

McCarthy**Adams** 
Recruitment Specialists

Guide

How to resign

How to resign

In today's society, where a job is no longer guaranteed for life, handing in your notice is something many people become accustomed to. But like most things, there are right and wrong ways to approach the situation. When it comes to resigning, there are certain etiquettes to abide by to ensure success and a smooth transition.



Setting the scene

In an ideal world, resigning from your job would be pleasant and straightforward. Your boss would be understanding and supportive of your needs and no bad feelings would arise. The fact is, too few employees experience such an easy ride.

How you handle your resignation has an impact on your career. Conforming to the correct etiquette can go a long way in ensuring confidence as your career develops; whereas approaching your resignation in the wrong way could be detrimental to your immediate future. After all, a good reference is not just valuable, but vital.

Once you have made up your mind to resign, your most urgent task is to inform your manager. A letter of resignation is the formal way to communicate your action and it acts as a legal document stating the date from which you wish your notice period to begin.

How you write your letter depends on the circumstances of your departure. A simple resignation letter should include details of the person to whom it is addressed, the notice of termination of employment, when this is effective from and your signature.

If you are leaving on good terms, or are particularly sorry to be leaving behind valued colleagues and friends, you may want to add an extra sentence or two thanking your boss for the opportunities you have been given, and expressing your regret. A touch of sentiment, concisely phrased, can go a long way and costs nothing.

On the other hand, if your resignation is as a result of adverse working conditions or worse, a clash of personalities with your boss or another colleague, it can be dangerous to go into detail. Simply state your intention to resign coolly. There is no need to elaborate. Remember, the letter has one sole purpose – to inform your employer of the date you wish to terminate your employment. Keep it simple and to the point. Don't commit bitterness to paper.

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How do I tell my boss?

You've made your decision to go to pastures new, and written the letter that legally notifies your employer of your actions. How do you feel?

It's not uncommon to experience a mixture of emotions. Guilt is often the first - they'll think I've deserted them! Anxiety then sets in. You imagine the moment when you tell your boss you're leaving and you try to visualize their expression and reaction. The notice period? gulp! How will they treat me? What if they try to convince me to stay? What if they don't? You may feel sad about the friends that you will leave behind.

Remind yourself you are ecstatic at landing your new job. But on the other hand, you know you have yet to do the dreaded deed; tell your boss!

The reality is, most people at some point in their lives, including your boss, will have been in your situation. Despite the fact you may have been a valued member of the team, the company will not collapse without you. You are not the first person to resign from there and you won't be the last - so stop beating yourself up over this!

There is never a 'right time' to resign. Just use common sense and judgment:

- Keep it confidential - your boss will appreciate being the one to decide who else to tell, how and when to break the news.
- Find the right moment to see your boss - just before he is about to make a presentation to the board of directors is NOT a good time!
- Be sure of your reasons for leaving - if necessary, rehearse them.
- If you don't want to reveal where you're going, you're perfectly within your rights to not declare your intentions.
- Be prepared for a negative reaction, even anger - take it on the chin, block your ears and re-state the facts clearly and simply; remember, you are just resigning - the initial shock will pass.
- If there is likely to be a handover period to a colleague or new person, reassure your boss you'll be helpful and cooperative - don't be negative.
- Remember your reasons for leaving - stick to your guns!

Breaking the news of your resignation could be a daunting experience - or perhaps it will be a doddle!

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Top 10 tips

- Celebrate!
- Prepare your letter
- Why delay? Do it today!
- Ask for time alone with your boss
- Be professional
- Leave on good terms
- Maintain interest in your role
- Be discreet
- Relax
- Celebrate!

