

## Opportunities for Growth

# The Stay Interview: Guidance for Leaders

Conducting a stay interview provides an opportunity to gather information and make changes *BEFORE* a valuable member of your team leaves (and hopefully prevents them from leaving). Stay interviews are a preventative measure!<sup>1</sup>

## Essential Skills for a Successful Interview<sup>2</sup>

- Listen 80% of the time.
- Ask probing follow-up questions.
- Ask the same/similar questions repeatedly over time to monitor trends in responses and perceptions.
- Take notes.
- Avoid defensiveness.

## 5 Questions to Ask<sup>2</sup>

### 1) What do you look forward to each day when you get ready for work?

**Follow-ups:** "Give me an example" "Tell me more about..."  
"Who do you look forward to working with the most?"

### 2) What are you learning here and what do you want to learn?

**Follow-ups:** "Which other jobs here look attractive to you?"  
"What skills would you have to build to attain those jobs or some responsibilities of those jobs?"

### 3) Why do you stay here?

**Follow-ups:** "Tell me more about why that is so important to you." "Is that the only reason you stay or are there others?" "If you narrowed your reasons to stay to just one, what would it be?"

### 4) When is the last time you thought about leaving us, and what prompted it?

**Follow-ups:** "Tell me more about what happened. Who said what?" "What's the single best thing I can do to make that better for you?" "How important is that to you now on a 1-10 scale?"

### 5) What can I do to make your job better for you?

**Follow-ups:** "Do I tell you when you do something well?" "Do I say and do things to help you do your job better?" "What are three ways I can be a better manager for you?"

## Closing the Interview<sup>3</sup>

- Summarize the key reasons the employee gave for staying or potentially leaving the organization and work with the employee to develop a stay plan.
- End on a positive note!

## For More Information

*The Power of Stay Interviews for Engagement and Retention* (book) by Richard P. Finnegan

### References:

1. "15 Best Questions to Ask in Your Next Stay Interview" (article) by Elise Paulsen (<https://www.quantumworkplace.com/future-of-work/stay-interviews>)
2. "How to Conduct Stay Interviews: 5 Key Questions" (article) by Richard P. Finnegan (<https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/employee-relations/pages/how-to-conduct-stay-interviews-part-2.aspx>)
3. Stay Interview Questions" (article - <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tools-and-samples/hr-forms/pages/stayinterviewquestions.aspx>)



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