

## How Long Do I Wait?

One of the hardest things in work—in life, really—is knowing how long to wait. How long do I stay in a job I no longer love? How long do I stay working for this boss, hoping our relationship improves? How long do I wait for a new opportunity to come my way? *How long do I wait?*

While there is no magic bullet answer to the question (sorry!), there are important factors to consider that lead you to the answer that is right for you.

First . . . is it your job/company/situation that you are trying to escape—or is it *you*? When we grow tired of something, we tend to no longer put our best effort into it. Performance starts to decline; we start doing the job less well than we have for years. And, there are consequences for that decline that we don't like . . . that lead to our liking the company/role even less. But be clear

of the sequence here . . . the job/boss didn't suddenly change; *your performance changed* . . . and as a result, your situation at work has changed. So, before you decide to leave, recognize your role in the situation. Your best action is to change *yourself* . . . so whether you stay or whether you leave, you are bringing your best to the table. You may still decide to move on . . . but be sure you are running toward something you want, not away from an unsuccessful scenario that may be of your own making.

Second . . . pause and be sure that what you run toward doesn't replicate what you hate about the position you are leaving! Too often, we think any new thing *has to be better than what I am doing now* . . . only to discover it isn't. There are things you love about your current job or role—and whether your next role is with a company, in the

community, on a board, or with your friends/family, be sure you are clear about what brings you joy—and where you excel, and what is *uninteresting* to you—even if you are good at it. There are so many possibilities out there for those willing to work hard and contribute. Pause to discern what you want to do next . . . and what you'd prefer never to do again. Being choiceful will help ensure you find yourself in a next season that brings you joy, fulfillment, and taps the best of what you have to offer.

Finally . . . remember that at the end of the day, you can either change jobs, or change yourself, or do both. Put your best foot forward to positively influence your situation—and if the situation does not improve with your changing, waiting may not be enough. You may need to change the job and find something with a higher probability of success.

Waiting and hoping is rarely enough. Take control of what you can control. Bring your best to bear. Ensure that, if you decide to change, that you have already changed the most powerful part of the equation: *you*.



**LESLIE W. BRAKSICK, Ph.D.**

Co-Founder & Senior Partner, [leslie.braksick@mynextseason.com](mailto:leslie.braksick@mynextseason.com)

Find Dr. Braksick's new book, *Your Next Season: Advice for Executives on Transitioning from Intense Careers to Fulfilling Next Seasons*, on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).