

HOW TO RESIGN

One Giving Notice

You've just received the formal job-offer by email and you're suddenly experiencing that great feeling of finding a perfect new exciting opportunity. But that feeling is replaced quickly by nerves when you realise you have to tell the supervising partner/director you're leaving. Feelings such as guilt, disloyalty and deceitfulness are common in this scenario.

When should you give notice?

You should give notice as soon as you have received a hard-copy or email confirmation of your future employer. In most cases, offers of employment are conditional upon employment checks such as confirmation of qualifications and references.

Two Write a resignation letter

Prepare a short letter of resignation, referring to your contract of employment to give the proper notice and writing out when your last day in the office will be. Finish with a brief but personal thank you.

Next, visit the partner/director, or immediate supervisor in person and tell them that you've been offered a position you can't turn down, and is a natural next step for your career. Make sure your immediate boss is the first person you tell. Then ask your boss how they want the situation managed and who else should know immediately. Remember that they'll have their own relationships with

the firm's clients and partners/directors; be respectful to that. They may need a day or two to think about it. Thank your boss for everything they've done to help you along the way. If you enjoy a great relationship with your boss, then refer to that and anything else positive you're leaving behind. If you didn't enjoy a great relationship with your boss, then keep all of your dealings with them professional, and as positive as possible – they'll be the one writing out your reference. And most will give you extra pleasantries above and beyond the usual factual notice, if there's good stuff to say.

Three **A counter offer**

If your boss gives you a counter-offer, before you rush into accepting that offer, read our other article about what to do, and make an informed decision.

Four **Managing the goodbyes**

Depending upon your own circumstances, the firm's circumstances, and the relationship you have with the partners/directors at the firm, you may be able to agree to a shorter notice period than the one that is in your contract of employment, but you should be prepared to accept that you might have to work out your entire notice.

Be prepared to work very hard to prepare a thorough hand-over for your successor/colleagues. If that means spending time over the weekend and evening to do it, then do just that.

And be available after you've left to deal with any queries. Whatever you think of the firm you're leaving behind, they have been responsible for providing you with a position and income – so you owe it to them to leave behind a good handover.

When you can, say goodbye in person to partners, directors, associates and others you worked with.

Five **Departing emails and exit interviews**

Even if your experience at a law firm was mostly negative and you wished you'd never worked there, it's not a good idea to publicise it in a departing email.

If you're offered the opportunity of an exit interview, and you have objective comments to help the firm in the future, then use the opportunity to raise them – privately.