has further developed your skills and career.

Another example is if you've had several short-term roles because you've been contracting. In this case, ensure you group these together on your CV and if you've worked for the one organisation for a long period of time, but have had a number of roles within this company, ensure you list all of them. If you think these questions are better covered through a direct conversation, call the employer to discuss.

References

Possessing excellent references is a great way to negate many challenges both job-hopping and long tenure can present. Having your previous Manager testify to your abilities and skills can squash any concern an employer might have over a stagnating career or skillset. At the same time, a solid reference can also attest to the fact that you **left your previous employer on great terms** and not because you were hard to work with or unreliable.

Summary

As modern-day workplaces continue to change, it's easy to get caught up in the debate between job hopping and stability, but you shouldn't lose sight of what's important: your career. Career satisfaction looks different for everyone so it wouldn't be true to say that one approach is better than the other. Whether you've been with the same business for years or periodically change jobs, evolving your skills to keep pace with your career aspirations should always be your priority.

Asking yourself whether your current role is helping you to develop yourself professionally can help you reach your own decision. If you feel like you are stagnating, find out if your current employer has any internal opportunities you could pursue and if there aren't, then it might be time to return to the market. If you are ready to move your career on, **speak to us** today to find out how Sourced can help you find your next great IT role.