

## Employment Communication – Resignation Letter

Informal salutation sets the tone

Friends and Colleagues,

After fifteen years as Director of the Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School, I have told Dean Ellwood I have decided that this academic year will be my last, and that I shall be leaving the position as of July 1. Later, Dean Ellwood will have an announcement about the process for selecting a new director

Direct opening announces resignation

Warm, sincere tone builds goodwill

My decision is based on a sense that the time for change has come – both for me and for the Center I truly love. My tenure at the Shorenstein Center’s helm has spanned perhaps the most tumultuous and challenging period in media history, and I am proud to say that the Center has evolved as those profound changes demanded. Indeed, the job I assumed in 2000 was to be Director of the Shorenstein Center on the Press, and was focused almost entirely on traditional news. It is now the Shorenstein Center on Media – a reflection of the dizzying reality that in 2015 all forms of media affect politics and public policy.

Reason for resignation follows the news

Gracious nod to major stakeholders –use of “we”

It has been my honor to have been a part of a fantastic team of staff, faculty, fellows, colleagues and benefactors – all of whom have contributed to the Shorenstein Center’s success. We are in a position of financial strength and are poised to build on the foundation that was created first by Marvin Kalb, the Center’s founding Director, and then broadened and deepened over the past decade and a half.

As I think back over those years, I am especially proud of several things that the Center has achieved:

- Engaged the media and public through scores of **events** and thoughtful and groundbreaking **papers and books** published on important media issues by Shorenstein faculty and fellows.
- Demonstrated a powerful commitment to HKS students in the form of digital instruction, workshops, internships, scholarships, speakers, lectures and courses geared to aid them as they set out to change the world.
- Achieved a financial foundation for the Center that ensures its long-term future, largely through the great generosity of the Shorenstein family.
- Raised the **Goldsmith Investigative Reporting Prizes** to the highest level of professional recognition, with the support of the Greenfield family.
- Created **Journalist’s Resource**, which now provides free access to the best scholarly research to give depth to journalism and also teach aspiring journalists the habit of using research in their journalism, with the support of the Knight Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation.
- Maintained the Shorenstein Center’s reputation as a standard-bearer for the highest-quality reportage and the best journalistic values in a world of epochal change.

Bullet points highlight accomplishments achieved under writer’s tenure

Online letter includes hyperlinks shown in bold font

This was a joint effort. I want especially to offer my thanks to the outstanding Shorenstein Center staff, and to Nancy Palmer, my trusted right arm and executive director. And also to Thomas Patterson, the Bradlee Professor, whose scholarly brilliance has been instrumental. Both have been key in making the Center not only a hard-working seat of achievement, but a generous and humane place to work.

Again writer gives credit to others and thanks key team members by name

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Preview of future endeavors

As for the future, I am embarking on what in Cuba is known as "Third Life," meaning the rich and exciting period in which to pursue long-delayed projects, to study and learn, and to follow one's own peculiar interests.

My feelings at this moment are overwhelmingly of gratitude – for the chance to work at such a wonderful institution and to do work I consider so very important. I believe that high-quality journalism is essential to democracy, and it has been my great pride to do all I could to ensure that the Shorenstein Center stood for that standard of excellence.

Gracious ending shows humility

Closing reflects a final opportunity to convey warmth

With my warmest regards to you all,



Alex S. Jones  
Director  
Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy

This letter is an excellent example of a well written resignation message. Alex S. Jones, outgoing director of the Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy at Harvard University, has composed a warm, gracious resignation letter. A highly accomplished individual, Jones is unassuming yet confident in giving thanks to his collaborators. He takes stock of his successful tenure with humility and shares credit with his team.