



Career Coaching

Quitting Well

*leave your job gracefully without
burning any bridges*

leaving a job is never fun

Even if it's the worst. job. ever. But even though it can be challenging, it doesn't have to be the worst. experience. ever. There are things you can do to make the transition as smooth as possible, without burning any bridges.

1. Give appropriate notice; face-to-face if possible.

Your relationship with your manager is just that--a relationship. Your manager should be the first to know and this conversation should happen face-to-face. This can mean scheduling a short meeting or video conference if you work remotely. This will communicate that you care about how you leave the company and will come in handy if you ever need a reference or are networking.

Two weeks is the standard notice for any job, but consider a week or two extra if you're leaving an executive position or are working on multiple projects. Be honest with your new employer about how much time you will need to transition from your current role to your new one so that things don't get tricky and you don't burn out before you even get settled into your new position.

2. Offer to help with the transition.

No matter how on top of it your employer is, there is likely to be a gap between having you in your current position and hiring someone else. Offering to help with the transition can help ease the stress and burden on your employer and your team/department. What may seem obvious to you may not be to your colleagues and providing some context of your day-to-day and long-term projects is always helpful.

Protip: Consider a more gradual transition if you have the time. This could look like moving from 40 hours a week to 20 hours a week to 10 hours a week and then on to a consulting basis as needed until you are completely out.

3. Think about your team/department.

You're not just leaving a job, you're leaving people behind. This can take a toll on team dynamics and, depending on how well you get along with your coworkers, it can be a hard adjustment. One day you're there, and the next you're gone. Think about how you can make the transition smoother for your employer and for your team.

Protip: Consider having a final team meeting or team lunch to go over any last-minute details and to officially say goodbye. Leave detailed notes for those who work closest to you (in every direction) about where you are with current and future projects so they can step in as needed until your replacement arrives. Lastly, put together a go-to binder with all the info your employer and team will need to keep up the pace after your final day: log-in/account info, helpful notes, etc.

4. Don't trash the exit interview.

Not every manager or company will do this, but if yours does be strategic in how you handle the exit interview. This isn't an opportunity to air your grievances. This is an opportunity for honest and meaningful feedback. Be honest and authentic about your experience, but provide possible solutions to issues and gaps in knowledge you may have noticed. If it really was the worst job ever and you have nothing positive to say, simply thank them for the learning experience and keep it moving.

Bottom line: You want to leave on a good note--you might need a reference or the networking later.

5. Make sure you write a resignation letter.

Whether an actual letter or an email, sum up all the details of your conversation with your manager so that there's a paper trail. Keep this succinct and professional. Not sure how to best do this? Check out my template on the next page! Feel free to customize it to suit your specific needs.

resignation template

Dear [NAME],

Thank you again for meeting with me today. Please accept this formal letter of resignation from my role as [INSERT YOUR JOB TITLE HERE] at [INSERT COMPANY NAME HERE.]

My final working day will be [INSERT DAY AND DATE INCLUDING YEAR HERE (ex.: Friday, May 19, 2021)].

I have learned a lot during my time here, and I appreciate the opportunity to contribute to such a dynamic team and organization. I am confident that what I have learned here will be of value to me in future roles.

Please let me know how I can help make the transition as seamless as possible. In the meantime, I will work to wrap up any pending projects and deliverables.

I wish you and [COMPANY NAME] all the best and welcome any future opportunities to remain in touch.

Thank you,
[YOUR NAME]

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