

Resignation and Counter Offers

Walking into your boss's office and verbally resigning can cause some problems. Your boss can be taken off guard, get upset, sometimes feel blindsided, and get very angry. It is important to prepare and choose to rehearse your delivery. Your boss will probably hammer you for answers on why? You could be asked, "Is there anyone in particular that is forcing your resignation? Is there anything you don't like? What would you change it if you could?" You might think it is a great idea to offer your incredible insights to such a wonderful and loving person.

Think again! This is an emotional time. It is not time to bring up dislikes with your boss. His wounds are fresh, and you don't want to provoke a wounded animal.

Remember as soon as you said "I am out the door", your boss sees you as an outsider looking in - you are no longer on the A team. He may just be looking for a way to get back at you – so keep your big "flap trap" closed.

If you are going to open it, make sure it is singing the most positive melodies about your experiences at work, and those with your boss. Just as you made a great first impression when you were hired, you want to exit the "stage door" leaving the most positive of impressions.

Your delivery should go something like this: "Mr. Boss man, can you spare a few minutes? I need to discuss something important with you. I accepted a new job and it has nothing to do with the opportunity here, you and the company have been great. This is the right fit and timing for me and my family. I am going to miss you. You have been a great and supportive boss. I am also going to miss everyone here. I hope it is ok if I come by from time to time to say hello. When I get to work on my first day I will send you all my contact information, and if you need any help or need any information regarding my work here, feel free to have anyone call me. If I can help, I will go out of my way to help

you out, even if it means coming in after hours. Here is the standard letter, with everything in there to make it official. Thank you for your time.” Then simply get up and leave.

The Written Resignation

If you prefer to do it with a written resignation, it carries certain advantages over the verbal resignation. The main one is - there is no opportunity for discussion when your boss finds out about it. With the written resignation, you have the advantage of delivering your message exactly as set out, without a chance for deviation. When you do it verbally, you can forget something, or your boss can turn the tables, and really go after you with question after question, making you feel very uncomfortable. With the written approach, you get to avoid the hot seat, (at least temporarily). Hopefully, by the time you are called in to his office, he has cooled down.

The written word is powerful. It tends to be viewed as permanent and irrefutable. Avoid getting into detailed reasons why you are leaving, or which company you are going to. Just like the verbal resignation, stay away from dropping any negative bombs into the mix. Keep it positive, since again you want to leave a great impression. You never know when your careers might meet up again.

To keep your resignation short, simple, and positive, you may want to write something like this:

“I want to thank you for all you have done for me here at X Company. It’s been a pleasure working with you and the other great people here. I have accepted a new job, so I am tendering my resignation as of today and I am available to work here until Nov XX 20XX. This decision has nothing to do with the exceptional opportunity you have given me here. I wish everyone the best of success. When I get to my new job I will send you my contact information. Please feel free to contact me at any time if I can be of assistance in helping, or solving any issues about my work here.”

The Counter Offer

Eight out of ten employees who accept counteroffers don't complete the following year *with their employer* - according to Paul Hawkinson (NBEW, "*Counteroffer Acceptance, the Road to Career Ruin*" by Paul Hawkinson).

What is a counteroffer? A counter-offer is when your current employer, as a response to tendering your resignation, offers you a matching offer or a better offer with the hopes of retaining you.

Why should you turn down a counteroffer from your current employer? You should turn it down because the reason you were seeking a new opportunity probably still exists. These have not changed. If you do accept, your current employer will most likely have lost trust in you, and may consider you a liability... damaged treacherous goods.

Since you can no longer be counted on in most circumstances, your employer will seek to replace you for fear that you may leave at any point. Regardless, your relationship is tarnished. Since you also accepted the offer, your boss may feel you were not genuine, and you were only bluffing to get what you wanted. This may bring up some resentment. No one likes to have a gun put to their head. Furthermore, your boss does not like being told what to do or manipulated into doing something. By nature, he is the boss - he is supposed to tell people what to do.

When you accept a counteroffer, you permanently damage your reputation with the people who made you the new job offer. The bottom line is, you have shot your reputation with the "would be new guys", and your integrity smells like a gym locker room. The word usually spreads fast that you used their offer to get a better one from your existing employer.

When your existing boss lays it on thick and says “Whoa, not so fast big boy. What if I give you all the tea in China, a Lamborghini, 20 weeks vacation and double your salary? Will you stay?” You say, “Thanks. I am flattered that you think so highly of me, but even doubling my salary will only give me \$20.00 a year, Boss man, and even with the extra \$10.00 I can not afford the water to make the tea, or the gas for the cool wheels.” All kidding aside, even if it is a great offer, and you feel like crying for turning it down, just keep on walking, there is no price to your integrity.

Leave on the right note- Your last days

Wrap up your work and offer to assist in finding your replacement. Pass on the information to the right people so your work will transition more easily. Thank everyone, even the people in the coffee shop - you never know when you may need their help someday.

Reestablish relationships, get contact information, and agree to keep in touch. Professionally, this makes a lot of sense. Offer to scratch their back – and as I said previously, you can expect someday to receive some tender loving care back in return.

Make sure to give appropriate notice for your industry or position. Avoid the double whammy of giving 4 weeks notice, and then taking your vacation time during this period. This tends to leave a bad taste in people’s mouths. Instead, if you want some time off, arrange for a later start date with your new employer.

The big takeaway... remember to leave everyone on a positive note.