

WHY AND HOW TO CONDUCT EXIT INTERVIEWS

MICHIGAN SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICIALS 80TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

COBO Center
Detroit, MI
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2:00 – 2:30 p.m.

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AGENDA

- What is and isn't an exit interview?
- What's the purpose and benefit of using them?
- What are typical questions and formats?
- Who should conduct them?
- What do you do with the information and who should it be shared with ?
- Are there risks associated with conducting exit interviews?
- A Review of "Best Practices."



WHAT ARE AND AREN'T THEY?

- Meeting with outgoing staff members with the purpose of gaining information beneficial for the organization.
- Covering topics ranging from quality of supervision and leadership to work environment and benefits.
- Applied consistently for all departing staff members.
- Monitored and reported to management.
- Not a check list of things to do on an employees last day.
- Not a chance to demean or “take parting shots” at coworkers, supervisors, or the organization.



PURPOSE AND POTENTIAL BENEFITS

○ Exit Interviews can:

- Be an early warning system regarding organizational issues.
- Provide honest feedback, departing staff “have nothing to lose”.
- Identify areas of supervisory strength and weakness that can be addressed and developed.
- Address existing and prevent future issues regarding violations of employment policies, laws, and regulations.
- Evaluate and improve the cultural climate in the organization.
- Provide feedback on cultural and climate issues in the organization.
- Address positions chronic turnover issues for improvement.
- Validate presumptions about salary and benefits.





TYPICAL EXIT INTERVIEW FORMATS

- Online questionnaires.
- In person interviews, unstructured.
- In person interviews, structured with set questions.
- Essay format.
- Scale format.
- Administered before separation.
- Sent to departing staff member after separation.
- Example:

EXIT
INTERVIEW
FORMAT
EXAMPLE

Name Position Last Day Worked
Service dates Was written resignation given? Yes No

Why are you leaving?

What is the primary factor listed below:

Location Salary Shift Benefits Opportunity for professional growth Other

WERE YOU SATISFIED WITH...

Your job: *(fit with interest and abilities, opportunities, work load)*

Supervision and management: *(fairness, competence, supportive open channels of communication)*

Co-Workers: *(helpful, friendly, competent)*

Policies and practices: *(fairness, working environment)*

Salary and employee benefits: *(fairness, working environment)*



WHO SHOULD CONDUCT EXIT INTERVIEWS

- Not the direct supervisor.
- Not a coworker.
- HR (but not always)
- Outside company
- Someone who is perceived to be:
 - Objective/independent
 - Trusted
 - Confidential
 - Position of authority/management
 - Sound of judgement



WHAT DO YOU DO WITH THE INFORMATION AND WHO SHOULD IT BE SHARED WITH?

- Take action:
 - Immediately communicate results.
 - Address any areas that involve violation of policy.
 - Investigate and address claims of harassment or other violation of law.
- Who should receive the exit interview results?
 - Direct supervisor
 - Supervisor's supervisor
 - Superintendent/Board
 - Employee file
 - Exit Interview file



WHAT ARE THE RISKS INVOLVED WITH CONDUCTING EXIT INTERVIEWS?

- Disruption caused by departing employees with a “grudge” toward his/her supervisor or organization.
- False claims.
- Not acting on issues raised or not acting on a timely basis.
- Perception of supervisors that they are not trusted or their authority is being diminished.
- Creating documents that could be used against the organization in legal proceedings.



EXIT INTERVIEW BEST PRACTICES

- Administering them to all departing staff members.
- Rapid response to issues raised.
- Communicating results and actions to all stakeholders.
- Tracking, analyzing, and reporting trends over time, turnover by department or position, specific issues or areas of dissatisfaction.
- Including initiatives to improve areas deemed to be weakness.
- Holding supervisors responsible for creating a positive work environment for staff.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

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