

What to Do During Your Last Two Weeks

By Brooke Heath

You have given your current employer two weeks' notice. But don't think that from here on out you can slack off. It is important that you treat these remaining two weeks like any other workweeks by working hard and being productive.

Finish the "Race."

Maybe you are thinking that right now would be a great time to use up those accrued vacation days, right? Wrong! It is extremely important that during the last few days with the company you finish on a positive note. If you were running a race, you wouldn't walk the last 100 meters, would you? If for no other reasons than your pride and ethics, make sure that you "sprint" across the finish line during your last two weeks with your current employer. It is not considered acceptable to say you will stay for two weeks and then take half of the time off.

Don't Burn Bridges!

Perhaps you are leaving because of a less-than-desirable work environment, and you were treated poorly by a coworker or supervisor. The last thing that you should do in this situation is tell your boss or coworker exactly what you think of him or her and where he or she can go! Hold your tongue, grin, and bear it. If you have made it this far, two weeks won't kill you. Also, if you cause drama in your place of employment, you will virtually undo all of the work you have done throughout your time with the company.

You may think that you will never see any of these people again, but the past has a funny way of coming back to haunt you. Who knows? You may be at a future interview and find that the hiring manager is your old boss's cousin (true story-it happened to me!). For this reason, and so many others, maintain your professionalism!

Also, there are these things called background checks that many potential employers conduct. You would hate it if your current employer put in your file that he or she wouldn't recommend you for rehire based on your last two weeks' performance. Sometimes the best way to patch up an injured relationship with a boss is to show that you will continue to work hard for him or her for your remaining days with the company.

Remember that how you act and what you do now may be the lasting impression that you leave on your company. Throughout this time, maintain your professional credibility, and don't do anything to damage it!

Use Your Time Wisely.

What should you be doing during this time? Ideally, you should utilize this time to tie up loose ends, such as reports or other assignments that are due. If you are all caught up, offer to help train your replacement or to create detailed instructions for whomever will take over your work.

You may also 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.

It is also important that you clear your work area of personal belongings, etc. 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.

You may also be asked to meet with your supervisor for an exit interview. During this interview, don't be petty and talk about how much you dislike the work environment. Again, maintain a professional demeanor.

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

Leave on the Best Terms Possible.

When your two weeks are up, be sure to thank your supervisor for the opportunity to work at the company, and plan to keep in touch with important coworkers, supervisors, etc., to maintain a strong network of contacts.