

You're Outta There: Giving Your Resignation

By Brooke Heath

You did everything to land a great new job! You aced the interview, and you were even able to negotiate a higher salary than you were initially offered. But before you get too far ahead of yourself and start envisioning your new desk and office with a view, you have one last matter of business: resigning from your current job.

The feelings and emotions that people feel when they reach this point in the job search can differ greatly. For some, it is all they can do to keep from jumping up and down at the thought of quitting, but for others, it can be intimidating or even somewhat sad. Read on to learn about some tips that can help you make your exit gracefully and with dignity.

Be 100% Certain.

This may seem obvious, but before you give your resignation, be absolutely sure that you are ready to leave. Very rarely can you go back on good terms after you give your resignation. Many employers will question your loyalty once they find out that you have been looking elsewhere.

Be Prepared.

Some employers ask that you leave immediately due to policies, security, or the fact that they are too prideful to keep you for the length of your notice. (I personally have had experience with the latter.) This is usually the worst-case scenario, but it is best to have your work area cleaned and free of your personal belongings just in case you will be leaving earlier than you planned. Also, if applicable, do not forget to delete any personal information that you have on your computer; for example, erase any family pictures on your screen saver, and disable the computer from instantly signing you into your email account.

Hold Your Tongue!

Perhaps you cannot stand your boss or certain coworkers and would just love to tell them off and make a dramatic exit. However, before you tell your boss where to go or use any choice expletives, remember that how you act and what you say may (and probably will) come back to haunt you. You just never know what your future may hold and whom you may re-cross paths with! Before you go to give your resignation to your employer, take a deep breath. Thank him or her for the opportunity to gain experience with the company. Be gracious, and avoid petty or negative comments.

Also, you may feel the need to brag to other coworkers about your new job and what great opportunities await you, but don't. You want the contacts that you established there to remain positive.

Give Enough Notice

If you have a contract that states how much notice is required, abide by it. Otherwise, two weeks' notice is what experts consider standard. Offer to help train your replacement during this time or to create detailed instructions for whomever will take over your work. If that is not necessary or something you can complete in the time frame, use

the time to tie up loose ends related to major projects or assignments. Remember that if you give two weeks' notice, you need to stay with the employer for the duration of the two weeks. It is not considered acceptable to say you will stay for two weeks and then take half of the time off. Continue to work hard during your last days with your current employer.

Important Details

You may want to meet with your HR department to discuss any outstanding or stored-up salary, sick days, vacation days, compensation, or bonuses you have left. Also, it may be necessary for you to sign COBRA (Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act) forms to prolong your insurance coverage.

Don't forget to turn in any keys, badges, phones, computers, or documents in your possession that belong to the company.

Finally, write a letter of resignation stating your name, supervisor, title, and the last day you will be employed by the company, and send a copy to your supervisor and the HR department.

Again, remember to leave on a positive note, and plan to keep in touch with important coworkers, supervisors, etc., to maintain a strong network of contacts.