

MILES MODELS, LLC

Changing Modeling Agencies

Breaking up is hard to do. Whether you've been with your modeling agency for 5 months or 5 years, it's never easy to cut ties and explore other opportunities. But, there may come a time when you feel the need to move on. Whatever your reasons, switching agencies is a big deal and you need to make sure you're doing it for the right reasons, and that you're doing it in the right way.

The Right Reasons to Switch Modeling Agencies

Your agency is no longer excited about you. Has your agent dropped off the radar? Have they stopped pushing your career? No longer booking you job after job? Sure, business might be slow, but your agency also might have stopped submitting you for jobs. If this is the case, it's time for a serious chat with your agent to find out what's really going on.

Your agency has the wrong clients for your look. If you have a high-fashion look but are signed to an agency that favors the commercial side of things, then you'll never get as many bookings as you'd like.

You no longer feel supported in your career goals. If your career plan doesn't match the plan your agency has set out for you, then neither of you is ever going to be happy. Before pulling the plug, though, make sure your goals are actually achievable (not every model is built to be a runway model, for example) and that your agency is actually aware of your plans.

You don't get along with your agent. You and your agent don't need to be best friends, but you do need to have a professional relationship that is open, honest, and civilized. If you find yourself avoiding all communication with your agent because you're afraid and/or uncomfortable, it might be time to move on.

They have a bad reputation. No model wants to be associated with an unprofessional organization that's known for losing models and clients.

A better opportunity has come up. If another agency has better clients, better agents, better pay, and better terms, then signing with them might be just what your career needs. Just don't jump the gun and let your emotions lead the way, though. Before signing with any agency, no matter how great they seem, you still need to do your homework and research them thoroughly.

The Wrong Reasons to Switch Modeling Agencies

You'd rather be signed to a big-name agency...just because. Remember, bigger isn't always better. While being on the roster of an elite agency does come with a certain amount of prestige, it doesn't guarantee work. You'll be a small fish in a big modeling pond, and that means lots of competition and less personal attention. Not always the best environment for a blossoming modeling career. Consider sticking with your smaller agency, unless of course it actually makes sense for you to step up.

You're upset/unhappy but haven't tried to fix the problem. Here's the thing: It's perfectly fine to want to switch agencies, but you need to a) make sure your agency is aware of your concerns and b) try to solve the issues together before leaving in a huff. The situation might be fixable with a little hard work and/or a change in direction. If it's not, or if your agent is unresponsive to your needs, then at least you tried!

When You Are Ready to Make a Switch

If you've communicated your concerns to your agent, try your best to work it out, and are ready to sign with a new model agency, there are still a few things you need to think about before officially parting ways:

The legalities. Before you do anything, you need to read over your modeling contract. Many contracts require models to give at least 30 days notice (sometimes longer) in order to terminate the agreement, and some have "loopholes" that allow you to get out of it if the agency hasn't fulfilled specific duties (like booking you a certain amount of work, for example). If you leave before properly terminating your contract, you could face serious legal ramifications, including financial penalties. Sometimes the agency won't particularly care if you're leaving (don't take it personally) and won't bring up the contract at all. If this is the case, you should still get the agency or a lawyer to draft a termination agreement, just to cover your back.

Get a Second Opinion. Whether it's from an attorney or an experienced model agent getting a second opinion can be very helpful. Experienced agents at ModelScouts.com often offer free guidance and advice if you are struggling with your decision.

Don't burn bridges. The modeling industry may seem big, but in reality, it is incredibly small, and chances are you're going to run into your agent or associated professionals at some point in your career. So, it's important that you leave your agency on the best terms possible. Break up with them in person if you can (Skype is a good backup plan), kindly explain your reasons, thank them for all they've done, and wish them all the best. And, never ever badmouth them to other models, agents, or industry professionals. There's a good chance your harsh words will get back to them, and that can greatly hurt your reputation as a professional model.