

Transfers and Separation

Meaning of Transfer

A transfer refers to lateral movement of employees within the same grade, from one job to another. According to **Flippo** “a transfer is a change in the job (accompanied by a change in the place of the job) of an employee without a change in responsibilities or remuneration”.

Transfer differs from promotion in the sense that the latter involves a change of job involving increase in salary, authority, status and responsibility, while all these remain unchanged /stagnant in the case of former. Also, transfers are frequent and regular whereas promotions are infrequent, if not irregular.

Transfer may be initiated either by the company or the employee. In practice, the company may transfer the employee to the place where he/she can prove more useful and effective. Similarly, employee may initiate transfer to a location where he/she is likely to enjoy greater satisfaction.

Transfer could be permanent, temporary or ad hoc to meet emergencies. Usually, permanent transfers are made due to changes in work load or death, retirement, resignation, etc. of some employee. As regards temporary transfer, it arises mainly due to ill health, absenteeism, etc. of some employee.

Transfer decisions may be perceived as negative or positive depending upon an individual's personal preferences, needs and aspirations. For example, an organization may consider transfer from Guwahati regional office to Delhi-head office as positive and reward because it will enable the employee to broaden his/her knowledge and work experience. On the contrary, the employee may look down upon it as it breaks ties with his people and community in Guwahati.

Sometimes, transfers are used as an instrument for victimizing the employees by management. Realizing it, provisions are made by constituting labor courts to set aside transfer orders proved as management strategy to victimize employees. In order to make transfers useful for employee and the company, some organizations have clear agreements with trade unions for the transfer of unionized staff especially on promotions.

Types of Transfer

Employee transfers may be classified as below.

- A. Production transfers:** Such transfers are made to meet the company requirements. The surplus employees in one department/section who are efficient might be absorbed in other place where there is a requirement. Such transfers help to stabilize employment.
- B. Replacement transfers:** This takes place to replace a new employee who has been in the organization for a long time and thereby giving some relief to an old employee from the heavy pressure of work.
- C. Veracity transfers:** It is also known as rotation. It is made to develop all round employees by moving them from one job to another. It also helps to reduce boredom and monotony.
- D. Personnel or remedial transfers:** Such a transfer is made to rectify mistakes in selection and placement. As a follow up, the wrongly placed employee is transferred to a more suitable job.
- E. Shift transfers:** This is pretty common where there is more than one shift and when there is regularized rotation.

Need

The need for making transfer is left for various reasons as listed below:

1. To Meet Organizational Needs:

Changes in technology, volume of production, production schedule, product line, quality of products, organizational structure, etc. necessitate an organization to reassign jobs among employees so that right employee is placed on the right job.

2. To Satisfy Employee Needs:

Employees may request for transfer in order to satisfy their desire to work in a particular department, place and under some superior. Personal problems of employee like health, family circumstances, and interpersonal conflicts may also necessitate transfer.

3. To Better Utilize Employee:

When an employee is not performing satisfactorily on one job and management thinks that his/her capabilities would be utilized better elsewhere, he/she may be transferred to other job.

4. To Make the Employee More Versatile:

In some organizations like banks, employees after working on a job for a specified period are transferred to other job with a view to widen their knowledge and skill and also reduce monotony. This is also called 'job rotation.

5. To Adjust the Workforce:

Work force can be transferred from the departments / plants where there is less work to the departments/plants where more work is.

6. To Provide Relief:

Transfers may be made to give relief to the employees who are overburdened or doing hazardous work for long period.

7. To Punish Employee:

Management may use transfer as an instrument to penalize employees who are indulged in undesirable activities. As a disciplinary action, employees are transferred to remote and far-flung areas.

Meaning of Separation

Employee separation is a sensitive issue for any organization. Usually, an employee leaves the organization after several years of service. Thus, the permanent separation of employees from an organization requires discretion, empathy and a great deal of planning. An employee may be

separated as consequence of resignation, removal, death, permanent incapacity, discharge or retirement. The employee may also be separated due to the expiration of an employment contract or as part of downsizing of the workforce. Organizations should never harass the employees, especially in the case of resignation, just because they are quitting the organization. In fact, a quitting employee of the organization must be seen as a potential candidate of the future for the organization and also the brand ambassador of its HR policies and practices. However, many organizations are still treating their employees as “expendable resources” and discharging them in an unplanned manner whenever they choose to do so.

Each organization must have comprehensive separation policies and procedures to treat the departing employees equitably and ensure smooth transition for them. Further, each employee can provide a wealth of information to the organization at the time of separation. Exit interviews can be conducted by the HR department to ascertain the views of the leaving employees about different aspects of the organization, including the efficacy of its HR policies.

Types of Separation

A. Resignation

In most cases, employees voluntarily resign organization employment. Employees voluntary resigning should provide you with a written letter of resignation. While resignation is voluntary, you should remember to acknowledge receipt of a letter of resignation right away. Accept the resignation by writing “Accepted” with an effective date and signing your name and date on the original (copy to employee). Once accepted, an employee may not rescind the resignation without management’s agreement.

B. Retirement

An employee’s decision to retire is entirely voluntary. However, an employee’s retirement decision does not automatically terminate organization employment. Retiring employees must also submit a letter of resignation to the home department.

C. Probationary Releases and Extensions

Probationary employees are at-will and may be released during probation. You are encouraged to contact Employee Relations as soon as you begin having concerns about a probationary employee. The decision to release an employee should be reviewed prior to the end of the probationary period with Employee & Labor Relations.

In some circumstances, the probationary period may be extended an additional three months. Probationary employees must be advised, in writing, of the reasons for the extension no later than seven calendar days before the six month probationary period ends. A decision to extend probation requires review and coordination with employee & labor relations. You are encouraged to contact Employee and Labor Relations as soon as you begin thinking about extending an employee's probationary period but no later than two weeks before the end of probationary period. More information about managing the probationary employees, see the 'Performance Management' section on the left.

D. Termination for Cause

Career employees may be terminated at the conclusion of the progressive discipline process for failure to improve attendance, conduct and/or performance. Career employees may be terminated without previous disciplinary action due to serious misconduct. In any circumstance, termination of a career employee **must** be reviewed and approved in advance by Employee and Labor Relations.

E. Resignation in Lieu of Termination

Employees subject to an involuntary separation action, e.g., probationary release, termination, may voluntarily request to resign in lieu of termination. Management is encouraged to accept offers to resign in lieu of termination. However, management may not coerce or otherwise pressure an employee to agree to resign in lieu of termination. You should be in contact Employee and Labor Relations prior to accepting resignations in lieu of termination.

F. Termination of Employment Contracts

Contract employees are at-will and the terms for termination should be provided in the employment contract. A decision to release a contract employee prior to the normal termination

date of a contract, or non-renewal of a long-term contract employee, should be reviewed in advance with Employee and Labor Relations.

G. Termination of Managers & Senior Professionals (MSP)

Managers and senior professionals (MSP) may be terminated when, in management's judgment, the needs or resources of a department or the performance or conduct of an employee do not justify the continuation of an employee's appointment. There are no layoff policy provisions for MSP's. Then contact Employee & Labor Relations for assistance in terminating or releasing a manager or senior professional.

H. Job Abandonment

Employees absent from work, without authorization, for more than a certain number of days (consult the applicable organization policy or collective bargaining agreement), may trigger the job abandonment process. Employees may be terminated for job abandonment following the appropriate notification process. You must work closely with Employee and Labor Relations to evaluate the need for and decision to proceed with a job abandonment action.

I. Layoff

Employees may be laid off from career positions based on a lack of work and/or lack of funds. Layoff may be permanent or temporary. Layoffs are generally determined by seniority (total years at UC) order and should not, in most cases, be based on performance. Generally, employees need 60 days written notice before permanent layoff. Therefore, departments are encouraged to begin layoff planning at least 90 days in advance of the effective date. Department considering layoffs should review the applicable policies or collective bargaining agreements and consult with Employee & Labor Relations early in the planning process. More detailed information regarding layoff actions is available in the LAYOFF RESOURCES FOR MANAGERS section to the left.

J. Medical Separation

A regular status employee who becomes unable to perform essential functions of his or her position with or without reasonable accommodation, due to a disability, may be separated from

employment. Prior to medical separation, the organization will engage in the interactive process in accordance with the applicable provisions of organization policy or collective bargaining agreements.

Reasons for Separation of Employees

Employee separation constitutes the final stage in the staffing process of an organization. An employee can leave the organization for any reason which he deems fit for seeking separation. However, separation is classified basically into two types. These are: voluntary separation and involuntary separation. Voluntary separation refers to the separation of employees on their own request, while involuntary separation means the separation of employees for organizational reasons which are beyond the control of the employees

- **Voluntary Separation** Voluntary separation, which normally begins after a request is placed in this regard by the employee, can happen due to two reasons: professional reason and personal reason. We shall now discuss these reasons in detail.
- **Professional reasons** Employees may seek separation when they decide to seek better positions, responsibilities and status outside the present organization. Efficient employees would seek to expand their realm of knowledge and skills continuously by working in different capacities/positions in various organizations. In their quest for greater responsibility, power and status, they may seek separation from the organization.
- **Personal reasons** The important personal reasons for voluntary separation are relocation for family reasons like marriage of the employees and health crisis of family members, maternity and child-rearing. For instance, when working women get married, they often prefer to settle in the partner's place of occupation. Similarly, an employee may seek voluntary separation to look after the child or parent.
- **Involuntary Separation** As mentioned earlier, an involuntary separation is caused by the factors which remain beyond the purview of the employees. However, these factors may be classified broadly into health problems, behavioral problems and organizational problems. We shall now discuss these factors in detail

- **Health problems** Major health problems crippling the employees may make them invalid or unfit to continue in the profession. For instance, accidents causing permanent disabilities and illness of the employees like brain stroke and other terminal illnesses can lead to their involuntary separation. Death of employees is another factor which results in their involuntary separation.
- **Behavioral problems** An employee's objectionable and unruly behaviour within the organization may also lead to his involuntary separation from the organization. When the employee's behavior is unethical or violates the code of conduct in force, the organization may initiate disciplinary actions, which may eventually result in his termination. This may constitute an act of involuntary separation. Consistent failure to reach performance goals by an employee can also result in his involuntary separation.
- **Organizational problems** Organizational problems are another important factor that contributes to the involuntary separation of employees. The poor financial performance of an organization may cause it to terminate the services of some of its employees as part of cost control measure. Such terminations are also classified as involuntary separation. Similarly, automation, organizational restructuring and rationalization can also result in employee termination, discharge or layoff, broadly called involuntary separation.