

THE IMPORTANCE OF CHECKING YOUR CONTRACT

Put your hand up if you have actually read your employment contract.

Majority of people see the 6 -10 pages of small complex copy and think oomph, I am sure it will all be standard, and they proceed to sign away without a second thought.

Until it's time to get out of it.

WHAT'S THE RUSH

I know when you have a new job offer it is very exciting and you just want to get the contract signed and sealed quickly – to show your new employer how keen and eager you are to work with them. And the sooner you sign, the sooner you can resign right.

Please don't rush into it. Your future employer is not going to pull the role out from under your feet. You are allowed an allocated time to have the contract checked.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Of course there are the basics, make sure the salary is what you have agreed. Are the work hours what you expected and agreed on?

Keep an eye on your notice period. More companies are pushing this out to 6 weeks. For certain roles, this is fine and expected, however a longer notice period could potentially have an effect on your future job searches.

Is there a restraint of trade that will affect future employment, or are the expectations and restraints totally ridiculous?

GET IT CHECKED

Employment lawyers check contracts all the time, so they know exactly what to look for and have more than likely seen it all. They can advise you on contract clauses they feel are likely to cause you future issues, or identify anomalies.

It doesn't cost the earth to get the contract checked, and for peace of mind, it is money well spent.

It is then up to you to discuss any queries with your future employer.

HOW TO DISCUSS YOUR CONTRACT

I would suggest arranging a meeting time with your future employer, to talk through any issues you may have and clauses that you would like to negotiate. There is a high chance that your soon to be employer hasn't fully read your contract, they have just changed out the name, title and salary sections.

This is the perfect time to discuss any issues.

DO NOT RESIGN UNTIL YOU HAVE SIGNED

Very important. If you haven't checked your current employment contract – do this now. Are there any ghosts in there that you were not aware of that could potentially stop you from commencing your new role on the agreed start date?

Do not resign from your current role until you have checked the above and have had your new contract checked. Are you 100% happy with the contractual obligations you are about to sign? Have signed and returned the contract to your soon to be new employer? Have they acknowledged receipt of it? Do you have a copy of the contract with both their and your signatures?

CONGRATULATIONS. NOW GO CELEBRATE.