

## **How to Resign from your Job**

### **By Rose Jonas, Ph.D.**

**You need to quit your job. Someone's made you an offer you can't refuse. What's the best way to tell your boss you're leaving the company?**

It can be difficult to turn in your resignation, especially if you like your boss or the cause you work for. The best way to tell your boss you're leaving is to use the right date, the right time, and the right words.

The right date is whatever the company policy or employee contracts say: two weeks, a month, whatever. Loyal employees are often tempted to give long notice dates, so the company can find a replacement, the leaving won't hurt the company, etc. I don't recommend that, and here's why.

Once you've said you're leaving, the organization begins to change away from you, and you lose your impact. Also, you develop a short-timer's attitude sooner. And, even if you don't, the company will interpret any slowdown on your part as being a short-timer. Additionally, if the company's in trouble and is making cuts, if your name is already on the short list for leaving, the company could ask you to go more quickly.

So, give the amount of notice your company tells you to give.

The right time is late in the day and close to the weekend. Bosses often become angry when an employee leaves, even if the reason is completely understandable or outside the employee's control. People take things personally, and it's going to be a hassle replacing you. Your resignation may be a smart career move for you, but it means more work for your boss. Tell him or her at a time when the weekend will give you both a buffer.

In terms of the right words, get straight to the point. Say you have some bad news, that you're leaving the company, that you've enjoyed working here, etc. But don't do a lot of small talk. This isn't the time to discuss football scores.

**What if you have a whole list of things that could be improved if the company would only pay attention. Should you put those recommendations in your letter of resignation?**

Employees often want to make one final contribution to their company by writing a report that either snitches on other employees or outlines problems to be solved. The boss may have an interest in the company gossip but seldom has a use for or puts to work those kinds of suggestions. You couldn't get the ideas through while you had the job. Why would your words on a piece of paper work after you've gone?

I often tell people that Richard Nixon resigned the presidency of the United States with a one-line letter to Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. Yours shouldn't be much longer than that.

**They say you should never burn your bridges. But what if your work situation is unbearable. Can you ever leave before your date of resignation?**

Once you're a short-timer, it can be psychological torture to come to your job everyday. But unless you fear for your physical safety, never leave a job early. It haunts you, from an employment standpoint (you "abandoned the job"). Let's face it. You've stood it this long; you can take it a few more days. So, do what your mother told you to do and dress nice, put a smile on your face, and just do it.