

Top job quitters for 2005 – career breakers survey (annual results)

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Sarah Horner > T +44 (0)113 205 4628 > E sarah.horner@i-to-i.com

STRESSED, DEPRESSED AND IN NEED OF A REST

UK workers quit their jobs to beat the winter blues

The UK job market again looks set to see a flurry of resignation letters in the new year, according to the latest research from meaningful travel specialist i-to-i.

Results of the company's annual career breakers survey show that, even more so than last year, the nation's workers are set to 'auld lang resign' in January, swapping their current posts for new jobs, further study or a spot of foreign travel.

According to i-to-i's research, more than four in 10 (42 per cent) employees are ready to head for pastures new in 2005, a five per cent rise on last year's figures. Topping the poll of potential quitters are office staff, beating last year's most likely candidates – financial workers – by a nose. Nearly half, a whacking 48 per cent of all office workers, say they are considering leaving their jobs in the next few months.

The top five list of would-be resigners past and present is as follows:

Most likely quitters 2005

- 1) office workers (48 per cent)
- 2) financial workers (46 per cent)
- 3) shop assistants (43 per cent)
- 4) health workers (37 per cent)
- 5) IT workers (35 per cent)

Most likely quitters 2004

- 1) financial workers (51 per cent)
- 2) office workers (44 per cent)
- 3) shop assistants (40 per cent)
- 4) teachers (31 per cent)
- 5) health workers (30 per cent)

Again, the happiest chaps proved to be those who work in the great outdoors, 90 per cent of whom saying they are satisfied with their jobs, a slight rise on last year's figure (88 per cent).

Vexed in the city

The i-to-i research also revealed a startling number of anxious employees feeling overworked and underpaid:

- Nearly half (42 per cent) say their workplace is often a pressurised environment.
- A very similar proportion (41 per cent) feel they are not always rewarded for their hard work.
- One in six (16 per cent) say they don't use all their annual leave because they are so busy.
- One in eight (12 per cent) feel guilty when taking a holiday and don't like asking for time off.

i-to-i founder Deirdre Bounds says: "It's well documented that Brits work some of the longest hours in Europe, so it's perhaps not surprising that people are beginning to feel burnt out. Nearly half of workers questioned (44 per cent) said they'd experienced work-related stress and one in ten (11 per cent) had actually taken time off sick as a result.

"We also found that one in three (34 percent) don't plan on doing their current type of job for the rest of their lives, and one in four (22 per cent) are keen to take a career break. So with Christmas being traditionally a time when folks take stock of their lives, employers could be seeing a stack of situations vacant in January!"

I can't get no...job satisfaction

Much of the nation's job dissatisfaction seems to arise from people 'falling into' careers rather than doing something they really want to do, a plight affecting nearly one in three workers (28 per cent). Similarly, a fair proportion of the UK's workforce say they would enjoy work more if they felt their jobs were more worthwhile. For example:

- One in seven (14 per cent) of employees would be prepared to take a pay cut if it meant they were happier in their work.
- One in five (19 per cent) would like to do a job that helps other people / communities

Correspondingly, nearly a quarter (22 per cent) would like to take time out to decide what to do with the rest of their lives.

Deirdre adds: "The latest research reflects a growing trend that we've seen at i-to-i, over the last few years and particularly over the last 12 months. More and more people are waking up to the fact that 'gap' breaks years aren't just for university students. They're thinking 'If Ewan McGregor can do it, so can I!'

"January is often one of our busiest months, as people suffering from the post-Christmas blues decide to take the plunge, quit their job and do something meaningful abroad. And if our latest statistics are anything to go by, employers better beware!"

This year I am mostly going to be detoxing and booking a holiday...

Backing i-to-i's 'new year, new horizons' theory, was the fact that travel came high up on the list of people's resolutions for 2005. In fact, travel was beaten only by the predictable pledge to get healthy. According to the research, this year Brits will resolving to:

- 1) Adopt a healthier lifestyle
- 2) Travel / book a foreign holiday

- 3) Change their career
- 4) Take a course / study
- 5) Ditch a current partner / find a new partner
- 6) Go to live / work in another country
- 7) Volunteer / support a charity
- 8) Take up a new hobby
- 9) Make a major purchase
- 10) Move house

Resolving that is, for the first week in January anyway!

Ends

For further press information, please contact Sarah Horner on 0113 205 4628 / 07818 055235 or sarah.horner@i-to-i.com

EDITOR'S NOTES

1. i-to-i is a volunteer travel and TEFL training organisation based in Leeds, UK; Denver, USA; and Co. Waterford, Ireland. Since 1994, it has sent around 10,000 volunteers to work on 300 projects in 24 countries worldwide and trained a further 15,000 people to teach English as a foreign language.

2. i-to-i is a founding member of the Year Out Group, associate of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office 'Know Before You Go' Campaign, member of the Federation of International Youth Travel Organisations and has training accreditation from the Open and Distance Learning Quality Council.

3. In December 2003, i-to-i was also awarded 'Yorkshire Small Business of the Year' by the Variety Club children's charity.

YORKSHIRE 'SMALL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR' 2003