



Roberta M. Barber

Just How Do You Know When to Make a Job Move?

When you meet Roberta, you will find an energetic dynamo who encountered and solved the challenges of balancing and integrating a successful leadership career with raising two children as a single parent. While there is not just one way to handle these challenges, she describes the trade-offs, which are so important to take into account—including the things to consider when you feel your job is not working out. Roberta identifies what an appropriate job fit really means.

Roberta completed her bachelor of science and doctor of pharmacy degrees at Union University Albany College of Pharmacy and her master's of public health at Columbia University's Joseph Mailman School of Public Health. Roberta is currently Assistant Vice President of Pharmacy Services, Virtua Health System in New Jersey.

In her letter, she states, *your career may take a winding career path; taking the risk and finding the courage to move from one job to another; but experiencing great joy, satisfaction, and reward in the journey.*



Dear Young Pharmacist,

You should be very proud of your career choice to practice pharmacy. On occasion, I have been asked why I selected pharmacy. In high school, I had a love for both chemistry and music. Eventually, I made my decision by process of elimination, with some family support. My mother was very influential in my decision;

not having had a career herself, she wanted her daughters to pursue a profession. I felt drawn to health care, and pharmacy seemed to rise to the top, and it is a decision that I have not regretted. I tell you this because it is just the beginning of all the decisions and choices you will make as you progress through your career, and how you go about making these choices is just as important as the result.

Pharmacy is a profession which offers a wide variety of practice venues. Whether it is industry, academia, clinical research, nuclear pharmacy, compounding pharmacy, retail or hospital pharmacy, there is something for every personality type and for every stage of your career. Many choose one type of practice and remain in that area for their entire career and that is fine. However, there are far too many opportunities in pharmacy to be dissatisfied or unhappy for too long in any job. So if you feel this way, it is time to start exploring your options.

I can honestly say that after 32 years of pharmacy practice, I still love my profession. Although times have changed during my years as a pharmacist, there still are some commonalities and consistencies. I have made several moves in my career: each time advancing my practice and knowledge base, each time with gratifying results.

So, you may ask, just how do I know when to make a move in my job or career? Sometimes it can be a difficult decision, but I will attempt to outline some guiding principles I use in my decision making. Some reasons you may consider a job change:

- More challenge or sense of accomplishment
- Positioning for promotion and/or advancement
- Better job “fit”

So how do you know it is time to consider something new or different?

- When you feel you have accomplished all you can in your current position, and there is nothing else that you can contribute to the organization, department, or your job.
- If you feel you need a more stimulating and challenging environment, and you need to feel more satisfaction at the end of the day.
- When you feel you have no room for advancement, and that is something you desire, and you have researched all available opportunities.