
The Right Way to Leave the Office on a Friday

By Dr. Woody, the Career Hot Seat

It can be hard to separate office life from personal life, making it hard to transition from the office environment into family life for the weekend, especially during the summer.

Closing out your week on a summer Friday in an orderly and positive way is a great way to make a clean psychological transition into your weekend. Nobody likes the feeling of unfinished business hanging over their head while playing with the kids or dining with the family on Sunday night, so it's important that you do what you can to make as clean a break as possible when walking out the office door at the end of the week.

Based on conversations I've had with clients over the years on how to make a clean mental break, here are a few ideas to help make the weekend transition a clean one:

Check the Win Column. Celebrating success is something we could stand to do a little more of, particularly in these tough times. Before walking out the office door you should always do a quick check of what you got done over the week as a reminder of your positive contributions to the organization.

Take note of something that went well, compliment a co-worker on an accomplishment, or drop a thank you note to a client. The idea is to find something positive that makes you feel good about your job and make sure that moment is the last thing on your mind before walking out the door.

Tidy Up. Before walking out the door for the weekend, take a few minutes to scroll through your inbox, toss any unnecessary paper piled on your desk and straighten up your workspace. This will give that feeling of a fresh start when you arrive on Monday.

Close the Door... Literally. When you leave the office, make sure you actually leave! Try and tie up any loose ends so that you can truly disconnect. Don't leave anything hanging that you can quickly take care of before heading out. There is nothing worse than having that feeling of something hanging over your head over the weekend.

Truly Disconnect. I recently met a CEO who turns off his phone at 6:00 every Friday night. Don't be afraid to shut down your Smartphone or at least shutoff the e-mail alerts and let people know about the policy.

When you walk out that door be sure to tell your colleagues the period of time you will be unavailable and stick to it! It's important to be present for your family and friends.

As we head into summer keep your priorities in mind. Most of us strive to live well and strike a positive work-life blend, so be sure to close every Friday in a way that will allow you to disconnect for a couple days and genuinely engage in some summer fun.

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A 5-step Guide to Taking Charge of Your Career in the New Economy and the new on-line course The YOU Plan for Career Change on Udemy.

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