

CHAPTER 8:

A Note About Moonlighting

Moonlighting means working other professional, paid jobs outside of your work at 37signals. It's not a black and white topic. There are one-time gigs, other pursuits, or opportunities that help you grow and make life interesting. We want to support that. But we want to make sure professional endeavors outside of 37signals don't create conflicts of interest or affect your time, dedication, or performance at 37signals. So it's a delicate balance.

With that in mind, here are some examples of what we'd consider OK and what we would consider a conflict of interest and not OK:



OK

1. An occasional side gig, free or paid, for someone you know. For example, if you want to work on a friend's website, or a design or writing project for something you're involved with, that's fine.
2. An occasional speaking gig, free or paid. Someone's going to pay you to give a talk somewhere? That's fine as long as it doesn't involve multiple days off for travel (unless you use your own personal vacation time against this travel time).
3. A side business that's different from your day job, as long as the commitment is only a few hours a week. If you come to work exhausted because you're trying to start a full-time business on the side, it's going to impact your performance here.
4. Serve as an advisor for another company, or be on a board, as long as there's no conflict of interest. The time commitment must be under a few hours a month. And if there's a scheduling conflict, 37signals gets priority.
5. Do volunteer or occasional pro-bono work for a cause you're actively involved with. A little work here and there is fine, but, for example, becoming an organization's full-time web designer and being on the hook to work during your standard work day, etc, would not be OK.

Not OK

1. You can't work full time or part time for another company in our industry. If you're unclear about what our industry is, and you have a specific situation you'd like to talk about, ping Jason or David.
2. Go out on a regular speaking circuit tour which is going to require multiple days of travel multiple times a year. That's too disruptive to our own work schedule and to your fellow teammates.
3. Consult for other companies in our industry where there may be a conflict of interest (a competitor, a product tangentially related to 37signals, etc).

4. Be aggressive in marketing your availability for side work. If something comes to you through a friend or some connection, fine, but aggressively promoting something on the side will ultimately result in a conflict of interest here at work.
5. Take on anything outside of work that'll pull attention from work. For example, if you wanted to launch an app, but the app requires providing timely customer support to people who use the app, that's going to eat into your day here at work. That would ultimately be a problem.

In general

Here are a few guiding principles about whether something could be a problem:

- Is it competitive?
- Does it occupy a disproportionate amount of your time?
- Does it require you to be away during times when you're needed at work?
- Is it another paid gig that employs the same skills 37signals is paying you for?

In general, we'd like to be lenient within reason, but we're going to be strict if we see it impact your time, attention, or performance here at work.

It's hard to come up with one-size fits all rules. If you're in doubt, please reach out to your manager.

