

# Resigning with Dignity: Why leaving your job with professionalism is important

Contributed by Michael Fleischner  
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Perhaps you've seen it, maybe more than once ... your co-worker has resigned, and they'll earn their last few paychecks getting on everyone's nerves. Negative or hostile remarks, projects left undone, an unwillingness to help, tardiness and truancy - they appear delighted to "poison the waters" before saying their final goodbye. It's known as "Short-Timer's Syndrome" and though they're not doing themselves any favors, we can thank them for the lesson they leave us - don't burn your bridges on the way out the door!

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{bot\_wrgoogle}Hopefully, for most of us, leaving one job for another is a positive experience, one where our co-workers are sad to see us go but happy we are moving on to bigger and better things. There is no ill will and we will likely get a positive reference in the future.

However, if you are leaving your job with unhappiness and disdain, you need to set your hostility aside. Resign with dignity and professionalism. It's the best thing you can do for yourself, both personally and professionally.

## Avoid the Leeches

There may be people who want to drag you down as you prepare to leave. As tempting as it may be to vent about all the unsavory aspects of your job, it's more important to remain professional. Leave on good terms; anything less is a professional black mark against you. Avoid gossip hounds. You certainly don't want to be remembered for your spitefulness or for turning staff morale on its head.

## Put it in Writing

Giving written notice is important. You don't need to write a novel about your reasons for leaving, just keep it short and to the point. Be professional and courteous, and inform your supervisor of your resignation before you tell anyone else. Under most circumstances, you should give at least two weeks' notice, but in the case of administrative and managerial jobs, four weeks is more appropriate.

## Be Helpful, not Harmful

Do everything necessary to complete outstanding work before you go. If you know who is taking over your duties, make a point to train them effectively, and offer to be available to answer questions even after your departure. If your replacement is not hired yet, offer to be available anyway. Chances are they won't call you, but it makes an excellent impression if you're willing to lend a hand.

## Get Things Done

If there are outstanding projects that can't be completed prior to your departure, prepare reports or lists of what needs to be done. Share names, numbers, and e-mail addresses of outside contacts or agencies critical to completing these duties. Clean out your desk and organize files, books, and supplies to help those replacing you.

## Choose Your Words Carefully

If asked to complete an exit interview, resist the urge to bash the company. If there are concerns that should be addressed, mention them only if you know they've been brought up before. It isn't the time to start stirring the pot. However, if you have critical information that you feel must be shared, you may want to find a way to cautiously divulge it. You can't control if it gets acted on, but at least you know you told someone.

Michael Fleischner is the Managing Director of ResumeEdge.com, one of the nations leading resume writing service providers, offering professional resume writing, editing, and guidance. For additional resume writing resources, including free sample resumes, visit

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