

Can staying in one job develop or stunt your career?

By [Lauren Durant](#)

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Should I stay or should I go? This is an age old question employees ask themselves when evaluating their career prospects. Will it look bad on my CV to keep moving – call it career suicide if you will – and are the benefits of staying put sufficient to warrant passing over new job prospects? In a world where job hopping is considered the new normal – there's value in considering the merits of staying loyal. It's true there are some benefits to moving frequently: enhanced industry experience, exposure, and the development of resilience which is a natural consequence of change. But there are equally as many benefits to remaining with a company – don't knock it till you've tried it!

As a "lifer" who has spent nearly a quarter century in one industry, at one company – in fact it's the only company I've ever worked for - there's a perception that it's an easy passage; an easy way out. On the contrary: I have had to work hard to reinvent myself, remain relevant and noticed, and to maintain my growth trajectory. While I have nothing to compare to, I can confirm that I am not bored (never have been), I am still challenged and growing (more than ever), my career keeps advancing and I enjoy enormous job fulfilment. Take it from me – job satisfaction comes from within – your employer is not responsible for your happiness and career outcomes.

These are the principles that I believe are the difference between career self-actualisation and the illusive chase for external gratification; consider them lessons from a lifer:

Happiness is a choice

Choose to be happy and satisfied with the life you have and take this attitude into your workplace. Happiness is not solely about your DNA or your life circumstances – it's a choice that you have to make every day. Attitude is everything. Successful people make the choice to be happy and work at it – reining in negative sentiment. This leads to a successful

personal and professional life.

Drive from within

Employees who progress quickly are generally people who participate in their own journey – carving out the career they aspire to have. They don't sit back and ask what the world can do for them but rather what they can do for the world. This thinking is equally true of how they regard their employer and career. So decide early if you are a passenger or a driver and then strap in and enjoy the ride!

Grass isn't always greener

Sometimes the compulsion to make change is not driven by the right motivation, and change for the sake of change isn't always a good thing. The grass isn't always greener. Just like personal progress is something you control from within – so too is the ladder to success.

Understanding why you want to make a change demands honesty and a real appreciation of who you are. Be very clear before making a change.

Surround yourself with the right people

As much as you work for a company – it's about the love of team and who you work with that makes all the difference. I am a firm believer that the culture of an organisation and working in a collaborative environment is often the difference between staying and leaving, and it's important to assess that the organisational values are aligned with your own. When you feel like you belong and you're contributing to something bigger than yourself, your job becomes less about the pay check and more about purpose.

Take a break

I am a firm believer in holistic living. When you play hard you need to figure out when to reboot and recharge so as to give your mind, body and spirit space to breathe and refuel. More regular breaks will improve your focus, efficiency, productivity, energy and ability to initiate and drive your agenda. There are also definite health markers that include lowered blood pressure, better quality sleep, trimmer waistlines, and stress resilience – the ability to bounce back from stress.

Evolution and reinvention

To be clear, reinvention and evolution will only follow if you choose happiness; foster a positive attitude; and drive success from within – all of which must be balanced with regular down time to recharge. Being a lifer doesn't mean opting out or choosing "sheltered employment". My career has been fluid and there's been so much growth - so staying was easy. But only stay if you feel there's evolution and continual growth – and remember you are as much in control of this as your employer is.

In closing – take responsibility and be accountable for your development. Equally so – don't stay if it doesn't serve you. But don't move because you believe it's the only way to advance because that's not always true!

ABOUT LAUREN DURANT

With 23 years in the marketing industry, Isilumko Activate executive Lauren Durant has no difficulty helping companies build emotional connections between their brands and their customers through live events and crafted experiences. A left and right brain thinker, Lauren is always in beta and it's this combination that makes her a creative, yet strategic force in the industry.

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