

What changes can affect my job status?



Chapter 16

Handling Changes in Job Status

Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, you will be able to

- **determine** factors to consider when changing from part-time to full-time work.
- **identify** reasons why workers are fired from their jobs.
- **explain** what positive action people should take after losing their jobs.
- **describe** ways to prepare for a promotion.
- **list** reasons why people change jobs.

Key Concepts

- Changing from part-time to full-time work brings changes in income, fringe benefits, and lifestyle.
- If you lose a job, try to maintain a positive attitude.
- If you prepare for a promotion, you will be ready if a higher position becomes available.
- When you leave a job, do so in a professional manner.

Key Terms

wages
overtime pay
salary
commission
laid off
fired
letter of resignation

Changing from Part-Time to Full-Time Work

Throughout your career, you are likely to experience several changes in job status. One change in job status might occur when you change from part-time to full-time work. See 16-1.

Many people begin working on a part-time basis. Some work part-time because they cannot find full-time jobs. Others choose to work only a certain number of hours each week. Students often have part-time jobs while going to school.

Changing from part-time to full-time work is a big step. It requires some careful thinking. Full-time work brings changes in income, fringe benefits, and lifestyle.

wages

The money earned for doing hourly work.

overtime pay

The wages earned, usually one-and-a-half times the regular wage, for working additional hours beyond the normal 40-hour week.

Income

Income is the money a person receives for doing a job. Most part-time and many full-time workers earn hourly **wages**. They earn a set amount of money for every hour of work. An example is \$8.00 per hour.

A full-time worker may be able to earn **overtime pay**. This is usually one-and-a-half times the regular wage. It is usually paid for hours worked beyond the normal 40-hour week. For instance, a worker may earn \$8.00 per hour for 40 hours and \$12.00 for each extra hour of work thereafter. ($\$8.00 + \$4.00 = \$12.00$)

16-1

Many people get early work experience with a part-time job in food service. Some people go on to full-time food service careers.



A full-time worker may earn an annual **salary**. This is a set amount of money for a full year of work. The amount is divided into equal payments. As an example, a worker with an annual salary of \$36,000 earns \$3,000 a month or about \$692.31 every week. The same amount is earned each pay period regardless of the number of hours worked. For example, some weeks may require more than 40 hours of work.

Some full-time workers, especially those in sales, earn commissions. A **commission** is a percentage of the dollar amount of sales made. Therefore, a salesperson who sells more will earn more. For instance, a 10% commission on sales of \$100 is \$10. The same rate of commission on sales of \$200 is \$20.

Some people do not feel secure working for a commission because they do not receive a stable income. A good salesperson can achieve high earnings by working for commission. However, if a salesperson makes very few sales, he or she will not have much income.

When changing to a full-time job, think about the income you want to earn. Do you want a job where you would earn hourly wages? Would you want to receive overtime pay for extra work? Would you enjoy the steady pay of a job with a salary, or would you prefer the flexibility of commissions?

Fringe Benefits

Fringe benefits are extra financial rewards beyond regular paychecks. Examples include medical, dental, life, and disability insurance, 16-2. Others are paid holidays, vacations, and sick leave. Some companies also offer bonuses, pension plans, tuition aid, and child care assistance.

Part-time workers receive few, if any, fringe benefits. The fringe benefits offered to full-time workers vary widely from company to company. When you look for a full-time job, consider fringe benefits as well as income.

Lifestyle

Taking a full-time job will affect your lifestyle. A full-time job usually involves at least 8 hours of work a day for a total of 40 hours per week. When you accept such a job, your employer expects you to be there full time. You should not arrive late or leave early. You should show up every day. You should not take time off unless you are truly ill.

salary

A set amount of money paid to an employee for a full year of work.

commission

A percentage of the money received from a sale.

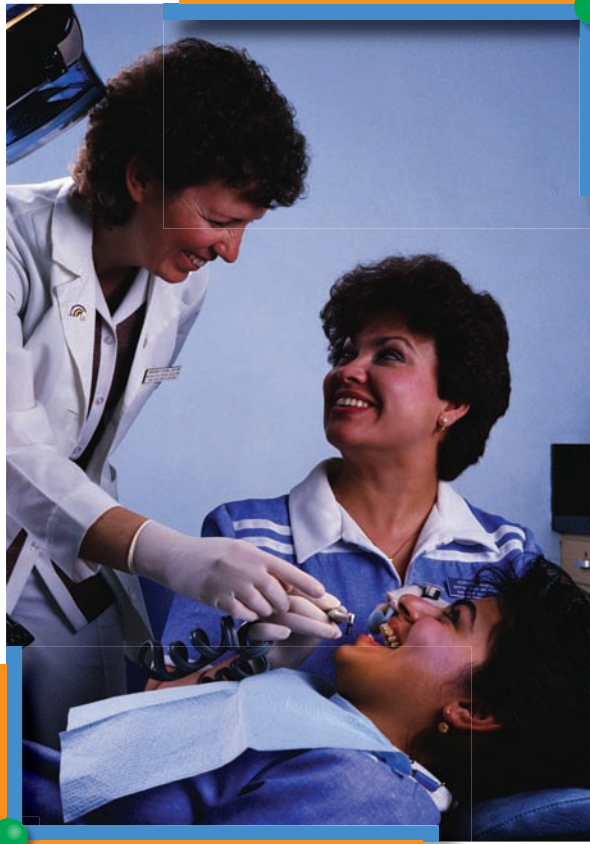


Community Connections

Interview people who are paid on commission. Find out the answers to the following questions: How do they feel about being paid on commission versus getting a regular paycheck? Do they budget their money any differently? Does commission work make them view their job differently than if they received a regular paycheck?

16-2

Dental insurance is just one of many fringe benefits companies often provide for full-time employees.



Your Reading

What types of changes might you encounter when changing from part-time to full-time work?

Your time at work should be devoted to your job. You must arrange to take care of personal and family matters after work or on your days off. This means that you will not have as much free time as you did as a student or part-time worker.

Getting accustomed to working 40 hours a week may take some time. You may feel tired at the end of the workday or workweek. After a while, you will adjust to the longer hours. Until you do, you may have to give up some of your activities.

Losing a Job

No one wants to think about losing a job. It is an unpleasant experience. However, the fact remains that people do lose their jobs for various reasons. Some are laid off and others are fired.

The reason for being *laid off* is beyond a worker's control. A worker may be laid off because the company is failing and short of money. The company may be reorganizing or cutting back

laid off

To lose a job because the employer must release the employee for financial reasons.

on production. In such cases, the last person hired is usually the first one to be laid off. Being laid off is not the worker's fault. It does not mean the person was not a good worker.

Being **fired** from a job is different. A worker is usually fired because of poor performance. The person's work may be unsatisfactory. The person may not be able to get along with others. Common reasons why people are fired are listed in 16-3.

fired

To lose a job because of unacceptable work or behavior.

Take Positive Action

If you lose a job, try to maintain a positive attitude. Brooding about a job loss is useless. The sensible thing to do is to take a good, long look at yourself. List your personality traits, interests, aptitudes, and abilities. Think about your values and goals. Decide what kind of work you want to do. Find out if you need more education. If you need retraining to enter another field, get it. When you are ready, go out and seek another job.

If you were fired from your job, learn from the experience. Look at the situation from your employer's point of view. Think about what went wrong. Correct your faults and move ahead. Be determined not to make the same mistakes again. Think positively and begin a new job search.

Common Reasons for Firing Employees

- Disregarding orders and being disrespectful
- Failing to follow rules and policies
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Being dishonest
- Making costly mistakes and failing to do the work properly
- Being lazy
- Often arriving late or being absent
- Failing to get along with supervisors, coworkers, and/or customers
- Causing trouble and acting carelessly
- Behaving rudely and using abusive language
- Always acting dissatisfied
- Making fun of coworkers
- Acting superior and bossing others around

16-3

Employers consider any of these behaviors to be a "just cause" for firing employees.



Your Reading

What are some reasons a person might lose a job?



Making a Difference

Create posters that express positive ways to keep a job. Check various places in the community, such as a local shelter or welfare-to-work programs that would welcome the posters to encourage the clients they are training to become competent workers.



Your Reading

Why might a person seek a promotion?

Being Promoted

At some point, you may feel that you have achieved all the goals you set for yourself in a job. You want new challenges. When this happens, it is time to seek a promotion. A promotion is a move up to a higher position within a company.

You may need to be patient to get a promotion. Generally, a higher position becomes available in two ways. In some cases, an employer creates a new position to be filled. More often, a position becomes available when a worker leaves it. That worker quits, is fired, retires, or is promoted to a different job.

If you want a promotion, start preparing for it early. Do your best to be ready when a higher position becomes available. The following tips will help you prepare:

- Always strive to do your job well.
- Maintain a good attendance record.
- Have a positive attitude about work.
- Get along with everyone.
- Volunteer to do extra work.
- Look for ways to learn on the job.
- Take additional training or further education.
- Be willing to accept more responsibility.
- Express your desire for new challenges.
- Be able to accept change and use it constructively.

Changing Jobs

The average person changes jobs at least eight to ten times during a career. Because employers do not expect workers to stay in the same jobs forever, they try to promote them into new positions. This is not always possible. Therefore, people change companies and sometimes careers. Common reasons for changing jobs are listed in 16-4.

Some people change jobs for a good reason. Others change jobs without thinking through their decisions. Before you make a decision to change jobs, you should ask yourself the following questions and answer them honestly and thoughtfully:

Common Reasons for Changing Jobs

- Problems with supervisors and/or coworkers
- Problems with health that dictate a job or environment change
- Transportation problems
- Desire to have one's own business
- A company closing or relocation
- Elimination of one's job (because of technological changes, company restructuring, or other reasons)
- Desire for better pay and/or fringe benefits
- Desire for more opportunities for advancement
- Desire for better working conditions or hours
- Desire for a job that better uses knowledge, skills, and abilities

16-4

People change jobs for many reasons during their careers.

- What are my real reasons for leaving this job? Am I leaving to accept something better? (If not, maybe you shouldn't be considering a change at this time.)
- Am I getting along with my boss and my fellow employees? (If not, why not? Is there something you can do to change a bad situation into a good one? Have you discussed your feelings with your employer? Many problems can be solved through employer-employee discussions. Perhaps you just need a change in job assignment or a transfer to a different department.)
- Have I given myself and the job a chance? (Employers do not want an employee who seems to hop from one job to another. Employers don't expect employees to stay with them forever, but they do expect a stay of a year or more.)
- If you aren't sure you want to change jobs, don't rush. Take time to think about both the pros and cons of changing jobs, as listed in 16-5. Close friends or family members can help you explore your reasons for seeking a new job.

Leaving a Job

Once you decide to change jobs, resist the urge to quit your current job right away. Instead, start looking for a new

16-5

Consider the advantages and disadvantages carefully before making a job change.



Community Connections

Talk to a human resources representative from an area employer to learn how companies handle employee resignations. Ask how employee resignation should be handled so no negative feelings result. Ask the representative for tips on how employees should behave during the period of employment following the official notice of resignation.

letter of resignation

A formal letter stating plans to quit or resign from a job.

Pros and Cons of Changing Jobs

Pros

- Chance for a new beginning
- Higher pay scale
- Better fringe benefits
- More room for advancement
- New opportunities for training or learning
- New experiences and challenges

Cons

- Unfamiliar people and surroundings
- Possible loss of some vacation benefits
- Possible loss of accumulated paid sick time
- Possible loss of seniority benefits
- The need to establish a new daily routine
- Being labeled a job-hopper

one while working at your current job. Employment is not always easy to find. Unless you have enough money set aside, consider keeping your current job until you find a better one.

When you are ready to quit your job, do so in a professional manner. Tell your employer before you tell any of your coworkers. Give at least two weeks' notice, preferably three. Your employer needs that time to find a replacement for you.

The most polite and professional way to exit a job is to put your plan to quit or resign in writing. A sample letter of resignation is shown in 16-6. Your *letter of resignation* should include the following points:

- your last day of work
- a positive reason for your resignation
- a few nice words about your present employment

It is wise to personally give notice to your employer. You can do this just before you hand in your letter of resignation. Take time to tell your employer about your new job. Also tell your employer how much you have gained from working in your current job. You can also use this time to ask your employer for a letter of recommendation. It could help you the next time you search for a job.

3 Park Avenue
Perth Amboy, NJ 07728
August 10, 20XX

Ms. Arlene Banks
First Bank and Trust Company
33 Main Street
Perth Amboy, NJ 07728

Dear Ms. Banks:

Please accept my resignation from the position of bank teller as of August 24, 20XX.

My decision to resign is based on my desire to further my business education. I recently enrolled as a part-time business student at Taft Community College. Therefore, I have accepted a teller position with the Union Bank, located across the street from the Taft campus. This will allow me more flexibility in scheduling my business classes.

My position with First Bank and Trust Company has been rewarding both personally and professionally. I wish to thank you for providing me with the opportunity to enhance my skills in the banking field.

Sincerely,

Terry Smith
Terry Smith

Make every effort to be on friendly terms with everyone when you leave. During your last days at work, continue to do your job to the best of your ability. Do not complain about your current job. Do not brag about your new job. Be as pleasant as possible to your supervisor and coworkers. You may need their help sometime in the future. You may need to use their names as references in future job hunts. You may even find your career paths crossing again. It is better to have friends than enemies.

16-6

Leaving a job in a professional manner involves giving your employer a letter of resignation.



Your Reading

What is the most professional, polite way to exit a job?

A circular graphic with a purple-to-blue gradient background. The word "Chapter" is written in a light orange, sans-serif font at the top. Below it, the number "16" is written in a large, bold, orange font with a slight shadow effect.

Summary

Throughout your career, your job status is likely to change many times. One change may be from part-time to full-time work. Taking that step will create other changes in income, fringe benefits, and lifestyle.

Try to avoid losing a job. If you are laid off or fired, you take positive action to find another job.

A change for the better in job status is a promotion. Start preparing for a promotion early. Then you will be ready if a higher position becomes available.

If you are like the average worker, you will change jobs at least eight to ten times during your career. Think carefully before you decide to change jobs. Consider both the pros and cons. Once you decide to leave, do so in a professional manner. Give your employer at least two weeks' notice. Submit a letter of resignation. Do your best to leave on friendly terms.

Reviewing Key Concepts

1. When a person's income is stated as \$30,000 a year, that person is earning _____.
 - A. hourly wages
 - B. overtime pay
 - C. an annual salary
 - D. a commission
2. List five examples of fringe benefits.
3. Describe one way in which changing from part-time to full-time work might affect a person's lifestyle.
4. Differentiate between being laid off and being fired.
5. List five reasons why people are fired.
6. What positive action should a fired employee take?
7. Name five ways to prepare for a promotion.
8. List five reasons why people change jobs.
9. Why should workers give their employers at least two weeks' notice when they decide to change jobs?
10. What three points should a letter of resignation contain?

Building Academic Skills

1. **Math.** Use the current minimum wage to estimate your income in a 40-hour week. List what you believe your expenses would be for all necessary items. After all deductions, what will your take-home pay be? Write a paragraph describing the type of lifestyle you would be able to afford on this salary.
2. **Writing.** Write a paragraph describing the career you hope to have. In a second paragraph, describe the lifestyle you plan to maintain. Finally, in a third paragraph, describe the work schedule you will have and the leisure activities you will pursue in your free time.

Building Technology Skills

1. Visit a Web site such as houseandhome.msn.com that will allow you to compare the cost of living in various cities. Use the average salary of \$38,000 in Dallas, Texas, with five other cities for comparison. What did you learn about the cost of living in various cities?
2. Locate Web sites using yahoo.com that address getting along with the boss. Do a second search on getting along with coworkers. Use the information you found to compile a list of do's and don'ts regarding how to relate to coworkers and supervisors. Share your lists with the class.

Building Career Knowledge and Skills

1. Read the want ads in a newspaper. Find two jobs that offer hourly wages, two that offer annual salaries, and two that offer commissions. Identify which jobs mention fringe benefits and what they are.

2. Find a news story about a company that laid off workers. Prepare an oral report about the story. In it, explain why the workers were laid off. If the news story includes interviews with the workers, describe how they felt and what actions they planned to take to find new jobs.
3. Interview someone who has changed jobs. Find out why the person decided to change jobs. Ask what the pros and cons of the decision were. Find out what steps the person took in leaving the old job. Prepare a written report.
4. Write a letter of resignation for a fictitious job.
5. Interview someone who has been laid off. Describe the personal feelings experienced as well as the process involved in finding another job. What lifestyle adjustments were necessary until the person was settled in another job?
6. Interview someone who moved from part-time to full-time employment or vice versa. Describe the lifestyle adjustments experienced and the advice that the person would offer regarding changing status of employment.

Building Workplace Skills

Suppose you own a small flower shop with three full-time employees. All three do the same job; they create floral arrangements for most of the day and interact with customers. You have \$7,000 to divide among the three for bonuses and/or pay raises next year, but first you must decide how to determine which worker qualities or accomplishments deserve a bonus or more pay. First, list the outstanding characteristics and/or behaviors that should be considered. Then develop a chart or table to analyze how employees rate in each category.