



Returning Home to Find Things Have Changed

‘Boomerang’ employees, who return to a former employer later in their career, may find all is not as they left it. For some this means even greater opportunities, for others, there are new hurdles to overcome.

This is the second of a two-part series looking at the relatively recent phenomenon of “boomerangs”, people who leave a workplace only to return for a myriad of reasons. While this outside experience gives both employee and employer a huge opportunity to build on the past, sometimes returning executives find the organisation they return to is very different from the one they left.

Olivier, an engineering graduate was seeking a career in industry, and joined the French global telecommunications company, Alcatel-Lucent hoping to be offered an expatriate post. A year later he found himself working in the U.S. While the work was fascinating, and he liked the culture, after seven years he felt the “itch” to move on, and left the giant for a small internet-based start-up. Two years on, the company failed, and although Olivier had a Green Card, he chose to return to France where he joined the French public finance institution, “Caisse des Depots”.

The work was enjoyable enough but after six years he realised he preferred industry and application over theory and advice, so when offered the chance to return to Alcatel he had no hesitation in accepting.

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