

SAYING GOODBYE WELL

Endings and new beginnings are an intrinsic part of life, from birth to the end of this life as we know it. It is important when a chapter of our life ends to acknowledge it – to understand and feel the emotions that are part of the leaving process.

When it comes to leaving a workplace that has been a significant part of your life it is important to realise that there are a number of areas to say “goodbye” to.

Some areas that people have found to be important to specifically say goodbye to are:

- Managers and supervisors – those in authority over you
- Colleagues and peers – even those from other regions or countries
- Subordinates – those who report to you
- Customers and suppliers who you have related to over time
- Friends and those who have entered into a more personal space
- Your work itself – tasks, responsibilities that you may have had specific control over which have to be handed to someone else
- Your work station – taking home your personal belongings that you have accumulated
- Your computer with your own special password, deleting personal files
- Your lunchroom, cafeteria or wherever you had relaxation with your colleagues – leaving “your” seat, taking away “your” mug or cup
- The office itself – meeting rooms etc where you have spent time
- The door you come in and out of daily – a final close the last time you leave as an employee
- Your car park – knowing someone else will use it

It is good to ask yourself:

- What do I need to do to say “goodbye” to these things?
- What kind of farewell process do I want?
- What do I want or need to say as I leave (to individuals, or to the group)?
- Have I left my work, my responsibilities, for the next person to pick up in a way that is helpful and lets me leave with integrity?
- Is there any unfinished business with anyone in the organisation that I need to attend to, in order to leave well?

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Remember that saying goodbye is not only important for you, but also for the people you have worked with – you have been a “work family”, and the relationships you have had are changing.

A helpful “goodbye formula”

L - Let Go

E - Express your emotions

A - Affirm the positives

V - Verbalise the negatives

E - Explore the opportunities for personal and professional growth

The goal is to leave well and free yourself and the organisation you have left to move on positively.

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