FOR LAWYERS

Before you answer a counter-offer

From our article: **Should you accept a counter-offer from your law firm?**
Read it in full, with the sources for every figure: https://www.wilsonmannion.co.uk/insights/should-you-accept-a-counter-offer
Checked 22 October 2026. General information, not legal advice.

> **IN SHORT**
> Accept a counter-offer only if it fixes the reason you started looking, in writing, with a date. If the reason was pay and the pay is now right, staying can be a good result. If it was supervision, caseload, progression or how the firm treats people, a rise does not change that.

Key takeaways

- Write down why you started looking before you resign. A counter-offer has to fix that reason, not just the pay.
- Ask for any offer in writing, with dates. A promise to review is not an offer.
- The research is thin and mostly old. Job changers had faster pay growth than stayers in 2018, and many counter-offered staff left within a year in a 2021 survey. Neither figure is about lawyers.
- Do not resign to start a negotiation. An employer cannot reject a resignation and does not have to accept a withdrawal.
- If you decline, do it quickly, kindly and in writing.

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- [ ] I wrote down why I started looking, and dated it.
- [ ] I asked for the offer in writing, with dates.
- [ ] I know whether it is base salary, a bonus or a promise to review.
- [ ] I have asked why it was not offered before I resigned.
- [ ] I have checked it against what the role pays in the market.
- [ ] I have told my new firm, if I am considering it.
- [ ] I know my notice period and my real start date.
- [ ] I will answer in writing, kindly, by the time I said.

Work out your answer

QUESTION	IF YES	IF NO
Was money the only reason you looked?	The figure may fix it. Check it is in base salary, in writing, from a date.	Money will not fix it. Go back to the line you wrote down.
Does the offer change that reason, in writing, with a date?	Staying can be a good result.	Expect to look again within the year. The conversation about leaving does not go away.
Is the new role clearly better on supervision, caseload and progression, not only pay?	Weigh it honestly. Moving may be right.	If the new role is only a little better, the counter-offer may decide it.
Did the firm only offer after you resigned?	Ask why. Ask whether it will still value you in a year.	Good. A firm that already listened is a firm worth staying with.