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Quitting mid-term spontaneously and with no discernable reason is an excellent way to kill your career.

by Stephanie A. Lloyd on July 4, 2009 · [4 comments](#)

in [I'm looking for a job](#), [Workplace Issues](#)

Yesterday Sarah Palin announced that she will not seek re-election in 2010 and that she is resigning at the end of this month. For those of you who live under a rock she is currently the Governor of Alaska and she was John McCain's Vice Presidential candidate for the November, 2008 election.

This is what career suicide looks like.

Because I have always stayed away from sharing my political views at the risk of alienating anyone my original intent was to write this post and avoid sharing my personal feelings but then I realized that I would be doing exactly what I tell you not to do and it would not be honest and it definitely would not be transparent. Do not expect a lot of political commentary from me on this blog or on Twitter but I feel strongly about this issue.

I just watched some of Sarah Palin's interviews from the campaign again. They were disastrous. Beyond disastrous. I had forgotten just how bad they were. Here is a compilation.

How she ever got elected as Governor in the first place is beyond me.

Then again this country elected Bush TWICE so I guess anything's possible. Be a complete and utter self-serving imbecile and the U.S. will elect you to be the Leader of the Free World. As many times as our democratic system allows, apparently.

Maybe now people will finally wake up and realize that we need someone with an actual brain -- that works -- to be our President.

I'm no expert and I'll be the first to admit that I've not exactly been following Sarah Palin closely since the election was over but I do know that she's got a track record of making very poor decisions and this is no exception. She's [under investigation](#) by so many federal, state, and local authorities for both personal and professional ethical and legal violations it's a wonder she's got any time at all to run the state or take care of her family with all of the legal defenses she's juggling.

There is something you can learn from Sarah Palin though. Quitting mid-term spontaneously and with no discernable reason is [an excellent way to kill your career](#).

For about three seconds there was speculation that she was doing this so she could run for President in 2012 but if you have half a brain it wouldn't take you long to realize that if that were her reason it would be the worst move she could possibly make because who's going to elect someone who spontaneously quit as a state Governor halfway through his or her term? Well I'm sure there are people who would do that and I really wish I could swipe their ballots right out of their hands because they should not be allowed to vote.

Anyway the focus of the speculation quickly re-centered on scandal. My first suspicion was blackmail and you'd better believe that thousands of political reporters and bloggers are digging for the truth and clamoring to get the exclusive and break the story. It will happen.

Gail Collins wrote in [her New York Times Op-Ed piece](#) yesterday, "Truly, Sarah Palin has come a long way. When she ran for vice president, she frequently became disjointed and garbled when she departed from her prepared remarks. Now the prepared remarks are incoherent, too."

She describes the scene during Palin's mind-boggling announcement. "Sarah Barracuda made her big announcement Friday afternoon on the lawn of her home to an audience that appeared to include only Todd, the kids and the next-door neighbors. Smiling manically, she looked like a parody of the woman who knocked the Republicans dead at their convention. She babbled about her parents' refrigerator magnet, which apparently had a lot of wise advice. And she recalled her visit with the troops in Kosovo, whose dedication and determination inspired her to ... resign."

Collins goes on to say "Life is about choices!" declared the nation's most anti-choice politician.

People, what is going on with governors in this country? Are we doomed to see them go bonkers one by one, state by state?

The timing of Palin's announcement was extremely peculiar. Not only did she interrupt the plans of TV newscasters to spend the entire weekend pointing out that Michael Jackson is still dead, she delivered her big news just as the nation was settling into Fourth of July celebrations. You'd have thought she didn't want us to notice."

Collins writes, "Palin has a year and a half left to go in her term of office. The political world had been wondering whether she'd run for re-election. The answer is no. And furthermore, it turns out that Palin believes that the only way her administration can "continue without interruption" is for her to end it."

There is rampant rumor of "possible federal indictments against Palin, concerning an embezzlement scandal related to the building of Palin's house and the Wasilla Sports Complex, built during her tenure

as Mayor.” You can read the whole story on The Brad Blog [here](#).

Anyway back to the point I am trying to make. If you have read my blog posts about my unfortunate experiences with [Evil Boss Lady](#) you know that I quit that job with no notice after just nine months. Evil Boss Lady started pushing me over the edge on Day 2 of that job and I’m surprised I even lasted nine months to be honest. In most cases I do not recommend quitting without notice and in that situation I felt I had no choice and honestly I also felt that I’d subjected myself to more than enough abuse and I was 1-800-DONE.

1. Sometime during my first week there she complained to me for two hours one day that the former business development manager in the Chicago office had quit and had only given two weeks’ notice and “her heart wasn’t in it anymore.” DUH. What company do you know that keeps salespeople on for a month after they resign? Not many. I know it depends on the situation but in most cases do you really want that person talking with clients? And you know they’re not going to sit there and continue to try to develop business or sell stuff for you so what’s the point of expecting any notice beyond what it will take to transition the role and the assignments and perhaps let clients know and say goodbye? Anyway when Evil Boss Lady described in detail for me the sheer Hell she put Tracey through during her last two weeks there I thought Note to self. You are not leaving here without being subjected to waterboarding and electrocution. Don’t give notice.
2. Nobody likes Evil Boss Lady. NOBODY. Her sphere of influence is so miniscule that even if she told all of her friends I didn’t feel it would negatively impact my career because I was certain that they’d both be all um yeah if I worked for you I’d quit with no notice too and I can’t even believe she stuck it out for nine months. She must be made of Teflon.
3. It was an incredibly small company that no one has ever heard of and the length of time I’d been there was so brief that it didn’t deserve so much as a mention when I talk about my career. Well other than the fact that I brought in more than four times the revenue in just nine months than she wanted me to produce in my entire first year. Yes, that’s right. Four times. More than four times actually. I made a lot of money for Evil Boss Lady.
4. Evil Boss Lady was the owner of the company. She was not going anywhere. If anyone was going to leave it was going to have to be me.
5. I was leaving to start my own business and I knew that I was not going to be in a situation where someone would want to talk with her as a reference.

As you can see I carefully thought through my decision and weighed my options. If and when you decide to quit your job I recommend that you do the same. I also recommend in most cases that you offer at least two weeks’ notice. The way that you conduct yourself during your transition and departure will be remembered just as vividly or even more so than all of your work during the entire time you were with that company.

Think long and hard before you burn a bridge. In the situation with Evil Boss Lady I knew that even if I gave SIX MONTHS’ notice she would talk badly about me anyway because she never had a single kind word to say about any former employee (I’m sure the feelings were mutual) and I also knew that Hell would freeze over I’d ever want to work for or with her again.

Sarah Palin’s seemingly spontaneous decision to quit mid-term as Governor has sealed her fate politically. She’s done. She may write books and get paid for speaking but if she has any future political aspirations she can forget it. In her rambling speech yesterday she was all over the place and she did not give one good or concrete reason for quitting. She gave the press absolutely no notice of the “press conference” and she did it seemingly purposefully on a Friday afternoon when many reporters were celebrating the 4th and not hot on her trail. Palin was evasive in her statement and she has created all

kinds of talk and speculation and once again she's managed to stir up an absolute circus around herself. She's really good at that.

My point is that if you conduct yourself the way she has you have a good chance of sealing your career fate as well and I don't mean in a good way. No matter how miserable you are in a job it is critically important that you

1. Don't quit right in the middle of a huge new product launch or system implementation or equally important initiative. It's almost impossible to do that and do it well. If you must do this then you need to go OVER THE TOP to be sure that your departure doesn't create so much as a hiccup in the operation.
2. Keep any commitments you have made and if that is absolutely impossible be sure to work with the powers-that-be to ensure a smooth hand-off of any outstanding responsibilities.
3. If you are comfortable with sharing this information, tell your employer and co-workers why you are leaving and for God's sake whatever you do do not say that you're leaving because you hate your job / boss / the company. Always state career transitions in a way that says you are going to something rather than trying to get away from _____. It gives off a much more positive and productive vibe and trust me you will feel better about yourself if you do this.

And now if you have any horror stories about Evil Bosses and quitting I would like to hear them please. :-)

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[Brian July 4, 2009 at 7:02 pm](#)

This has nothing to do with Sarah Palin, but I wanted to tell you that I admire your choice of a red Twitter icon birdie-person to match your blog layout.

[Reply](#)

[Executive Resume Writer July 4, 2009 at 9:51 pm](#)

Hi Stephanie,

See why I like you? We think exactly alike. I was midway of an identical blog draft when yours popped up in my Google Reader! :) Great minds.

Well said. It's tough to try to get back to the "top" when you have left your job midway– um, especially when you're in a position like hers. Not a good career move at all.

Erin Kennedy
Professional Resume Services

[Reply](#)

[Stephanie A. Lloyd July 5, 2009 at 6:34 am](#)

Thank you, Brian!

And thanks to you too Erin. :-) I can't wait to read your post and find out your take on this.

Stephanie

[Reply](#)

[Guy Martin July 5, 2009 at 10:02 am](#)

Stephanie,

I tend to agree that one should not quit a job mid-stream, but I'd like to point out that when you remove the TelePrompTer from most politicians, including & especially our current leader, you tend to get a series of disjointed remarks.

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- check out [@MGRecruiter](#)'s shiny new blog! <http://www.peakhistory.com/>
- I just reserved stephaniealloyd.com + pointed it to my blog. (about time) I recommend you reserve your name before someone else does.
- me: "Do you have a LinkedIn profile?" my brother: "I used to." surely one of us is adopted.
- This is what career suicide looks like. <http://bit.ly/oo8YU>
- WHAT DID I TELL YOU. guess what's on CNN right now. "The Politics of Michael Jackson." hey CNN, I was KIDDING.

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