

# Six important things to do when you are moving job

Ellie Rich-Poole



When you are wrapping up your time in one organisation and getting ready to transition to another, **it's easy to get swept up in the practicalities and a long list of things to do.** You may feel pressure to join the new role quickly, whilst your existing boss likely wants you to stay as long as possible, and it can feel hard to protect space for yourself. But **being intentional in planning your exit and onboarding can be beneficial.**

## 1. Stay professional and leave well

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**Your professional reputation follows you throughout your career, so manage it carefully.** Consider the impact your resignation will have on your team, peers and boss, and be generous when agreeing how much notice you will work and how you approach your handover. **Do what you say you will do.**

**Be diplomatic.** It might feel tempting to share what you really think about something or someone but stop and reflect on whether it serves any useful purpose.

People move companies and organisations merge. **Assume that everyone you work with will pop up again at some point in your future career.**



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## 2. Be intentional about keeping in touch

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One of the most common regrets I hear from leaders in my work as an executive career coach is that they didn't keep in touch with former colleagues. Typically, this hits home when they next need to ask for help with something.

**Your professional network can be an important source of information**, a sounding board and can connect you to future opportunities and other people. As most professionals admit to finding networking with new people draining or awkward, it makes sense to keep in touch with those you've already done the groundwork with.

Think long-term, not just about the next few weeks and the new role. **Plan intentional ways to keep in touch with the people you value most and who already know and respect you.** Make sure you have connected with them all and have shared contact details as you wish and **schedule a reminder a few weeks ahead to send some 'keeping in touch' messages.** Aim to arrange a coffee or lunch every month with someone external to the new organisation.



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## 3. Expect a range of emotions and manage them

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**A job move is one of the biggest changes you can go through, up there with moving house and relationship changes.** Even if the departure was your choice and you are feeling positive about it, you will still go through the change curve, which is essentially the grief cycle.

If the move wasn't your choice, it will likely be harder, and you may feel a lack of control. **It is natural that you will experience a range of emotions, and they are rarely neat and logical.** Things will hit you at different times. Confide in a friend, someone you trust away from your new organisation where you will want to maintain your composure and create a strong first impression.



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## 4. Take ownership of your induction

The quality of inductions even at senior levels can vary enormously. **To be safe, assume that nothing will be done for you and be proactive.** Agree your plan for the first month with your boss. Create a list of all the stakeholders you want to meet with in the few weeks. Include people of all levels and go as broad as you can. Get out into the operational areas as soon as possible and speak to customers.

Meet with other individuals who have joined in the last 6 months and ask them what they wish they had done sooner and what their biggest learnings have been. **Organise one-to-ones with your direct reports as soon as possible** and aim to build rapport and get to know them, their strengths and preferences early on. If you lead a function, schedule a full team meeting in the diary in the first month.



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## 5. Be respectful of what's gone before

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Picture this: Someone new joins your workplace - who lacks the organisational experience you have - making suggestions about things that could be done better. They make frequent references to their previous company. 'At X we used to do Y'.

Don't inadvertently be that person! Respect your new colleagues and assume they are intelligent humans and there are reasons why things are set up as they are. Even if you have been brought in to manage a major change, **you can start with learning about the context and what has been tried in the past.**

Also **remain positive about your predecessor.** You don't know who they were close to or still in contact with. Give them the benefit of the doubt that they made the choices they did for the right reasons.



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## 6. Ask lots of questions and really listen to the answers

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The start of a new role is the perfect time to ask anything – no question is a stupid question. **Ask lots and listen to what people tell you. Really listen.** Stay quiet and give people space to think and share. Don't fill the space with your views. Take notes and read them again later, reflecting on what they are telling you. Avoid trying to prove any theories too quickly.

**Don't rush to solutions immediately.** It is natural to want to show your value and get to action but balance it with ensuring you make the right decisions and take people with you. You have a unique insight as a fresh pair of eyes – and ears – capitalise on this perspective. What worked well in your previous roles won't necessarily apply in the next one.

Taking these six simple, but sometimes overlooked steps will help you leave one organisation with a positive reputation and land well in the next.



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Ellie Rich-Poole is an Executive Career Development Coach, former Headhunter and HR professional. She helps organisations develop their leaders through coaching, workshops and speaking. She also supports departing leaders transition positively as they approach the job market. She is an advocate for proactive career management and writes on career topics for a range of publications including Fast Company.



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