



Make a Graceful Exit

Making the decision to leave your job is hard enough, let alone finding a new position to go to, but do remember to make your resignation as graceful as possible - it's in your best interest. You shouldn't burn your bridges, especially in business because you never know when paths may cross again. You will also need references in the future so it's important to leave on a positive note if possible.

Follow these tips to make your exit as smooth as possible:

- If you are leaving to take a new position, make sure your new job is confirmed in writing before you hand in your resignation, and make sure you have checked the new contract thoroughly.
- Tell your boss you are resigning before you tell your work colleagues - it won't go down well if your boss hears the news on the grapevine.
- It is much more polite to tell your boss in person, face to face, not over the phone and not by leaving a letter on their desk. You can follow up your resignation in writing after you have met with your boss.
- Be clear in yourself as to why you are leaving and let your employer know the reasons. However save any constructive criticism for your exit interview.
- Make sure they know that you want to leave on the best possible terms, giving them the right notice period and assisting in handing over to your replacement.
- Ask your boss if they will be happy to provide a written reference, not all companies do but if you can get one, it is useful to have. Also ask if they are happy to be listed as a referee on future job applications.
- It's an absolute no-no to try to leave a job without working your correct notice period, even if your new employer has suggested you do so. They will have more respect for you if you show respect for your current employer.
- Keep in touch with the people you've worked for, including your boss. Never underestimate the value of a good network.
- Be seen to make every possible attempt to leave the workplace in the best possible condition - try to improve your performance before you leave rather than let it slip. Your boss will remember the last few weeks you were there when writing your references.
- Tie up loose ends as best you can.
- Follow company protocol about informing customers/clients of your impending departure.

Resignation Letter

Finally, write a letter of resignation - this can be simple but should include:

- Your intention of resigning from your current position
- Your notice period
- Your last day of work
- A thank you to your employer

Example Letter

Dear (Manager's name),

I hereby tender my resignation from my role as Systems Administrator with TechCo.

My resignation is effective from today. As per the terms of my contract of employment, I am providing Technical Co Ltd with four weeks' notice. My last working day will be August 16th 2008.

Thank you for the opportunity to work for this company.

Yours sincerely,

I.B. Leaving

Do not be tempted to say anything bad in the letter - it will remain on file and may show up again at some point in your future. After the written notice, you will probably be called in for an exit interview, so HR can find out why you're leaving. This will be your chance to give constructive criticism.

When you finish working somewhere always try to leave on good terms. The IT industry can prove to be a relatively small playing field; your existing boss may turn up again in your future, either directly or indirectly when you change jobs, and be asked their opinion of you. You want to ensure it's a good one!

