

Exit gracefully

Quitting is only the end of an engagement and not the end of a business relationship

No man is an island. One is connected to an ex-employer in one way or another, be it in the same or related industry. As a headhunter and recruiter, on many occasions, we are required to conduct reference checks on potential employees joining a new company. If the candidate had left a bad impression just because he or she decided to leave the company in a haphazard fashion during the last few days, what would the HR department or the ex-superior have to say? How do you think they would answer a key question such as "Would you rehire this ex-employee if given the opportunity?"

Pro-active passing over

From the time you hand in your resignation letter, do keep track of what you need to pass over. Take the initiative to check with your present superior proactively what information is required to be handed over to the colleague who is taking over your area of responsibility. Draw up a checklist with your manager so you will not miss out any essential information that the company may require later on. Based on how much time you have before your last day, during your notice period, complete the hand over process in stages and review the progress with your superior.

Put yourself in the new colleague's shoes. Think about how he or she can take over your portfolio and assignments as seamlessly as possible, and what you can do to help your present boss pass over your incomplete tasks as effectively as possible. Tabulate client information, project details and

the works systematically, and provide notes on the working processes.

Choose to be kind and professional

Employees join companies and leave bosses. That goes to show that probably the single most important element that causes attrition is a bad superior. Choose to be kind. Learn not to go around the office or beyond passing ill remarks about your boss' weird personality or impossible working style. As you speak negatively of others, what impression would you leave with your colleagues or the people you are in contact with of your composure and maturity?

A small token gift for your superior in appreciation of his or her mentorship during your stay with the organisation is appropriate. This demonstrates you are a person of gratitude and poise. The same goes with colleagues you've had conflicts with. Although you may not need to suddenly change your tune, prove that you are not a petty character by wishing them well as a person.

Exhibit integrity

Don't take proprietary company information out of the office. Whatever you have done during your tenure with the company belongs to the organisation even if it is obtained through personal sources. You must keep all information which you have acquired during your stay strictly confidential and not reveal any trade secrets. As you're organising materials for your career portfolio, try to keep copies of documents to a minimal.

Come clean with any information that you're taking with you. Many fail to identify the importance of coming clean with the company in this aspect. Always remember that your professional reputation is at stake!

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Joshua Yim, managing director
Achieve Career Consultant

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When resignation letters are tendered, many believe that it bodes the end of their relationship with their previous organisations. Wrong! It is only the end of the engagement with you as an employee but surely not the end of the relationship that you have built over the years.

It is indeed very human to adopt a careless attitude when you are leaving the organisation because it may seem like what you are doing has no longer any bearing towards your salary reviews or performance assessment. In fact, any contribution made during the transition period may not be given any due merit as well.

Often, because of this myopic view, many individuals do not bother to cooperate with their colleagues and even superiors. Some just lax and refuse to follow the discipline standards within the office. Such actions are really a reflection of one's immaturity in handling the exit process.

Accountable in how we behave

Professionalism is a vital trait when exiting. Many a times it will be left to the employee to carefully pass over ongoing projects or work issues to the one taking over his or her duties.

Exit checklist

1. Check with your supervisor what is required to be handed over to the new colleague.
2. Provide information such as project details, client information and work processes to the new colleague.
3. Do not speak negatively about your superior or co-workers.
4. Token gifts of appreciation for your superior or close colleagues show your gratitude for their mentorship and guidance.
5. Inform your company the information you will be taking with you to organise your career portfolio.