

Stay Interviews

Exit interviews are more commonly used to learn about why people leave and not always as effectively as they might be.

With recruitment and retention being a key challenge for trusts and schools, how can you gain an advantage and prevent more staff from leaving.



Adding **Stay Interviews** can give you a competitive advantage and enable you to better understand what keeps people working for you and allow you to identify and address issues ahead of them leaving. The questions will differ from those asked in an Exit Interview.

It should be conducted by someone with enough experience and confidence to ask the right questions. This could be their line manager, though this may not always be possible due to experience, skills or perhaps the current situation.

It maybe as a starting point you use your HR team's expertise, where available, and start with a small group. You can also carry these out anonymously from those that lead the staff concerned. As trust is built you can expand the number of people involved.

The role of the interviewer is to make the experience positive, and the interviewee must feel like they have their best interests in mind (which should also be the intent of the interviewer). They need to feel comfortable and encouraged to give candid feedback without repercussions and the interviewer demonstrate how important their feedback is.

The object is to check in with staff and learn more about how they're feeling about their work, the trust or school and their future. The reasons why people stay in a role will provide you with real insights that aggregated can be used to create a better employee experience and help make sure you are an employer of choice.

What is a stay interview?

It's a short interview to learn why staff will stay with you in your trust or school, and to understand any circumstances that might cause them to leave. They should be conducted as part of your standard operation, rather than an ad-hoc reaction to events.

Unlike an Exit Interview, where you ask why people are leaving, this focuses on what is likely to make sure they stay.

The stay interview

The tone of the conversation should be informal and focused on the staff member and their feelings and needs. You are asking for and receiving feedback, rather than delivering it. Concentrate on gathering information, rather than responding to feedback or justifying why events have happened.

You can create a standard set of questions and use these consistently and review and adapt them as needed. However, interviewers should ask follow up questions to find out further details behind answers given.

Interviews should feel like a conversation and not an interrogation and should also be seen by the interviewer as an opportunity to find out what they can do more of or less of and how they can best support the staff member being interviewed.

Feedback from Stay Interviews should be aggregated and those staff providing information should be updated on actions taken as a result of the information they have given.

Below are questions that you can choose from and use.

Stay Interview Questions

Assessing a staff members general outlook

- What do you look forward to when you come to work each day?
- What do you like most / least about working here?
- What keeps you working here?
- What might tempt you to leave?
- When was the last time you thought about leaving the organisation?
- What situation made you think of leaving?
- Would you recommend working here to your friends? You can use a 1 -10 scale if this helps. Why (or why not)?

How staff members feel about their work

- What would you change about your job, if you could?
- What do you think about your objectives?
- How meaningful do you find your work?
- Do you have the right resources and support to do your best work? If not, what is missing?

Staff Motivation

- What would make your work more satisfying?

- How do you like to be recognised? Is this happening for you here?
- What motivates / demotivates you?
- Are your work contributions valued? (If no, why not?)

How do they feel about their future

- What future do you see for yourself here?
- What strengths and talents of yours are we fully utilising / not utilising?
- What do you think of the professional development you receive now?
- What learning and development would you like or would help keep you here?

How do they feel about their manager

- How can they better support you?
- What could they do more / less of?
- What advice would you give them?
- Thinking of the best manager you have worked with, what did you appreciate most about them?

Asking about the stay interview

- How did this interview / discussion make you feel?
- What other question(s) would you have liked me to ask?
- What are we currently not doing, that you feel we should?

Stay interviews can deliver significant insights and conducting them regularly and consistently can make sure more staff, and particularly those with talent are retained within your trust or school.

For advice on improving and building staff wellbeing into your culture, to increase staff retention and motivation, reduce absences and costs and further raise student outcomes, get in touch at support@welbee.co.uk, call **01277 554 001** or visit welbee.co.uk.