

How to Resign

As with everything there are right and wrong ways to do this. Doing it the wrong way can lead to a protracted process; having to resign more than once, bad feelings, and a poor reference. In contrast doing this the right way will make the process pain-free, and you and your former employer can move on personally and professionally.

At this stage you will have weighed up the reasons as to why you want to leave, location, new challenge, promotion, money, etc.

Next check your contract carefully:

- What is your notice period?
- Are you still in your probationary period – can you leave immediately?
- You are legally obliged to work your notice and doing so is best advised.
- Even where there is no written employment contract, this does not mean that you and your employer do not have duties and responsibilities to each other. Often, a written employment contract is replaced by a company handbook which lists the terms and conditions of your time at work. In the absence of an employment contract, you should refer to the company handbook.

Telling your employer:

- Always give your notice to the most senior person / manager; this may not be your line manager. If you don't what can happen is you end up in meetings with your direct manager, then his/her superior etc. Effectively you have to resign 2-3 times. This is energy sapping as you end up giving the same reasons over and over.
- Be prepared – anticipate how they are going to take it, be ready for the “Why?” question.
- Don't make it personal or turn it into one last stand. Say “I decided to move on” Don't say “I hate working for you or you're the worst manager ever”.
- Be positive – thank them for the opportunity, but remember don't make it personal.
- Remember that you have made your mind up and stick to it. Your employer may try to personalise the meeting and either get you to agree to stay or divulge some real reasons that they don't necessarily want to hear.
- Don't divulge personal information like your new salary, in some cases keeping your new employer confidential may be necessary. Employers are great at pointing out the downfalls of your new employer but not necessarily the upside which why you are going to join them.

Write a formal resignation letter:

- In its simplest form, a resignation letter should only include the following information: name, date, the person it is addressed, notice of termination of employment, when this is effective from and finally, your signature.
- Include some brief positive comments if appropriate.
- Give one copy to your employer and hold a copy for your own records.

Leave on the Right note:

- Make sure that you've completed any outstanding tasks and participated in the smooth handover of any unfinished work.
- Ensure that your boss knows that you've actively participated in this process and that you have been as co-operative as possible.
- Take time out to speak to all of your colleagues and associates. Give them support and make positive comments about their contribution to your time at the firm. Try and remain in touch because again, you never know when they'll be useful to your personal and career development in the future.
- Negotiate a fair settlement for any outstanding salary, holiday entitlement etc that are due to you.
- Get contact details of the people you want to stay in contact with.
- Be happy, smile and congratulate yourself, why not even spoil yourself a little.