



## Introduction

Resigning from your present employer can be an uncomfortable and at times, a difficult process. You will often have mixed feelings, and if it is handled badly it can cause considerable discomfort for both parties. While it is sometimes difficult to predict how your resignation will be received, you need to plan to make sure you have observed all of your legal and moral obligations and be prepared for the worst case scenario: a speedy departure.

Once you have decided to make a career move and join a new organisation to develop your career, there will be a high level of excitement in starting this new role. It is in your interest to make this transition smooth. In this guide we outline some helpful hints that have been gained from our years of experience in assisting people's career development. We hope you find this useful.

## Preparation

If you are thinking of resigning, the first step is to review the details of your letter of appointment or contract and any constraint and confidentiality clauses that were included in those documents. Should you be in a position that pays commission or bonus, review under what circumstances those benefits are paid upon resignation. It is far better to be prepared in these areas than to be surprised and inconvenienced by the enforcement of a lengthy notice period when you are keen to start in a new role. Here are some considerations:

### Notice Period

Usually the required notice period from either party will have been specified in your letter of appointment. However, in its absence, you may need to agree a reasonable period of notice with your employer. It is fair to note here that the pay cycle of your organisation has no legal status regarding notice periods but it is regularly used as a guide, depending on length of service with your organisation and your seniority. One to four weeks notice may apply.

### Resignation

It is important to resign in writing. Your letter should be brief and does not need to include reasons for your departure. The letter should be polite and firm and should provide an appropriate notice period and specify your date of departure. It is sensible in this letter to thank

your employer for the experience you have gained. Don't forget you may well cross paths again in the future. Everyone at some stage in their career moves on from one company to another.

### Employer Action

The reaction to your resignation can vary. In an ideal circumstance, your employer will accept your resignation graciously and ask you to work out your notice period to effectively hand over your responsibilities. However, some organisations have a policy of asking you to leave the organisation immediately, so you need to be prepared for this event. Under those circumstances, they are legally obliged to pay you for your notice period and any other entitlements you are due. They may require, as they have paid you for that period of time, that you do not start in a new role for that period. At all times we encourage you to comply with the notice period required. However if you do leave immediately at your request, understand the company has no requirement to pay you for any notice period.

### Leave Payment

You are entitled to be paid for any unused annual leave and for any annual leave loading if it is applicable to your position. In some organisations unused sick leave is also paid upon departure although this is unusual and certain conditions often apply.

### Commissions or Incentives

If you are due commissions or incentive payments, it would be sensible to document these and attach them to your resignation letter. If there is going to be a dispute at least you have recorded your view in writing.

### Superannuation

Your accumulated superannuation is fully transferable, but of course cannot be accessed just because you have changed employers. Certain notifications will need to be completed in relation to your rollover and you should enquire about specific details through your human resources area or directly with your superannuation fund.

### Company Car

Ensure your company vehicle is returned in a clean and professional state. Return spare keys, fleet and petrol cards and ensure you sign off for these items, noting the date and time.

### Computers

Ensure these items are handed over in good repair and a receipt noting the condition is obtained. It is very sensible to ensure that you have deleted any personal information from these computers. Make sure all company records and files are up to date and in good order. The company has paid you to do that it is an obligation on your part.

### Mobile Phones

Ensure you have assembled all of the accessories with the mobile phone before handing this back. Don't forget to delete any numbers of a personal nature.

### Home Phone Costs

At times companies pay home phone costs for their employees. You may want to seek agreement from the company that those home phone costs will be covered up to the day of your departure and that you will be sending them an account as soon as it is received.

### Keys and Access Cards

Ensure all keys and access cards are returned and you are given a receipt for them. Again, the checklist you have provided can serve for this purpose, but your company may well have a departure checklist. If that is the case, ensure you are given a copy.

### Your Office or Workstation

The way you depart from the company will often be the lingering memory for those who remain. Your office or workstation will be fair evidence of your professionalism and our suggestion is that you ensure all filing and records are completed and handed over to your supervisor. Again, if necessary, have this acknowledged in writing.

## Who Do I Tell?

It is important the first person to find out about your resignation is your supervisor. No one likes to learn of these things secondhand and on the rare occasion where you may actually change your mind, you don't need the rest of your team to have known your intentions. Having resigned and moved on from an organisation, it is important to advise relevant parties of your move. These might include; your bank, your superannuation fund, employer or trade associations, professional bodies and advise them of your new contact details. Be careful not to break any of your employment responsibilities with your employer.