

STAY INTERVIEWS:

A retention tool for keeping talent

Before completing this sheet, watch the video that introduces this topic. You can watch it [here](#). After watching the video, return to this sheet to get tips on how to conduct Stay Interviews.



What are Stay Interviews?

“A stay interview, sometimes called a retention interview, is a structured conversation between a manager and an employee to gauge engagement levels, assess the company culture, learn what’s keeping the employee at the organization, and understand where improvements can be made” (Cieslinski, n.d.).

How to set up a Stay Interview

1

Schedule Interviews

Set up a time that is convenient for the employee, ensuring enough time for a meaningful conversation without rushing.

2

Communicate Objectives

Clearly communicate the purpose of the stay interview to the employee, emphasizing confidentiality and its focus on their experience and satisfaction.

3

Prepare the Environment

Choose a private and comfortable setting to ensure confidentiality and minimize interruptions.



Sharpen your skills and understand that...

Stay interviews are conducted to understand what keeps employees working for the company, what might cause them to leave, and how to improve their work experience.



THINGS TO REMEMBER ABOUT STAY INTERVIEWS

- **They are NOT performance reviews.**

They are conversations about the employee’s happiness and engagement.

- **CONFIDENTIALITY is crucial.**

If you want to have an honest conversation, you must ensure confidentiality to maintain openness.

- **Spend more time LISTENING.**

Listen more than you speak, and provide encouragement.

- **Practice PERSPECTIVE TAKING.**

Focus on understanding the employee’s perspectives.

- **WRITE IT DOWN.**

Document main points and follow-up on actionable items.

- **KEEP IT REAL.**

Do not make promises you cannot fulfill

Getting prepared for Stay Interviews

Create a bank of open-ended questions to choose from that are the best fit for your organizational needs and the employee being interviewed, rather than viewing the questions as a checklist. Consider the order and categories in which to ask questions e.g., start with questions that are more likely to be perceived by the employee as “low risk” and build up to questions that may be perceived as higher risk when answered candidly.

The following are examples of stay interview questions.



Remember to maintain a positive and engaged tone throughout the interview, showing genuine interest in the employee’s responses. The goal is to help employees feel valued and heard, which can often lead to more honest and constructive feedback.

Job Satisfaction

- What aspects of your job help you look forward to coming to work every day?
- Describe a day when you felt really motivated and engaged at work. In what ways could we support more days like that being possible?
- In what ways could your work be more fulfilling and how can we support that?

Work Environment and Culture

- How do you perceive our company culture, and what impact does it have on your daily work experience?
- What do you need to integrate your personal and professional responsibilities successfully and how could the company support you in this?
- What are the most significant factors that enhance or detract from your success here?

Management and Support

- In what ways could I or the organization better utilize your skills and talents?
- How do you prefer to receive feedback and recognition for your work, and how often?
- What are some ways to help improve the effectiveness of team communication?

Development and Growth

- What opportunities for professional growth would you like to explore here?
- In what ways have you been able to expand your skill set in your current role?
- What are your professional aspirations, and how can we assist you in achieving them within the company?

Engagement and Retention

- What motivates you to go above and beyond in your role?
- If you could make changes to your job or the organization, what would they be?
- Reflect on times when you’ve considered leaving our company. What prompted those feelings, and what factors play the biggest role in your decision to stay or leave?

Post-Interview

- Summarize key points
- Thank the employee for their time and openness
- Create an action plan to address the discussed points
- Schedule a follow-up meeting to review progress