

# Ask the Career Coach: Overqualified and Willing to Accept

What do you tell a hiring manager when they ask if you will stay when the market improves?

By [Lisa Chenofsky Singer](#)

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Dear Career Coach Lisa,

During a recent interview, I was asked "What happens if we hire you, the market improves and you are able to find a job that pays more in line with what you are looking for or previously made? How do I as the employer know you will not leave?"

Overqualified and Willing to Accept  
Short Hills

This is a very common question or at least thought about by many hiring managers. The hiring manager understands that in this market he can afford to hire an overqualified candidate. The key question is will this new hire remain with the company as the market picks back up? What does this company have to offer the candidate in order to retain them? The hiring manager needs to understand how to sell his company and what perks will help attract the best qualified candidate and retain them over time. There needs to be a mutual "value proposition" exchange.

As the overqualified candidate, you need to consider what this company has to offer relative to what you need. Does this company offer benefits and pay you can manage on if you reduce your monthly expenditures? Consider the fit between you and your potential new company. Does the culture feel right? Do you like your potential new boss?

Some additional questions to consider include:

- Is the company closer to home, reducing your commute and expenses?
- Does this company offer you the ability to be more hands on to learn more in the industry?
- Does this company allow you to step into a new industry?
- Does this opportunity allow you to create new contacts in a new industry?
- Does this position set you up for a future opportunity you have always thought of trying?
- Do you feel you will be contributing to a cause you believe in?
- Does this new opportunity allow you to re-engage in the industry and learn new trends and/or compliance regulations?

Answering the hiring manager's question by selling them on why you are a strong candidate for this opportunity. Explain that you can afford to accept a lesser salary in this present market and talk to some of the value his company offers you, selecting answers from some of the above questions. For example, say I am not as interested in title as I once was but rather the value the work I am able to do for you. I am very interested in learning your industry and bring significant functional skills that your organization will benefit from. I am very interested in working with you as I have great respect and value the partnership we can form together.

Add that you are seeking a new home and welcome the opportunity to remain as long it is mutually beneficial for both. If you have a stable company track record, add I am not one to jump around.

However, there is one caveat. You need to be sincere and truly speak your words from your heart. An intuitive hiring manager will know if you are not sincere. Before you answer this question or any other

doubting question, be true to yourself, understand what you truly want and are able and willing to accept.

*"Ask the Career Coach" is a column dedicated to those who may be in transition or wrestling with a career dilemma by providing a forum for advice. We welcome your questions. Please send them to [CareerCoachLisa@gmail.com](mailto:CareerCoachLisa@gmail.com).*

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