

Your Exit Strategy: Resignation Recommendations

A career move ahead? A return to school?
A more favorable work environment?

When a better opportunity presents itself, it's time to resign and move forward. Resigning can be difficult to do though, even in the best of circumstances. Here's how to make your resignation as positive as possible.

Maintain Your Network

Your goal throughout the resignation process should be to maintain your relationships with your manager, co-workers and colleagues. To that end, emphasize your positive experiences on the job and minimize negativity in your communications.

Write a Good Letter

A good resignation letter is short and direct:

- State that it is your official notice of resignation
- Identify the date of your last day. The time period may be in your company handbook; the typical resignation period is two to four weeks.
- Commit to making the transition as smooth as possible. Offer to help train your replacement, but leave enough time to finish your own work.
- Thank the company for the opportunities and experiences you have had.
- Topics to avoid: Any grievances, conflicts or negative experiences. You do not need to state why you are leaving, or what you will be doing next.

Before You Deliver It

Employees are sometimes asked to leave immediately upon their resignation. Prepare for this scenario by taking home personal items. Gather contact information you need to maintain your network of managers, co-workers and colleagues in advance. Collect any information you need for your resume.

The Day of Your Resignation

Plan to hand-deliver your letter to your manager. At this time, state that you are leaving. Expect that your manager will react in some way. If you are nervous about this meeting, practice the points you want to communicate in advance. Remember to stay calm and pleasant face-to-face.

Set up a time with your manager to discuss the transition. You'll want to agree on the work you will complete before you leave, and what role, if any, you will have in finding and training your replacement.

The Exit Interview

You may be asked to do an exit interview with human resources. Use this time to focus on the positive experiences you've had. If you are asked about conflicts, try to keep your comments neutral.

Finally, get any questions about bonus checks, unused vacation or other compensation settled before you leave. That way, you're free to concentrate on your success ahead.

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million
people voluntarily
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