

## How to Write the Perfect Resignation Letter

By Larry Barkdull, Award-Winning, Nationally Recognized Writer

We tend to equate career success with performance on the job, but first and last impressions are just as important. Resigning from a job can be a very difficult task, and one that seldom receives proper attention. A good resignation letter can help you resign on a positive note and smooth the transition to your next job. Furthermore, a well-written resignation letter can help you to maintain a network of friendly coworkers and managers. Keep the letter short and to the point—one page is usually enough. Say goodbye gracefully.

A resignation letter announces or confirms your resignation and should consist of several parts:

- **Inside address/date.** At the left-hand margin, type the date, then skip two single returns and type the name and title of the person who will receive the letter, followed by the company's address:

**Example:**            January 30, 2005  
                             John Taylor, Area Supervisor  
                             Thompson Publishing Co.  
                             123 Thompson Plaza  
                             Any town, PA 16555

- Your resignation letter should then continue with a formal salutation, followed by a colon:

**Example:**            Dear Mr. John Taylor:

- **Last date of employment.** State the effective date of your resignation—the last date you expect to be at work. It is standard to give a resignation notice two weeks prior to your last day at the company, but don't be surprised if your employer suggests you leave sooner or later than that.
- **Reasons.** Depending on the circumstances, you may want to explain your reasons for making this decision and your regret in doing so, but your explanation should be simple and brief.

**Example:** I have accepted a position that is more in harmony with my career goals.

- **Gratitude.** Express your thanks for the opportunity to work for the company and for the rewarding associations you were able to develop with management and coworkers.
- **Achievements.** Emphasize the most positive aspects of your employment. Include one or two personal achievements that gave you a sense of pride and satisfaction. This will help to establish the company's final, positive impression of you.
- **Positive ending.** End your resignation letter on a positive note. The end of your resignation letter should express best wishes for the company's future and for everyone involved with your employment experience. You may want to say that you hope everyone can also wish you well. Repeat how much you valued the opportunity to work there and to develop so many positive relationships.
- **Close.** Skip two returns after your last paragraph, and type your close, followed by four single returns, then type your name. In the space between the close and your typed name, sign your name with a black pen.

**Example:**            Sincerely yours,  
                             *Mark Jones*

Mark Jones

## Additional Tips for Resignation Letters

**Write a positive letter.** Do not use your resignation letter to list grievances or to make negative comments. A resignation letter should focus only on the positive side of your work experience. The content of your resignation letter should then be the content of your announcement meeting.

**Schedule an announcement meeting.** Ask your employer or appropriate supervisor for a meeting in his/her office. Mornings are usually best. Announce or confirm your resignation. Offer your resignation letter at the conclusion of the meeting.

**Behave in a professional manner.** Keep your announcement meeting brief. Try to remain positive, calm, and resolute. Beyond resigning with dignity, your goal is to leave a positive image of yourself to help you retain important professional contacts that may be helpful in future employment searches. The announcement meeting, your resignation letter, and how you function in the company from the time of your official announcement to the time you leave will form lasting impressions. Avoid any negative comments during the transition.

**Be prepared for emotional reactions.** Your employer may be surprised by your announcement. He/she may react emotionally or even take your leaving personally. Be cooperative and cheerful with your supervisor and coworkers. These people may experience anxiety concerning your unfinished projects and the sudden need to train someone to replace you. Try to anticipate these situations and calm their fears with positive communication as well as your cooperative nature and sound work ethic. Don't forget, no matter how emotionally charged your present circumstances may be, these days will pass and you will soon move on to your new situation.

**Will you accept a counteroffer?** Your boss may ask you to remain with the company and offer you a better offer. In advance of your decision, you should ask yourself why you sought a new position in the first place. If you receive a counteroffer, does it address all your concerns and will it move you toward your career goals? If you were to accept the counteroffer, would you have to resign again in order to accomplish your goals? Would your relationship with this company be damaged because you had wanted to leave? Would your employer now be suspicious of your loyalty if you stayed? Thinking through these questions and answering them in advance provides a valuable exercise that can prevent you from being caught off guard, and enable you to decide in advance if you would accept or reject a possible counteroffer.

## Resignation Letter Examples

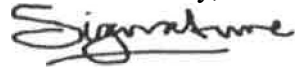
### 1. Straight to the Point resignation letter

Dear <the recipient's name goes here>:

As required by my contract of employment, I hereby give you <your notice period goes here\* weeks' notice of my intention to leave my position as <your job title goes here>

I wish both you and <the name of your current employer goes here> every good fortune and I would like to thank you for having me as part of your team.

Yours sincerely,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Signature".

### 2. Moving to another company resignation letter.

Dear <the recipient's name goes here>:

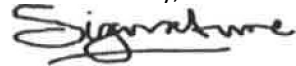
As required by my contract of employment, I hereby give you <your notice period goes here\* weeks' notice of my intention to leave my position as <your job title goes here>.

I have decided that it is time to move on and I have accepted a position elsewhere. This was not an easy decision and took a lot of consideration. However, I am confident that my new role will help me to move towards some of the goals I have for my career.

Please be assured that I will do all I can to assist in the smooth transfer of my responsibilities before leaving.

I wish both you and <the name of your current employer goes here> every good fortune and I would like to thank you for having me as part of your team.

Yours sincerely,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Signature".

### 3. Waiver of Notice Period resignation letter

Dear <the recipient's name goes here>:

As required by my contract of employment, I hereby give you <your notice period goes her» weeks' notice of my intention to leave my position as <your job title goes here>.

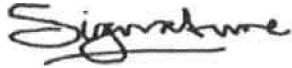
I have decided that it is time to move on and I have accepted a position elsewhere. This was not an easy decision and took a lot of consideration. However, I am confident that my new role will help me to move towards some of the goals I have for my career.

I understand that my notice period is <your notice period goes her> weeks but I would like to join my new employer at the earliest date. Therefore, I would like to request that you waive this notice period and relieve me of my duties

immediately. Please be assured that I will do all I can to assist in the smooth transfer of my responsibilities before leaving.

I wish both you and <the name of your current employer goes here> every good fortune and I would like to thank you for having me as part of your team.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Signature".

#### **4. Going back to College resignation letter**

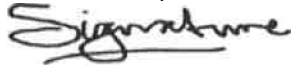
Dear <the recipient's name goes here>:

As required by my contract of employment, I hereby give you <your notice period goes her> weeks' notice of my intention to leave my position as <your job title goes here>.

I have decided to realize my professional and personal goals by accepting a formal offer to study for a <type of course goes here> in <name of your course goes her>. This was not an easy decision and took a lot of consideration but I believe it is an exciting step forward and one that I hope you will understand and support. Please be assured that I will do all I can to assist in the smooth transfer of my responsibilities before leaving.

Should you have any need for my skills in the area of <name of your course goes here>. I would of course consider returning once I have completed my studies. In the meantime, I wish both you and <the name of your current employer goes here> every good fortune and I would like to thank you once again for having me as part of your team.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Signature".

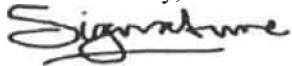
#### **5. Extension of Notice Period resignation letter**

Dear <the recipient's name goes here>:

Further to our recent meeting, I write to confirm both my resignation and our agreement about the proposed extension of my notice period.

I agree that the critical nature of my role here means that the time required to transfer my responsibilities may exceed the contractual notice period of <your notice period goes here> weeks. I will now leave <the name of your current employer goes here> on <the date you have agreed to leave>. I understand that my salary (and other benefits) will be calculated to take account of this arrangement.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Signature".

**6. Request Shorter Notice Period resignation letter.**

Dear <the recipient's name goes here>:

I write to confirm that I am resigning from my position as <your job title goes here>.

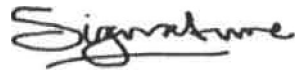
I have decided that it is time to move on and I have accepted a position elsewhere. This was not an easy decision and took a lot of consideration. However, I am confident that my new role will help me to move towards some of the goals I have for my career.

My contract of employment requires me to work here for a further <your notice period goes here> weeks from the day I give notice. However, I wish to request that you release me at an earlier date because my new employer wants me to start work on <the date you want to leave goes here>. Please be assured that I will do all I can to assist in the smooth transfer of my responsibilities before leaving.

I wish both you and <the name of your current employer goes here> every good fortune and I would like to thank you for having me as part of your team.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Signature".**7. No Written Contract resignation letter.**

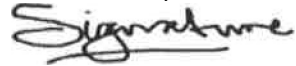
Dear <the recipient's name goes here>:

I write to confirm that I am resigning from my position as <your job title goes here>.

Although there is no written contract of employment between us, I accept that we have a verbal agreement and that my notice period stands at <your notice period goes here> weeks . Please be assured that I will do all I can to assist in the smooth transfer of my responsibilities before leaving.

I wish both you and <the name of your current employer goes here> every good fortune and I would like to thank you for having me as part of your team.

Yours sincerely,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Signature".

**8. Leaving to have a Baby resignation letter**

Dear <the recipient's name goes here>:

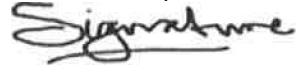
As required by my contract of employment, I hereby give you <your notice period goes here> weeks' notice of my intention to leave my position as <your job title goes here>.

I'm now only <time remaining until you reach term> weeks away from the birth of my new baby and although I understand that I could return to work my maternity leave, I have decided against this.

This was not an easy decision and took a lot of consideration. However, please be assured that I will do all I can to assist in the smooth transfer of my responsibilities before leaving.

I wish both you and <the name of your current employer goes here> every good fortune and I would like to thank you for having me as part of your team.

Yours sincerely,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Signature".**9. Leaving due to Sickness resignation letter**

Dear <the recipient's name goes here>:

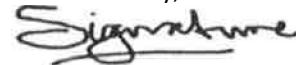
As required by my contract of employment, I hereby give you <your notice period goes here> weeks' notice of my intention to leave my position as <your job title goes here>.

As you know, I have been very unwell for some time now and as a consequence, feel that I am unable to for <the name of your current employer goes here> any longer.

This was not an easy decision and took a lot of consideration. However, please be assured that I will do all I can to assist in the smooth transfer of my responsibilities before leaving.

I wish both you and <the name of your employer goes here> every good fortune and I would like to thank you for having me as part of your team.

Yours sincerely,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Signature".