



Stanford eCorner

Don't Prolong Your Exit

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If you've decided to leave a large company in pursuit of other ventures, make it a clean break, advises Hugh Martin, Chairman and CEO of Pacific Biosciences. He cites a personal anecdote of one company who tried to reverse his decision through a laborious series of meetings with the executive team, and the disastrous results that ensued. If you plan to leave an organization, do so quickly and painlessly.



Transcript

If and when you resign from a company and you're going to go do something that you really believe in, recognize that the company has only one interest, and that is to keep you in the company. They're not focused on you. They're focused on their products and their company. And so when I left Hewlett-Packard, because this product was significant, they continually massaged my ego and told me how great I was and how important I was and had me talk to ever more important people. So in fact, some of you may remember two guys, Bill and Dave. I actually met with Bill and Dave having worked my way all the way up the management ladder. At the end, I was always going to leave and I knew that, but what ended up happening is of course the entire management chain at Hewlett-Packard got quite angry because I left because they had all tried to keep me there. So my first piece of advice to you is, if you're going to leave and you know you're going to leave, just leave, don't sit around and have a whole bunch of meetings.