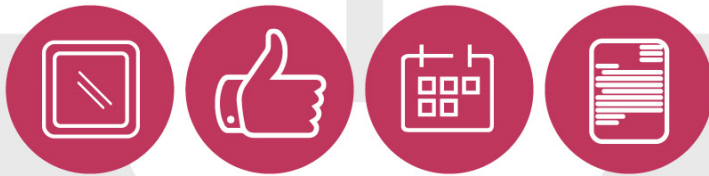


How to Resign Without Burning Bridges

How to Gracefully Resign Without Burning Bridges



Picture this: you've developed a great set of skills, worked alongside some excellent people, and really enjoyed turning up to work every day to fulfil your role. But now it's time to move on. Whilst it may be the right time for a change, jumping ship after being an extremely loyal and dedicated employee can be a tough call to make.

Taking the wrong approach when leaving your current employment can put those important bridges you've spent years building in jeopardy. With so much on the line, how can you gracefully exit from your employer without damaging your reputation and your career's future?

Honesty is Still the Best Policy

Always be honest with yourself and work out why you want or need to leave, and avoid making any rash decisions by talking it through with trusted friends and family, and if possible, even your Manager. The best career decisions are usually carefully thought and planned out. Moving out of a familiar environment and towards the unknown can be daunting. Don't underestimate the value of conducting research on where you may move on to so you can be confident you're not making a mistake, as there may not be any guarantee you can return.

However, if you do decide that resignation is the only way forward then make sure you do so properly and professionally; without burning bridges or lowering your level of performance. Write a resignation letter and hand it to your manager; Friday afternoon is often a good time to do this, as there is rarely much time for them to react immediately to your resignation, and gives them the weekend to take it in. This curtails the immediate, emotional reaction, which can sometimes result in conflict, before allowing you to come together on the Monday and discuss the matter calmly.

There is a chance that you will be presented with a counter-offer, but if you have chosen to resign then stick to your guns. Accepting a counter-offer often turns out badly for both employer and employee, as the employee's initial problems are rarely addressed and the employer ends up having to persist with a disengaged employee. For more on counter-offers, take a look at [our blog](#) on the topic.

Avoid going public straight away and wait for all the details to be ironed out first, as providing feedback or criticism that wasn't asked for can land you in hot water, and sharing negative messages about your previous employer on social media account never paints you in a good light. If you feel the need to speak your mind, your exit interview will give you a chance to clear the air. In your exit interview, explain the reasons you want to leave and how you think the company can address them. Be careful to be objective and to provide constructive criticism, otherwise it is very easy to come across as if you're complaining.

During the Transition

Whilst notice periods can vary, the rule of thumb is that you should always work the length of time noted on your contract. Although, if you are in a crucial role, you could offer to stay slightly longer to help find and train a replacement. This avoids leaving your employer in a tough situation, and lets you leave in an even more positive light. If you need to, and if you can, offer to continue working after your notice period to show you're doing everything you can to smooth out the transition process.

Don't forget to leave with a good impression by finishing strongly. Decreasing your contribution during your final weeks at a work place can reflect poorly on you in the years to come, especially if you need a good recommendation. Keep in mind that your last four weeks is the thing that most people at your workplace will remember, so it pays to work even harder than before in order to leave a good impression. Remain focused on keeping your head down and getting work done. Disrupting the natural order of things and talking about your issues with the company with former or current employees could risk damaging your reputation and career if passed back to your Manager.

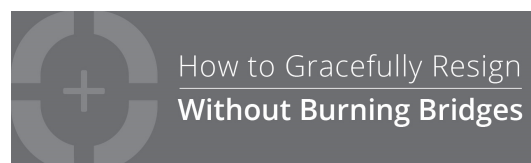
You want to make sure you leave on as good a note as possible, as this will have a positive impact not just on your current work environment, but also on your job search and potential new workplace. Giving 110% until you start elsewhere will leave you with a good reference, and continue your own personal culture of success.

Recognising Those Who Have Helped You

Throughout your career, there would have been a number of people who have helped you achieve success and played an important role in getting you where you are today. Whether it be in person or through a personal note, thank them and describe how they have had a positive impact on your working relationship. Even if you had a difficult boss, it can be worthwhile to find the time to thank them and show your appreciation whilst remaining genuine.

Doing all of the above will ensure you leave on great terms and maintain the connections you made throughout your time there. Keep in touch with former colleagues and bosses where possible in case your new job doesn't play out as expected and you'd rather have your old one back. The key to not burning bridges when leaving is staying positive with everyone, from start to finish.

Recommendations and Endorsements



Be honest with yourself and your employer.

Give plenty of notice and your best performance.



Show gratitude to those who helped you and leave on great terms.

Ask for feedback and a letter of recommendation.



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During your final days, you'll have the unique opportunity to get real feedback on the areas you need to improve on. Approach your boss and those who have had to manage your performance since you started working with them. Ask them for their feedback, and take note of it so that you can implement it in your next role. Before you consider asking your Manager for a letter of recommendation, look at your employer's policy on providing references, as you may have to go through your HR department in order to get one. If this is the case then discuss the possibility of requesting a personal reference on your performance instead, perhaps in the form of a LinkedIn recommendation.

Summary

Focusing on the best way to approach your boss, tell your co-workers and prepare to move into a new job whilst leaving a good impression, can be an extremely difficult thing to do when you've worked with the same people for years. However, if you find yourself leaving your current employer, but haven't yet had a chance to secure the next step in your career, then **Speak to one** of our specialist IT Recruitment Consultants in confidence about where you can see yourself going next.