

How to create a clear exit statement in 4 easy steps



Many job seekers struggle to address how and why they left their last position; especially when they are still feeling uncomfortable about the decision. On the next pages, we address this situation positively and effectively in four easy steps.



The 4-step exit statement



STEP 1

Summarise the situation

In one sentence, describe the situation that caused your departure. Keep it quick, objective and avoid oversharing.

- "I felt that I had achieved all my goals with the company and opted to move on..."
- "The company is changing direction **or** restructuring and I could see my role was at risk so I thought I would take control of my future".

STEP 2

Prove it wasn't performance based

If your reason for departure was not due to poor performance, create an evidence based statement with some statistics.

- "I have consistently achieved my targets and was on track to do so again this year".
- "My boss wanted me to stay on but in the end I realised I needed to leave so I could grow".

STEP 3

Make it positive

When discussing the situation, keep your statement light and forward focused.

- "I've been keeping an eye on your company for a while and I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to discuss this role with you."
- "It's been an exciting transition; I have since upskilled and my interest in <skill> is what brought me to your company, as I see you're working on a lot of interesting products in that space."

STEP 4

Practice

The only way to get comfortable when delivering your **exit statement** is to practice. Start by practicing in front of a mirror or with your family. Then move to having networking meetings with close professional contacts and friends. Meet with recruiters if appropriate. The bonus: this is **GREAT** networking to enhance your visibility in the hidden job market!

The 4-step exit statement

★ Special situations

What if it was performance based?

If there was a performance issue that contributed to you leaving then be honest, because these things have a way of becoming known. Display maturity by taking responsibility for your performance.

Discuss what you've learned and how that has improved your attitude and approach to work in the future.

What if it was relationship based?

Often people leave because of personality clashes with management. If this happened to you always remain positive and not talk negatively about your former boss. You may briefly mention a large shift in corporate culture and management styles across the organisation that added to your interest in seeking a new role but be prepared to answer direct follow-up questions.



Exit statement example

"Last year was really challenging for the business and my team. This stress had an impact on my job satisfaction and I made the decision to leave, even though I was on target to achieve all my KPIs. **I am proud of my decision as it gave me time to reflect, recharge and reconnect with family and friends.** Working at 'Company XYZ' honed my skills in operations management, outsourcing, and process improvement, which I believe would be a great fit for your company based on the job description."

