

## Juliet Has a Job, Will Romeo Understand?

Dear Stephen:

*I know this is a career advice column, but I have something a bit out of the ordinary. I guess it's more of a life advice question that has to do with my career. Either way, I hope you'll answer it.*

*For context, I have been out of college for four years and work for one of the major manufacturers in a metropolitan market. I was an interior design major in school, but then I went into sales and absolutely love it. I suppose there's no harm in just saying I work for Herman Miller, and it is really a dream job.*

*That's the good news. The tricky part has to do with my boyfriend. We met in college, fell in love quickly and moved in together after school. He worked for a big bank while I built my career at Herman Miller. A couple years ago he decided to apply to law school. Low and behold, he got into a great school on the other side of the country and in the middle of nowhere, and he has asked me to transfer my job to be with him.*

*I really do think that he is "the one," and I truly love him, but I know if I go with him I will lose my client base and seniority. I also have a feeling once he finishes school we will move right back to the same metropolitan market we are in now, and so I will need to start over twice.*

*I think what is bothering me is we also moved to this city because it is where he got his current banking job. We are not even engaged, and I cannot figure out what I really want. I know he is the person I want to be with, but I don't want to end up resenting him because of the sacrifices I make for the relationship.*

*Will it be easier to make the move than I'm anticipating? Is there some business way to settle this whole mess, or do I really have to weigh my relationship against my career?*

**Soon to Be Star-Crossed**



You can send your workplace questions to Stephen at: [StephenSays@bellow.press](mailto:StephenSays@bellow.press).

Questions selected to be answered, will appear in this column. Please use the Subject: Stephen Says for all emails. Stephen Viscusi is a bestselling author, television personality, and CEO of The Viscusi Group, global executive recruiters located in New York. Follow Stephen on Twitter @WorkplaceGuru, Like Stephen on Facebook; and follow him on LinkedIn.

Dear Star-Crossed,

You have come to the right place, even if you didn't know it. Although, on second thought, maybe it's the wrong place. Suffice it to say, I have a lot of opinions on the topic. Whether they are helpful is another story.

I was confronted with a similar conundrum when I was about your age. I met my own special someone while at college and soon after graduating we moved to the same city, and I started my career at Haworth. When I

finished my graduate degree I was given an opportunity to take a promotion and move to the corporate headquarters in Michigan.

I was not yet married and very unsure about whether I wanted to do the long distance thing. My partner and I were comfortable in Manhattan, and it became quite clear if I were to head to the Midwest I'd be making that journey alone. However, my career was very important to me and when push came to shove, I decided to pull the trigger and make the move to Michigan.

The job was exciting. It was a more senior position in which I had a number of people reporting to me directly. What's more is I was able to get out of sales and move into my dream job, product development. Within three months, though, I found myself absolutely loving my job and hating every other element of my life just as much. More than anything, I really missed my "bae." (Depending on which generation you're in you might want to substitute this with "boo" or "babe").

Even all these years later, part of me wants to blame the freezing cold Michigan February, but truth be told, I was just upset to live away from my partner.

I am not Dear Abby so I am hesitant to tell you what to do with

your romantic life, but I can tell you based only on the statistics of divorce today (which are astronomically high) it is better to follow your career than to follow love. That being said, at the end of the day it is important to do what makes you happy in life. A fulfilling career offers little solace if the rest of your life is utterly miserable.

Maybe try to work things out long distance or see how things go with the two of you being apart from one another. My main advice is pretty simple: It's difficult to make concessions at this point in your life. If you were engaged, I would feel a lot better about telling you to just move with him and also about the prospects for your relationship even if you don't move with him. It's a contradiction, I know, but a ring shows commitment. Maybe I'm just old-fashioned, but getting engaged might solve the problem.

Still, I know plenty of people who have sorted out some creative arrangements, even late into their careers. One couple I know essentially operates in a one-for-you, one-for-me style, which means one of them will make a sacrifice for the other's career with the understanding the next time there is an opportunity for the person who sacrificed in the first case, the other person will hitch along for the ride. Another

couple I know does an even more extreme version of this. They have two kids, are very successful in their fields and ambitious beyond belief. Knowing they can't both be going full out at work and still raise their kids, they have a four-year on/off plan, where one of them will go 100% possible at their job and try to get as high as possible in their company at that time, while the other does their best to keep reasonable hours and focus on the family without closing any professional doors. Then they switch. I could go on with examples of how couples make it work. The point is there might be a right answer, but there isn't a universally right answer. This is a question only you and your boyfriend can answer.

From a business perspective, I'm sorry to say your thinking is probably right. It likely won't be so simple to just jump all over the country. Of course, compromise is the backbone of healthy relationships. Too much bending over backwards, though, will run you down.

I can't tell you what to do, but I can tell you that it's worth focusing on what makes you happiest. That is, after all, the most we can ask for.

I hope this helps!

**Stephen**