

NEXT PHASE

LIFE SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY RECRUITMENT

Handing in your Resignation



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Congratulations on being offered a new position! An obstacle you now need to overcome is the task of handing in your notice. This can sometimes be difficult, especially if you have been with your current employer for a long time and they have no idea you are looking elsewhere. You have done very well to get to this stage, so you owe it to yourself to give it serious thought before you say or do anything with your present company. We hope that this document will help you consider all different perspectives and potential outcomes, so you can be fully prepared.

The consultants at Next Phase Recruitment are on hand to help guide you through this stage, so you are welcome to call us any time on **01403 216 216** if you have any questions. Further guidance, ideas and advice are also available at <http://www.nextphaserecruitment.com> and our [LinkedIn page](#).

FEELINGS

Once you have received your offer letter from your new company, you may experience a multitude of different feelings – guilt, relief, uncertainty, elation, apprehension, excitement, to name but a few! Give yourself the opportunity to consider these feelings, so you can trust your gut instinct that it feels right to leave and move on to something new.

Try not to feel too guilty about resigning. Remember that it is your career, not anyone else's. Similarly, it is very rare to have a “job for life” nowadays, and change can therefore be a really positive thing. Remember the reasons why you decided to leave in the first place. It is unlikely that those reasons would go away if you opted to stay.

PREPERATION

- **Read your current contract.** Check your notice period and make sure you understand any clauses that relate to resignation. Similarly, make a note of any restriction clauses (often referred to as a “competition”, “non-compete” or “restrictive covenant” clause) that might be threatened if you move to a competitor.

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- **Write a letter of resignation.** Keep this short and concise and include the notice period you will serve and any pay outstanding (including holiday pay, bonuses and expenses or commission owing). Remember that this letter will be treated as an official document, so if you have any questions then it is worth taking advice while you write it. Your consultant at Next Phase will be able to assist you with any questions, no matter how trivial you think they are; and we will respond to any enquiries in absolute confidence.
- **Who needs to be in the meeting?** This will depend on your company size, team setup and your level of seniority, so there is no single answer to this question. In all likelihood, your direct manager will need to be present and it may be a good idea to include a representative from HR if you feel this is appropriate.
- **Arrange a meeting as soon as possible.** It is best to move things forward at the earliest opportunity. If there is nowhere very private at your place of work, suggest having a coffee somewhere or meeting after hours.
- **Prepare what you are going to say.** In your opening statement try to consider how you might respond to different reactions.
- **Conduct some research.** It is worth checking your status and your employment rights, especially if you have a feeling that your resignation may not be received well. Some good websites to look at are:
 - <http://www.acas.org.uk>
 - <http://www.adviceguide.org.uk>
 - <http://www.gov.uk>

THE MEETING

Remember that companies are often shocked and upset to lose a good member of staff and they can sometimes be caught unaware when you hand in your notice. Therefore you must keep the meeting professional and show your appreciation for your time spent with the company. Agree your leaving date and the date you will be paid for outstanding wages, etc.

You are well within your rights to ask for a written reference. If your manager agrees to provide one, make sure you agree a date by which you will have this; and ensure this is documented so you can make another request if you do not receive one by a certain point. As an absolute minimum, your HR department and / or manager should be willing to provide a reference that confirms how long you have been with the company.

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Keep the meeting brief. If you show from the start that your mind is made up, the meeting should not last long. You will hopefully be given the opportunity to have a longer “exit interview” nearer the time of your departure; so it is best not to be drawn into a lengthy discussion in this initial resignation meeting, while everyone’s feelings are still very raw.

YOUR EMPLOYER’S RESPONSE

It is impossible to predict how your employer will respond to your resignation; but if you consider the most likely outcomes now then you can at least be slightly better prepared. To help you with this, here are some examples of things that have happened to candidates of ours over the years:

- **The Counter Offer.** It is quite common for an employer to respond to a resignation by matching or exceeding your new salary package. There is a whole range of reasons why you should be wary of accepting a counter offer. For a start, the reasons you wanted to leave in the first place are unlikely to disappear; and almost all candidates we have known to accept counter offers have ended up back on the job market within 6-9 months. Another concern is that your employer now knows that you have wanted to leave and have attended interviews elsewhere. Whichever way you look at it, bridges have been broken and neither party will forget this.
- **Bad Mouthing.** Some companies are desperate not to lose staff and it has been known for candidates to be told unpleasant things about their future employer. Remember that remarks like this are often made through desperation and resentment; so please take them with a pinch of salt.
- **Emotional Blackmail.** A great deal of pressure can be placed upon individuals by companies to get employees to stay, since it is very costly and time-consuming replacing valued members of staff. We know of instances where threats have been made not to pay wages or bonuses already earned, or that you will be given a bad reference. There are employment laws protecting your rights. Try to recognise these threats for what they are - just threats. However, always seek advice.

- **Peer Group Pressure.** Companies are not the only ones who will be sad to lose good members of staff. Colleagues are often distressed and disorientated at a team member leaving and will try many types of persuasion to get you to stay, often so they do not have to cope with change themselves. When you have been with a company a long time this can be difficult, as you have been very used to the way things are run and have probably earned a lot of respect. However, all good things must come to an end and there is nothing to stop you keeping in touch with your colleagues socially.
- **Sudden Promotion.** This is often produced as if from nowhere. Again, your company does not want to lose you. While the offer of promotion is no doubt sincere, do you really have to hand in your notice before your efforts are rewarded? Ensure you explore the real reasons why you want to leave and ask yourself: "Has anything really changed?"
- **Instant Exit.** This can often happen in a sales environment or where there is a high level of confidentiality entrusted. Some companies feel that making an employee work their notice can upset the rest of the workforce, as he/she is demotivated and will probably not be as productive. Sometimes this can be the best outcome for all parties.
- **Restrictive Covenants.** If you are moving to a competitor, your current employer may try to enforce a non-compete clause that prevents you from contacting certain clients or working in a particular sector. It is very important that you have read your contract thoroughly before the resignation meeting and that you keep your consultant at Next Phase informed so we can guide you. In many cases, restrictive covenants are not enforceable; but sometimes they are.

ABOVE ALL

If you have any questions at all about whether you are doing the right thing, **PLEASE** talk to us. Moving to a new company is challenging and exciting but can still feel daunting. Just remember your new company has chosen to offer a job to you and they are excited about you joining them. Resignation is the next hurdle to overcome. If you approach it correctly and with a positive mindset, you can help your departure to be as amicable and professional as possible.

You are very welcome to call our consultants at Next Phase on **01403 216 216**. We are experts in our field and will listen to any concerns you might have, enabling us to advise you accordingly.

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