

Transition

Category: Endings and Beginnings

written by Joan Greland-Goldstein | December 6, 2020

"Hi, Sue," I said. "Here's my letter of retirement."

"You know I don't want to hear this," she replied.

"Yes, but the time has come, and I've been clear about my intentions for several months."

"Do you think you could work a few extra months so you can help us find and train your replacement?"

"Well, there are some classes I want to take that start in January. How about if I cut back to three days a week at the beginning of the year?"

"Can you get things done in three days?"

"Yes, if I don't go to any meetings."

"What do you think about Marian taking over your job?"

"She would be great at the planning, analyzing, and reporting parts of my job, but I doubt she'd want to spend hours in front of a computer updating the databases and translating the quality reports into a form the doctors and staff can understand."

"We could split your job in two and hire someone to do the computer work."

"Good plan."

Marian drafted some interview questions, and I set up scenarios to test the applicants' technical abilities. We interviewed half a dozen people. Some seemed promising until we realized they didn't have a clue how work with spreadsheets.

Finally, we got an application from Zoey, one of our clerical staff. She went through the scenarios with flying colors and was offered the job.

Two weeks later, Zoey started working with me. Within a month she was ready to be on her own.

On my last afternoon, as I sat at the second desk in my office watching Zoey work, I wrote my final emails thanking everyone for the wonderful retirement party. That done, I began daydreaming.

I've wanted to retire for so long—and spent a year planning it—and now it's actually here! The time seems to have gone really quickly. I can't believe I've worked here for fifteen years!

The life that started with nursing school sure has morphed into something

totally different. From bedside nursing to management to health education to project manager to this, whatever "this" is. It's hard to define what I actually did during these years with the quality programs, but it sure was satisfying.

Now it's on to a new phase of life where I can volunteer and pursue other interests ...

"Joan! I think I just lost my file!" Zoey sounded desperate.

"I'm sure things are fine," I said as I snapped out of my daydream. "Let me take a look."

It was nice to still be needed for the last fifteen minutes of my career.

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