



# How to Conduct Exit Interviews

(and improve your  
employee retention  
rate x 10)

FINITE



When someone decides to leave your company - it hurts. It can hurt team dynamics and productivity and leave skills and knowledge gaps that can take a long time to recover from.

But some of these negatives can be turned into positives through exit interviews. When done properly, exit interviews can provide great insights into the business and can lead to boosted retention rates that mean you can hold on to your top performing talent.

Ultimately, a good exit interview all comes down to timing and asking the right questions.

## When to do it

There are two days you definitely don't want to conduct an exit interview: the day you find out the person is leaving; and on their last day. Ideally what you really want to be doing is scheduling the exit interview about one week before the person leaves. This way they will be relaxed enough to give in depth answers but won't be mentally completely checked out.

## Who should do it

Ideally, the interviewer should not be a direct manager or someone who dealt with the employee on a day to day basis. It needs to be someone who the employee feels they can speak openly and honestly with. You should also be looking to use someone as senior in the organisation as possible - so the interviewee knows their opinion is valued.

## How to do it

The information revealed in an exit interview can provide incredibly valuable insights. So don't treat it as something that's just a routine exercise. Treat every exit interview as an opportunity to learn about the strengths and weaknesses of the business because this is one of the few times you can get truly unfiltered information and feedback on how the business operates.

Therefore, preparation is key.

Ensure you have prepared the right questions to ask, ideally questions tailored to the individual and their role within the organisation. In some cases it may be worth letting the person leaving know some of the questions in advance. This can give them some extra time to prepare more meaningful answers.



# Questions

The following are some sample questions that you can ask. However, you should try to select the ones most appropriate to the person as well as adding new questions of your own. The ultimate goal is to get honest feedback that can be used by the company to improve its culture and processes.

- What most attracted you to your new job?
- Was there something in particular that made you want to leave?
- Before you made your decision to leave, did you look at other opportunities here, or speak to anyone about changes that might have made you stay?
- What were the parts of this job that you enjoyed the most?
- What were the parts that you liked the least?
- How satisfied were you with your job's:
  - onboarding process
  - salary
  - career progression opportunities
  - work/life balance
  - benefits package (if any)
  - conditions, such as work hours?
  - culture
- How aligned were the everyday responsibilities with what you thought this job would be?
- Do you think you had enough training and support to do your job effectively?
- Did you have access to the right resources to be able to complete your tasks?
- Was your direct manager as supportive as you would have liked? If not, what would you have changed?
- Do you feel as though your efforts were recognised by the team/company?
- Did you get along with your manager and colleagues? If not, why?
- What could we have done differently to encourage you to stay?
- If you had some things for us to improve on, what would they be?
- What skills or experience should we look for in a replacement?
- Do you have any other concerns about your team or the company you'd like to share?
- Would you consider returning if a position became available in the future?
- Is there anything else that you would like me or the organisation to know?

## Closing thoughts

As you can see by some of the above questions, a good exit interview really gets to the heart of a company's culture and the way it treats and supports its staff. Therefore you should be prepared to possibly hear some harsh truths. But these can be invaluable to gaining a genuine insight into how your organisation can make meaningful improvements to its culture and the way it supports its staff.

For more information on the importance of exit interviews and how your business can gain the most benefit from them, talk to the experts at Finite.



# Finite IT

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