███████,

I am writing this as my resignation letter, my last day will be 2 weeks after this date. It is clear to me that my time at ███████ has come to an end, and it's best to not overstay your welcome. While I learned a lot during my time here, I think it would be a disservice to us both to categorize this past year as an overall positive experience. I am hopeful that we both can reflect on this and become better people because of it. In the words of Dalio, "Pain + Reflection = Progress."

Also in the theme of Dalio, I want to write this letter with the intent of radical transparency. I think that I often took your words more literally than you anticipated when you claimed you wanted "open and honest communication," but it is something I will live and die by, so I want to stick with that here. I came into this job with the naivety and excitement of someone who sees a world of possibilities and believes their actions can change some small part of the world. I feel like I am leaving this job feeling hopeless, useless and utterly shot of confidence. Some of that is on me. Some of that is on you.

It is up to me to rebuild myself into someone even better, but just as hopeful, as the person I was in August 2019. I hope that you believe it is up to you to rebuild ███████ into a place that is challenging, exciting and uplifting for the team members who have stuck it out. As I have now experienced a full year of this environment (comparatively not a long time, but enough, I think, to get a good picture), I would like to offer my two cents on what I believe to be the biggest issues at play during my time here.

The first issue that became clear to me quite early on is the fear culture created at ███████. I know the words "fear culture" are an overused leftist term that can be dismissed by claiming any power dynamic can be perceived as creating a fear culture. What I'm talking about here is a true fear culture: "the concept that people may incite fear in the general public to achieve political or workplace goals through emotional bias." People are afraid to speak up, disagree, give feedback, or argue their points strongly because they have seen what happens to those who do. Nobody wants to disagree when that disagreement can directly affect their standing in the company, their salary or their perceived leadership status. I have watched all three of these be torn down in front of me because I have spoken out, asked for direction, and publicly made mistakes.

Next, which I am sure you have seen coming, are the trust issues. It is next to impossible to build up a team when you do not trust them. This dynamic has affected our working relationship from almost the beginning. I understand corralling and prodding when mistakes are made, both in the job and in the communication around the mistake, but tearing down the foundation of trust each and every time something goes wrong makes it exponentially harder to build back up time after time. After a while, it becomes too much work to make it worth it. Trust your people. Surprisingly, Dalio has the words that I think will resonate here: "Getting the right people in the right roles in support of your goal is the key to succeeding at whatever you choose to accomplish." You might not believe it, but I gave a whole lot of fucks about the team and the company. I wanted what was best for us as a whole and I fought because I cared so much. Unfortunately, that did not translate to you.

On that note, I do feel like communication needs to be brought up here. Again and again, I have called out a communication problem on both sides of this equation. I often found your directions unclear, vague, or constantly shifting. I asked for clarification and was told I should not have to do so. There are many times where nobody in the meeting understood what was needed from them. I often spoke up for them and would be villainized for it. I will again use the words of Dalio here because I truly believe that this point is crucial: "Understand the power that comes from knowing how you and others are wired." I felt that I was constantly trying to work at communicating in a way that would cause you to listen to me, understand what I was saying, and take it with good will. Unfortunately, I did not feel that the favour was returned. I would say the wrong word, and as soon as it came out I would *hear* the backlash I was going to get before it would come. Communication would have been much more productive if the general sentiment of my statement was taken instead of literal definitions. I learn by example, and hearing enough conversations would have gotten me there. I felt like I was getting there, but the fear of saying the wrong thing slowed my progression on this one.

I tried as hard as I could to fit into the mold of the leader you wanted me to be. It just wasn't the right fit, and I cannot be anything but true to myself. I do not wish you any ill will, and I will not be posting any of this on Glassdoor. All I ask is that you take this as a sign to reflect on the direction and leadership of the company and take a look inwards at your own shortcomings. I know I will be doing the same.

Best,
Julie