

Senior Resignation Conversation Script

1. Opening Lines

Option A – Direct and Complete

"I wanted to meet with you today to let you know that I've made the decision to resign. My last day will be [date]. I'm committed to a professional transition during my notice period."

Option B – Measured and Final

"I'm here to inform you that I'll be leaving the company. This was a considered decision, and I'm giving [X weeks] notice. I want to make sure we handle the transition thoughtfully."

Option C – Respectful and Closed

"I want to share that I've decided to move on from my role. My final day will be [date]. I appreciate the time we've worked together, and I'm focused on ensuring a smooth handover."

2. Key Talking Points

Frame the decision:

- This is a final decision, made after careful thought
- It's the right move for me at this stage
- The timing works within the parameters I can control

Acknowledge impact without owning the solution:

- "I recognize this creates transition challenges"
- "I'm committed to a professional handover during the notice period"
- "I trust the team/leadership will manage what comes next"

Reinforce boundaries:

- The decision is not conditional or negotiable
- The notice period is defined and reasonable
- Your role ends on [date]; you are not available for extended consulting or callbacks post-exit

Maintain professionalism:

- Express respect for relationships and the work done
 - Avoid burning bridges or airing grievances
 - Keep the door open for future professional connection, but not for role reversal
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3. Responses to 5 Common Pushbacks

"Can we make this work if we adjust your role?"

"I appreciate you exploring that, but this isn't about the role structure. The decision is made, and I'm not reconsidering. Let's focus on what needs to happen between now and my last day."

"What if we fix the issues you raised?"

"I understand the instinct to problem-solve, but this isn't about fixing specific issues. I've made a broader decision about my next step. I'd rather use our time to talk through the transition plan."

"Can you stay longer to help transition?"

"I've thought about the timeline carefully. [X weeks] is what I'm able to commit to, and I'll make sure it's used well. I won't be available for extended transition support after my last day."

"This is bad timing for the business"

"I recognize the timing isn't ideal, and I've tried to be thoughtful about it. That said, there's rarely a perfect time for these decisions. I'm focused on doing everything I can during the notice period to set things up for continuity."

"You're too valuable to lose"

"I appreciate that, truly. I've valued my time here and the work we've done together. But this is the right decision for me, and it's final. Let's talk about how to make the most of the transition."

4. What NOT to Say

Avoid these phrases and instincts:

- ❌ "I've been thinking about this for a while..." → Invites them to ask why you didn't raise it sooner
 - ❌ "Maybe if things were different..." → Leaves room for negotiation
 - ❌ "I'm open to discussing options" → Signals the decision isn't final
 - ❌ "I'm sorry for the disruption" → Takes on guilt; they may leverage it
 - ❌ "Let me know if you need me to stay longer" → Opens the door to scope creep
 - ❌ "I'll be available anytime after I leave" → Sets an unsustainable expectation
 - ❌ Long explanations about why you're leaving → Over-justification weakens your position
 - ❌ Criticizing the company, leadership, or strategy → Damages reputation and relationships
 - ❌ "I'm burned out / exhausted / unhappy" → Emotional vulnerability that can be used against you
 - ❌ "I haven't found another role yet" → May trigger retention pressure or awkward questions
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5. Follow-Up Steps

Confirm in writing immediately after the conversation:

Send a brief, professional email within 24 hours:

- Confirm your resignation and final date
- Reference your commitment to transition support during notice period
- Thank them for the opportunity (optional, but recommended)
- Keep it to 3–4 sentences maximum

Template:

"Following our conversation today, I'm confirming my resignation effective [date]. I'm committed to a professional transition over the next [X weeks]. Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to [team/company]."

Frame notice period and handover:

- Propose a high-level transition plan within 48 hours
 - Identify key handovers: stakeholders, projects, knowledge, systems
 - Be specific about what you will and won't do (e.g., documentation yes, post-exit consulting no)
 - Decline requests to "stay on as advisor" or "help recruit your replacement"
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Protect against scope creep during transition:

- Set a clear end date and don't extend it
 - Don't take on new projects or strategic initiatives
 - Politely deflect: *"That's better handled by whoever takes this on next"*
 - Document actively but don't over-engineer or try to solve every future problem
 - Limit after-hours availability as your end date approaches
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Exit cleanly and professionally:

- Return all company property on your last day
 - Deactivate access gracefully; don't leave loose ends
 - Send a brief, warm goodbye note to key colleagues (optional)
 - Do NOT bad-mouth the company or leadership in exit interviews or afterward
 - Maintain relationships selectively—stay in touch with people you value, but don't owe anyone your ongoing availability
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Final Reminder

The conversation will likely be shorter than you expect.

Your instinct may be to fill silence or soften the blow. Resist that.

Say what you came to say. Let them process. Answer questions directly and briefly.

Then move to logistics.

This is not a negotiation. It's a notification.