



RESIGNING TIPS

How to Resign:

The way in which you resign specifically underlines the level of commitment you have just made to your new employer. Many candidates resign improperly leaving the door open to counter-offer measures imposed by the current employer. The notice period can be a particularly vulnerable time for candidates. In many respects it is similar to going through a divorce, so be assured that those feelings that you might have in the pit of your stomach over facing your boss are quite normal.

Follow these simple steps and your resignation will be a straight forward, low-stress process:

The Resignation Letter:

Once you have written your resignation letter, arrange a brief meeting with your superior. It is imperative that this letter is direct, to the point and without embellishment.

Here is a suggested letter which we have found quite appropriate:

Dear John,

Please accept this letter as my official notice of resignation. I have made a commitment to another organization and will start with them in two weeks. Naturally, that it is my intention to work diligently with you and my team members to make this transition as smooth as possible. As I am most interested in leaving on a positive and professional note, I welcome your thoughts on how we can most best accomplish this goal.

The Meeting :

Call your boss and schedule a 5-10 minute meeting. The purpose of the meeting is professional but a private matter. You set the agenda with your boss. You must be positive and professional. This will not be a time for idle conversation, progress updates or a chance for your employer to find out what it will take to keep you on board. This is the time when you inform your employer of your decision and commitment to make a career move.



The only purpose of the meeting is to discuss how to make the transition a positive one. Open the meeting by saying "John, this is my letter of resignation. I'd like you to read it before we discuss how we can make a proper transition." Be prepared to outline your plan for the transition, especially as it relates to the start date at your new firm.

Do not approach your boss with the mentality of apologizing. The "I'm sorry" or "I'm thankful for everything we've been able to do together" routines are dangerous and could jeopardize the commitment you've made to your new employer. You must set aside emotionally dangerous issues and be in control. If your employer begins to ask a lot of "why" or "how" questions state that you'll be happy to address these questions perhaps in a couple of months after you're settled into the new role.

Emotional Control:

The moment you resign you upset the balance in the relationship with your boss and create an entirely new situation. Your current boss is used to dealing with you as an employee, now you're taking control.

You are no longer, from the moment of resignation, his/her subordinate and there just might be a battle for who controls your career.

Who knows what's better for you and your career, you or your boss? Are you going to control your career or is he/she? An interesting consideration is that should your employer persist with questions or dialogue regarding your decision what he/she is actually telling you in the sub text is that "I don't believe you're capable of making this decision and I'll make it for you." The more your firm throws at you to keep you, the more concerned you should be because it could be an indicator that things in your firm are seriously wrong.

When is the best time to give notice?:

Usually, at the end of the week and late in the afternoon. This usually minimizes your employer's opportunity to spend the requisite time to develop a counter-offer.

Your current employer does not have a need to know where you'll be working after you leave.

In the event of competition issues, assure your employer that you do not intend to break your contract and that you will disclose the name of your new employer when you have settled into your new role. This can often be a way for managers to angle themselves into a counter-offer discussion by informing you of all the "wrong" things with your new organization. This reinforces the notion that they don't really believe you are capable of making a sound decision on your own, and probably one of the reasons that you decided to make the change in the first place. The point of the meeting is to discuss how to make the transition as smooth as possible for everyone involved. It is not a meeting to debate the merits of the decision you have already made in your own best interest.



What to Expect From Your Boss:

Some of you will agonize over this meeting. Others will move through it with ease. In either case you need to be prepared.

Employers have only a few possible reactions to your resignation:

- “Clear your desk and leave!”
- “How can you do this to me, the company, after all we've been through together?”
- “How can you do this to the client, and as you know we're so backlogged?!”
- “Come on, you can't be serious, what's it going to take to keep you?”
- “I understand, I accept your resignation and want to work out a smooth transition.”

Whatever their reaction, take confidence in knowing that you have been well prepared both emotionally and professionally. Having realistic expectations of the resignation meeting, the possible reactions from your boss and the appropriate positioning of your resignation itself, you'll be able to maintain control of your career.

I would like to recognize Mike Goldman, CPC of Strategic Associates, INC. and Jeff Skrentny CPC, CTS of The Jefferson Group for their extensive work in the area of resignations and counter-offers.