

STAY INTERVIEW GUIDE

Employee Retention Tool for Supervisors



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Public Health

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THE PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

The purpose of this guide is to provide you, the supervisor, with a tool that may be utilized to improve retention of your employees. This guide looks at common reasons employees leave their jobs and the toll this can take on you, the team, and the organization. This guide provides a structured framework, along with resources, that may be used to implement and conduct Stay interviews.

WHAT IS A STAY INTERVIEW?

A Stay interview is a periodic, informal discussion between you and an individual employee to identify ways of aiding and retaining them. These discussions provide an opportunity to recognize top performers and to assist employees who may be struggling. The interviews are designed to encourage the building of trust and commitment between you and each of your employees. During Stay interviews, your employee may share information about one or more of the following:

Stay factors - Positive work characteristics affecting job satisfaction, engagement and commitment.

Concerns - Problematic work issues that may impact their decision to stay.

Requests - Specific actions an employee seeks from you to resolve their concerns.

A Stay Plan is used after an interview as a written record of the employee's Stay factors, concerns, and requests along with responses to the requests and a plan for implementing any changes.



THE SUPERVISOR ROLE IN EMPLOYEE TURNOVER

Employee turnover is impactful and costly in several ways. Turnover creates a vacancy that needs to be recruited for and filled, an uncovered workload that may affect the overall performance and morale of the team, and may take weeks or months of training; all costing a minimum of 16% to 20% of an employee's salary. Understanding the reasons people decide to leave a job is key to building strategies aimed at retaining employees.

Within the last year, the San Bernardino County Department of Public Health (DPH) has been greatly affected by turnover.

- 83 Employees voluntarily separated or left due to unforeseen reasons
- 10 Employees were terminated or the term of their employment ended
- 12 Employees promoted to departments outside of DPH
- 11 Employees accepted lateral transfers or transitioned from extra-help to regular employment outside of DPH
- 6 Employees took voluntary demotions within or outside of the department
- 1 Returned to their former classification in another department

Several studies have been conducted to understand why people leave their jobs. These studies point to the relationship an employee has with their supervisor as a key driver of voluntary turnover. One study, conducted by the Saratoga Institute, gathered data from 20,000 employees who resigned from their various positions. The Saratoga Institute study found that 75% of these employees left for a reason linked to their supervisor. Common turnover reasons found by the Saratoga Institute study are listed below, and the percentage of employees citing each as their reason for leaving.

Common Reasons Employees Leave

- Limited career/promotional opportunities (16%)
- Lack of respect and support from supervisor (13%)
- Lack of challenging/interesting job duties (11%)
- Supervisor lacked leadership skills (9%)
- Supervisor's poor employee relations (4%)
- Favoritism displayed by supervisor (4%)
- Lack of recognition for contributions (4%)
- Lack of training (3%)
- Poor working conditions (3%)
- Poor senior leadership (2%)
- Harassment/discrimination (2%)
- Supervisor lacked technical skills (1%)
- Co-worker's attitude (1%)

16%
DPH TURNOVER
IN FISCAL YEAR
2017-2018

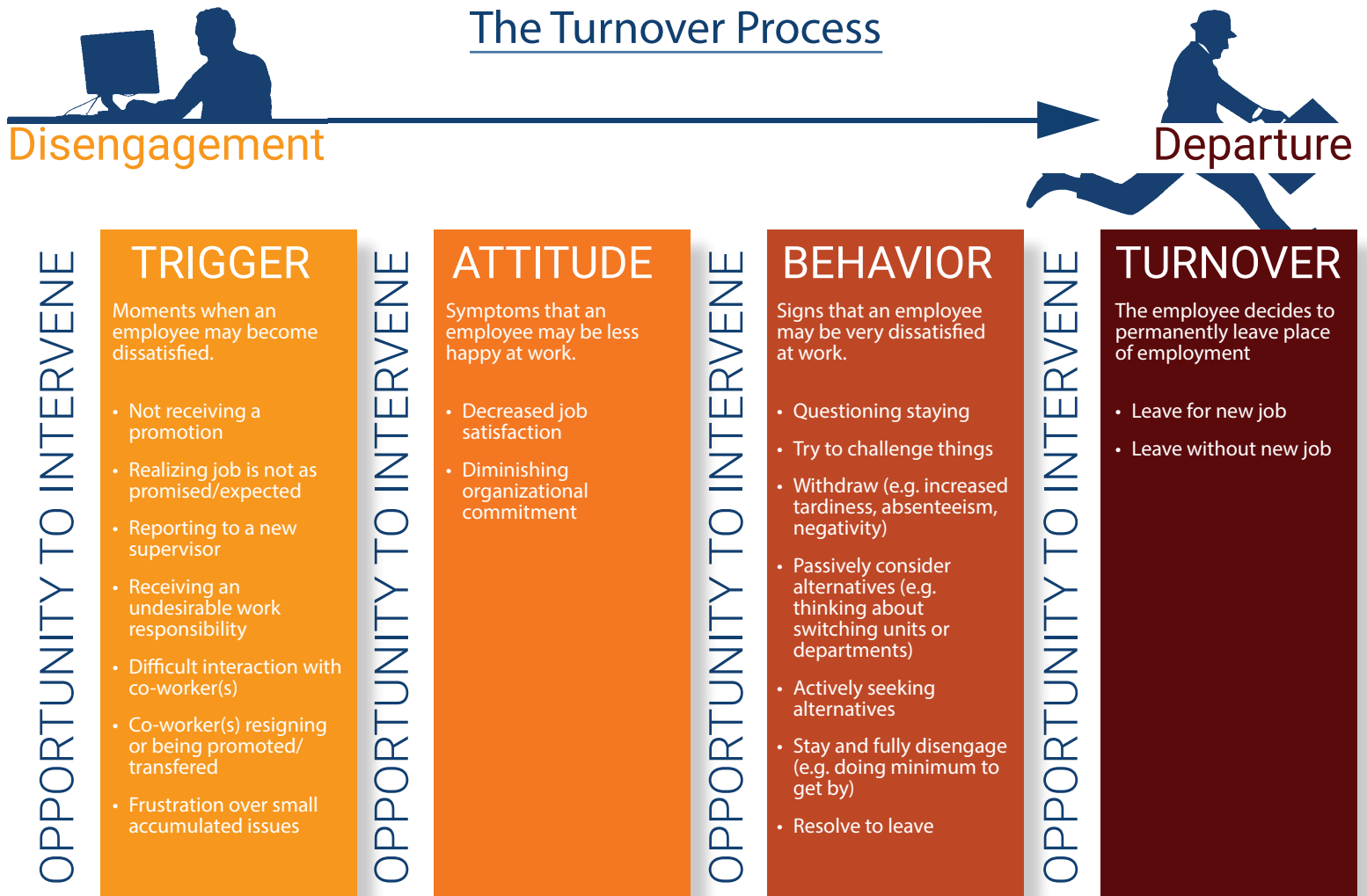


89%
OF MANAGERS
INCORRECTLY
BELIEVE THAT EMPLOYEES
LEAVE BECAUSE
OF PAY



THE TURNOVER PROCESS

In order to take effective action, it is important to understand that turnover is typically not an event, it is a process. It can take a short period of time, or years, for an employee to reach the decision to leave. Stay interviews can be a valuable tool to prevent the turnover process from starting, or possibly stop its progression, in a dissatisfied employee. The illustration below describes the typical turnover process, as well as the many points along the decision path where a supervisor may intervene.



Because the greatest opportunity for successful intervention occurs prior to, or early in the turnover process, it is critical that you know your employees and what contributes to their specific decisions to stay or leave. Conducting regular Stay interviews is one way to obtain this awareness and encourage discussions that may reverse, or preempt the turnover process from starting.

When to Conduct Stay Interviews

Stay interviews should be conducted within three months after onboarding new employees, as needed. Additional Stay interviews should be conducted annually, or as needed, based on the changing attitude, performance, goals, and needs of the employees over time. Always schedule Stay interviews separately from Work Performance Evaluations (WPE). Stay Interviews are not intended to evaluate the employee's work performance.

THE BENEFITS OF CONDUCTING STAY INTERVIEWS

Enhancing the employee-supervisor relationship

Communication is a key factor in enhancing the employee-supervisor relationship. Meaningful communication with employees can be facilitated in several ways:

Face-to-face conversations – make employees feel that you are more approachable and understanding by engaging them in frequent, casual conversation. This can be an opportunity to get to know your employees on a more personal level and build comradery within the team.

Follow through – When an issue is brought to your attention, ensure that it is given proper attention and the employees are given a follow up answer/update, when appropriate.

Feedback – Requesting input from your employees regarding what can be done to help make their jobs easier or more efficient.

Conflict resolution – Recognizing conflicts between employees and dealing with those issues promptly, rather than waiting for them to resolve themselves.

Tone – Maintain a positive or neutral tone when speaking with employees. Your job as supervisor is to lead, support and inspire your employees. Your words should reflect your commitment to this role.

Timeliness – Don't wait for a Stay interview to give feedback to your employee. Feedback (good or bad) should be provided in a timely manner.

“It is said that employees don't leave companies, they leave people.”
-Dale Carnegie





Increasing productivity and engagement of employees

The importance of employee engagement is immense. Strategies used to enhance employee engagement have been proven to reduce turnover as well as improve productivity, efficiency, and decrease absenteeism. Engaged employees are happier people, both at work, and in their daily lives. Engagement is distinctly different than satisfaction. Employees may be content in their roles, show up every day without complaining, but also without being invested in the greater good of the team/department. Without the proper engagement, your employees may not identify opportunities to go the extra mile. No one action will magically cause employees to be engaged, but if you are consistently looking to encourage and support your employees, this will in turn lead them to want to support you, the team, and the department as a whole. Extending this type of respect to employees will lead to higher productivity and a stronger department overall.

“Employee engagement is the emotional commitment the employee has to the organization and its goals.” -Kevin Kruse

Identifying individual professional growth goals and/or training needs

Unlike workforce capacity and training needs surveys that are focused on a large number of employees, Stay interviews are customized to a single individual. This allows for accurate professional goals development and training needs. Whereas the focus of the Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) is to maintain and enhance skills to prepare the employee for career advancement, the focus of the Stay interview is on retaining staff. They are both tools that the supervisor may utilize during meetings with their employees.

A woman with blonde hair is shown in profile, working at a computer. The background is a blurred office environment with other people and equipment.

Strengthening organizational commitment

The success or failure of an organization is closely related to the effort and motivation of its employees. Communication is one way to keep employees engaged and thereby increase their motivation and commitment to the organization. Commitment provides the strongest incentive to stay with an organization. Committed employees often feel a desire to maintain an association with the beliefs and goals of the organization; they feel well treated and supported by the organization, their co-workers, and their supervisor.

Reversing/averting the turnover process and its associated costs

A detailed Stay interview, along with a Stay Plan, will give you the valuable insight into a goldmine of information. This information can be used to reduce turnover of high performing employees. This information can also save tens of thousands to millions of dollars on internal costs, not to mention helping your employees stay motivated, stay engaged, and stay productive.

“Having a regular Stay interview program demonstrates to your employees how much you value them because you are careful to ask and listen to why they are still with your company.” -AppleOne.com

Improving employee retention rates

Stay interviews have been shown to improve employee retention rates based on several key factors:

Employee stimulation – Employees perceive the organization as being interested in their happiness and wellbeing due to the supervisor taking time to listen to the employees' concerns and suggestions.

Personalized to the employee – This type of engagement strategy focuses on the individual and what they want/need rather than on the masses.

Narrowed focus to key personnel – This is a benefit to supervisors as they can target their time on key staff that may be on the verge of leaving, rather than make this a very time intensive effort with all staff. This can also be an opportunity to inquire about stay factors among engaged, highly productive staff to determine if these factors can be adapted to benefit all employees.

Actionable – Exit interviews identify problems, but the time to fix them has passed. Stay interviews allow for dialogue between a supervisor and employee to identify potential solutions to improve the work experience, and minimize turnover triggers.

Early intervention – Timing is everything. If a Stay interview is conducted prior to an employee contemplating leaving the organization, then potentially negative emotions are lowered.

Reduce time pressure – When intervention is initiated before the turnover process has started, the employee has not yet started thinking about or looking for another job. This provides the supervisor some additional time to resolve identified concerns and aid in retention of that employee.

Positively focused – A good Stay interview focuses on, and reinforces, the positive aspects of the employee's job. While concerns and issues can be explored, they should not be the main component of Stay interviews.

No training required – A good "How To" kit is typically all that is needed for supervisors to conduct Stay interviews, eliminating the need for formal training courses on the topic.

Minimal fiscal input – Typically, 2 hours of the supervisor's and employee's time is all that is needed– no large budget expenses are required. Compare that to the cost of turnover, which can be 1.5 to 2 times the employee's salary.

"Train people well enough so they can leave. Treat them well enough so they don't want to." -Richard Branson



TURNOVER TIME COMMITMENT

While the time spent on Stay interviews might seem demanding, this process may offset the time it would normally take to deal with discipline, replacement hiring, training, and other time-consuming issues related to the turnover process. The typical amount of time it takes to fill a vacated position (after the 2 or more weeks required to recruit) is about 2-3 months. Any effort you can take to retain employees will be well worth your time.

The Hiring Timeline



9 to 13 weeks
to hire a new
employee

STAY INTERVIEW TIME COMMITMENT

A Stay interview process should typically take approximately 2 hours of your time. In addition to potentially averting or reducing turnover within your team, these interviews may increase the engagement, communication, and morale between you and the employee interviewed.

The Stay Interview Timeline



The two hours invested in conducting a Stay interview is well worth the 2-3 months saved in filling a position.

THE STAY INTERVIEW PROCESS

When implementing Stay interview, follow the steps provided below. By following the four steps of the Stay interview process, you will ensure that you and your employee are prepared for the interview, your discussion is productive, and the Stay Plan is focused.

step one PREPARE

- Use the Stay Interview Process Checklist for Supervisors (appendix B) to stay organized as you advance through the steps.
- Inform your employee that the purpose of Stay interviews is to improve job satisfaction and engagement.
- Be committed to positive change and approach the interviews with an open mind.
- Reflect on your knowledge of the individual employee before selecting interview questions.
- Use a limited number of questions (no more than 6). Some examples can be found in the Stay Interview Sample Questions (Appendix E).
- Anticipate possible concerns the employee may voice. Formulate possible strategies for addressing their concerns.
- Give ample notice to the employee, and provide the questions along with the Stay Interview Fact Sheet for Employees (appendix A) ahead of the interview.

step two INTERVIEW

- Meet in a private location ideal for candid discussion. Consider sitting on the same side of the table, rather than across a desk from your employee.
- Read body language and be aware of your own. Use open body language during the interview. This means ensuring eye contact is maintained, facial expressions communicate interest and encouragement, and your legs and arms are uncrossed.
- Maintain a casual, conversational tone throughout the interview.
- Review the purpose of the interview.
- Use the interview questions to have a discussion with the employee.
- Express appreciation for the employee's efforts and achievements.
- Take short notes (maintaining an open discussion is the goal).
- Gather information regarding your employee's Stay factors, concerns and requests.
- Thank the employee for sharing and advise them that you will consider the information provided.
- Summarize what was discussed and ask if there is anything else the employee would like to add.
- Schedule a follow up meeting and provide an overview of what the meeting is for.

Note: Immediately address any workplace violations reported by the employee.

step three EVALUATE

- Review Stay factors and how or if they can be maintained.
- Evaluate requests; give proper consideration to all requests and concerns voiced. Ask yourself the following:
 - What does this request mean to the employee?
 - Is it appropriate for his/her level?
 - What will it cost to implement?
 - How will it affect other employees?
 - How will this improve his/her work contribution?
 - Does this conflict with county/department policies?
- If you are unable to fulfill a specific request, ask yourself the following:
 - What is my reason for denying the request?
 - What is the underlying concern that led my employee to make this request?
- Identify solutions or alternatives to requests that cannot be granted.
- Document the Stay Plan (appendix H).
- Analyze the information gathered throughout various Stay interviews for possible response trends. If multiple employees are requesting similar changes; this may suggest those changes need to be implemented across the whole team.

step four FOLLOW-UP

- Schedule a follow up interview to present the Stay Plan to the employee.
- Check for agreement with the plan, or update the plan as needed/appropriate.
- Move forward with implementing the plan for the employee and/or your team.



SUCCESS STORIES

Novo 1

This Fort Worth, Texas Customer Contact Center sends its managers to a 90-minute, interactive Stay interview training that includes information on how to conduct the interview to feel more like a conversation than a formal interview. Stay interviews, which the company conducts on an annual basis, have helped the company reduce turnover by 20%.

Webroot Software

This internet security product development company in Broomfield, Colorado implemented Stay interviews immediately following a reduction in workforce, a period during which turnover would historically spike. After conducting the Stay interviews, turnover actually decreased rather than increased.

Hilton

The international hotel chain's five call centers averaged 55% annual turnover, and 50% of new agents failed to reach 90 days of employment. By requiring managers to send a 90-day retention report to the CEO and conduct Stay interviews with new hires at 30 and 90 days of employment, the company has reduced turnover by 50% in four months.

Burcham Hills

The East Lansing, Michigan retirement community began conducting Stay interviews for nurses after 30 days of employment and annually for veteran employees. As a result, turnover among veteran nurses decreased by 72%.



CONCLUSION

EFFECTIVE SUPERVISORY SKILLS AND PRACTICES

The supervisory skills and practices you will develop and employ while performing Stay interviews may be used on a daily basis to increase your employees' job satisfaction, engagement and commitment. Connecting with your employees helps to build a foundation of trust and loyalty to you, their team and the organization. Key elements in making meaningful connections with your employees include:

Communication - be open and receptive to employees. Use Stay interviews, daily interactions, and clearly defined goals to open and enhance lines of communication.

Recognition - use formal and informal recognition programs to show employees that they are appreciated and provide feedback on their performance.

Meaning - show employees they are performing meaningful work by explaining how it affects the County and members of the community, as well as how it fits into County and department goals.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Stay interviews are about building a comfortable, open, and trusting relationship with each of your employees. As stated in the American Management Association's The Seven Hidden Reasons Employees Leave, "this takes courage, an ability to be self-reflective, more frequent contact, and emotional involvement with the employee." Although it may not be possible to prevent or delay an employee from leaving, Stay interviews help you take ownership of your role in retention management within your team.

"The [supervisor] needs to look at the employee not as a problem to be solved, but as a person to be understood." -Nigel Nicholson



APPENDICES

Use the following resources and forms to implement Stay interviews.

STAY INTERVIEW

FACT SHEET FOR EMPLOYEES

What is a Stay interview?

This fact sheet provides some information regarding the purpose of Stay interviews and what you can expect from a Stay interview with your supervisor.

What is the purpose of a Stay interview?

A Stay interview is a one-on-one discussion with your direct supervisor about your level of job satisfaction and commitment to stay as a member of your work unit and ways to improve it.

What happens during a Stay interview?

Your supervisor appreciates you and values the work you do and wants to ensure that you are satisfied with your job so that you are encouraged to stay with your work team.

How should I prepare for a Stay interview?

Your supervisor will ask questions about what is going well, what you like about your job, and the work-related factors that may cause you to consider leaving. Your supervisor may take notes so what you discuss can be reviewed to determine how to best increase your job satisfaction.

- What do I appreciate most about my current position? What do I like least?
- On a day-to-day basis, does my current position meet my needs?
- On a broader scale, does my position meet my needs for achieving my career aspirations?
- What challenges or concerns do I have with my...
 - Workload (e.g., level of autonomy and challenge)?
 - Development? (e.g., career planning and training opportunities)?
 - Work environment (e.g., workspace location and well-being)?
 - Access to information (e.g., feedback and recognition preference)?
 - Access to necessary resources (e.g., tools and equipment)?
 - Work relationships (e.g., interactions with your supervisor and co-workers)?
- How can my supervisor help address those challenges and concerns?
- What, if anything, would have to change about my position to keep me satisfied?

What will happen after the Stay interview?

After meeting with you, your supervisor will evaluate and determine if there are changes that can be made to help address the issues you discussed. Keep in mind that your supervisor may not be able to create your ideal job, but every effort will be made to increase your job satisfaction.

Is the Stay interview a performance evaluation?

No, the Stay interview is not a performance evaluation or a disciplinary process. Work experiences and activities will enter into the discussion as they relate to your job satisfaction.

How long does the Stay interview last?

The Stay interview lasts approximately 30 minutes.

Note: Participation in the Stay interview process is voluntary. You can decline the invitation for a Stay interview and do not have to participate in the process, if you are not interested.

STAY INTERVIEW PROCESS CHECKLIST FOR SUPERVISORS

This document provides a checklist that can be used to help you organize the planning, administration, and follow-up of Stay interviews.

step one: PREPARE

- ☐ Inform your employees of the purpose of Stay interviews.
- ☐ Be committed to positive change; approach the interviews with an open mind.
- ☐ Reflect on your knowledge of the individual employee before selecting interview questions.
- ☐ Anticipate possible concerns the employee may voice.
- ☐ Select a limited number of questions (no more than 6).
- ☐ Give ample notice to the employee; allow him/her time to prepare as well.
- ☐ Schedule a Stay interview within 3 months after onboarding a new employee.

step two: INTERVIEW

- ☐ Meet in a private location. Consider sitting at the same side of the table as your employee.
- ☐ Read body language and express open body language to your employee.
- ☐ Maintain a casual, conversational tone throughout the interview.
- ☐ Review the purpose of the interview.
- ☐ Use the interview questions to have a discussion with your employee.
- ☐ Express appreciation for the employee's efforts and achievements.
- ☐ Take short notes, if needed (maintaining an open discussion is the goal).
- ☐ Gather as much information as possible regarding your employee's stay factors, concerns, and requests.

step three: EVALUATE

- ☐ Review Stay factors and how/if they can be maintained.
- ☐ Evaluate requests; give proper consideration to all requests and concerns voiced. Ask yourself the following:
 - What does this mean to the employee?
 - Is it appropriate for his/her level?
 - What will it cost to implement?
 - How will it affect other employees?
 - How will this improve his/her work contribution?
 - Does this fit within county/department policies?
- ☐ If you are unable to fulfill a specific request, ask yourself the following:
 - What is my reason for denying the request?
 - What is the underlying concern that led my employee to make this request?
- ☐ Identify solutions or alternatives to requests that cannot be granted.
- ☐ Document the Stay Plan.

step four: FOLLOW-UP

- ☐ Present the Stay Plan.
- ☐ Check for agreement and update the Stay Plan as needed/appropriate.
- ☐ Move forward with the Stay Plan.
- ☐ Repeat Stay interview annually, or as needed (Stay interviews should be a recurring process as employees' goals and needs change over time).

STAY INTERVIEW BEST PRACTICES



As you begin to implement Stay interviews in your team, keep in mind some of the following best practices:

Conduct interviews individually - These conversations should not occur in a group setting. Your employee must feel that they are the focal point and not one of many. This will help you to create individualized strategies to keep each employee as well as strategies to stop or offset turnover triggers.

Review the purpose of the interview - Employees may not be familiar with the concept of Stay interviews and may have a negative view at first. It is best to begin by explaining why you are conducting the interview and what type of information you will be discussing. Your goal is to gain insight into what motivates or frustrates your employees, what they value and to support, develop, and retain their services.

Avoid “Yes/No” (closed-ended) questions - Specific information is your goal. The feedback you receive will be much richer by asking questions that require an explanation, such as: What attracted you to this job? What about your job makes you proud? What aspects of your job do you find challenging?

Listen, don’t guide - Pay attention to what gets your employee excited and engaged. Take notes and stay focused on the answers you receive. Probe deeper into responses that are not clear or may have more behind them. Keep the conversation constructive and positive, even if comments or concerns are made that you don’t agree with.

Be creative - Try to be creative in finding solutions that can be a win/win for your employee, you, and the team/department. If there are areas where you as a supervisor can’t make accommodations, be honest and clear with your employee so realistic expectations can be set.

Do not negotiate - The Stay interview is not intended to be a negotiation with the employee. It is designed to proactively gain useful information, show appreciation, and remind employees that they are important to the team/department.

Show follow through - Demonstrate that you have genuine intentions to make changes, if possible, as a result of the interview. Supervisors should let their employees know what they plan to do to make improvements, including the anticipated timelines and plans.

Timing - Don’t wait until there is a noticeable morale problem to launch Stay interviews within your team. Making Stay interviews part of your team and department culture will show employees that you are sincerely interested in boosting job satisfaction.



OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

The table below summarizes some possible challenges you may face throughout the Stay interview process. Suggested strategies are provided that can be used to overcome these challenges.

Challenge	Description	Strategies
Fulfilling requests	Problems may arise if you cannot fulfill an employee's request.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be upfront about the process and your evaluation criteria. • Explain why the request cannot be fulfilled. • Do not promise something you cannot deliver. • Offer alternatives when possible.
Unreasonable requests	An employee requests something that is impossible to grant (e.g. higher pay for the same job).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set clear parameters for what kinds of requests can be considered. • Request the employee stay focused on requests that you have authority to implement.
Dissatisfaction with outcome	An employee is not satisfied with the response to their requests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To mitigate potential unrealistic expectations, ensure staff is adequately familiarized with the purpose of Stay interviews before scheduling begins. • Prior to the Stay interview, be upfront about your criteria for fulfilling requests. • Keep an open mind. Try to determine what about the request is important to your employee. • Meet again with the employee to collaboratively develop and/or discuss alternative solutions.
Awkwardness	It can be difficult to discuss an employee's concerns and the possibility that he/she is seeking employment elsewhere.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate employees and yourself on the process. • Hold the meeting in a private location. • Focus on how the process will lead to improvements. • Incorporate informal Stay interviews into day-to-day conversations so they become more natural.
Complaints about you	It may be hard for an employee to express, and for you to hear, concerns about your management style and/or behaviors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the employee if there is anything you can do to be a better supervisor. • View issues raised as areas for improvement rather than complaints. • Ask for examples to help you understand the employee's perspective in a specific situation or context.

STAY INTERVIEW SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Below is a list of possible Stay interview questions. Feel free to modify the language and remember you do not need to ask every question to every employee. Select 5-6 questions that are most appropriate for the situation:

Opening

- What about your current job would you miss if you changed your role or moved to a completely different job?
- If you were asked by a friend, what reasons would you give for staying at your current job?
- What is one thing that would make your job more satisfying and rewarding?
- What about your job is not what you expected it to be?
- Do you feel that you are part of a bigger vision and mission? Why or why not?
- What attracted you to this job?
- What makes it challenging to perform your job?
- What would keep you enthusiastic about your job?
- What about your job makes you excited to come to work?
- What makes for a great day at work?
- What about your job keeps you up at night?
- What one thing would you change about your job?
- Do you believe that your work has meaning? How can we work together to make your work more meaningful?
- What has influenced you to stay here (i.e., your stay factors)?
- What might entice you to look for another job?
- What about your work makes you proud?

Recognizing skills and talents

- What talents, interests or skills do you have that are not being used in your current role?
- What part of your role is most challenging? What is least challenging?
- How do you like to be recognized for a job well done?
- How can your talents and skills be better utilized within your current position?
- Do you feel that you are being recognized for your work? How can this be improved?
- Can you highlight any recent recognition and/or acknowledgment you have received that increased your commitment and loyalty?

Leadership

- Do you respect the amount and type of guidance that you receive from senior leadership?
- What can I do as a supervisor to better support you?
- Do you trust the senior leaders? Why or why not?
- Do you have suggestions about how we can improve as a team, unit, or organization?

Environment

- Are you treated well by your co-workers?
- Do you feel that you have the necessary control over your job to perform successfully and productively?
- What type of feedback would you like to receive about your work performance? From co-workers? Do you get that type of feedback currently?
- How are your work relationships with your colleagues?

STAY INTERVIEW SAMPLE QUESTIONS

How can I help?

- What did you love in your last job that you are not doing now?
- What can I do to make your experience at work better?
- What are the strengths of our work relationship? What could make it better?
- Are you listened to and valued at work? Do you feel that your teammates listen to and respect you? Do they value your ideas, input and decisions?
 - Would you say the same for our management team?
 - How can that area be improved?
- What kinds of flexibility would be helpful to you in balancing your work and home life?
- Are there things I could do more of? Less of?
- What can I do to make your job more satisfying?
- Have you had days when your frustration level was high enough that you considered leaving?
 - What kind of “triggers” or negative factors led to your frustration?
 - Can you help me understand what happened to lower that frustration level?
 - Are you still experiencing those triggers?

Training/career development

- What is your dream job? Can the department support your progress toward it? If so, how?
- Are you satisfied with the training and development you have received? Do you have an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)? A mentor?
- Do you have anything new you would like to learn this year?
- What training or career development courses are you interested in?
- Is there anything that would help progress your career development that you are reluctant to ask about?
- Are there career opportunities you would like to pursue within the department or County?
- Is the department providing you with opportunities to grow and develop as a person and as a professional? What would improve your opportunities?
- Do you feel supported in your career goals?
- Are there any new challenges you would like to take on?
- In what areas do you feel you can grow further in this job? Is that the kind of challenge you would want? If not, what challenges do you seek?

Closing

- Have you ever considered leaving? If so, what are the specific reasons that would cause you to leave? What would make you stay?
- What support or feedback can I provide to you?
- If you decided to leave the team/department, would you stay in the County? Why or why not?
- Is there anything else that is important to you that we did not cover during this meeting?

POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS TO COMMON CONCERNS

The following tables describe potential solutions to address common concerns raised during Stay interviews. This information may be helpful in evaluating how to improve your employee's job satisfaction, engagement, and commitment.

Note: Before proposing or implementing any solution, carefully consider the specific benefits, feasibility, and any limits regarding use (e.g. budget and policy constraints).

Concern	Solution	Potential Action
Workload	More Autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve employee in project planning process. Determine due dates with employee. Let employee determine how to complete projects to meet performance expectations.
	Less Autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide more precise direction. Check in regularly to monitor progress. Help employee build skills to self-manage.
	More challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide more difficult projects (e.g., build something new and/or unique). Assign a higher volume of projects.
	Choice of projects/assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a list of future projects. Consult with employee regarding interests and preferences, when possible.
Development	Career planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss employee's goals. Map out path of possible advancement and enrichment to achieve those goals. Determine what additional skills and/or experiences are necessary to move into each position.
	More training opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage and allow employee to attend county sponsored programs related to his/her career path. Consider suggesting free learning opportunities the employee could pursue during and/or away from work (e.g., webinars).
Access to necessary resources	Add equipment to workspace	Provide employee with necessary equipment in his/her workspace.
	Access technology needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide hardware and software/applications that match the needs of the employee's work. Ensure employee's software/applications are up-to-date. Ensure employee's software/applications are compatible with the software/applications of other individuals with whom the employee sends or receives work.

POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS TO COMMON CONCERNS

Concern	Solution	Potential Action
Information	More feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide regular feedback regarding work the employee is performing. • Acknowledge when things are going well. • Provide suggestions for improvement, when needed.
	More recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell employee when he/she has done well. • Create small notes or awards to give out for superior performance. • Mention employee achievements at staff meetings. • Remember that recognition can be meaningful when large or small.
	More knowledge of a team's goals and current projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold regular staff meetings. • Meet with employee individually to provide information on the team's goals and projects. • Maintain and share an assignment/project log. • Require employees to upload project information and materials to an accessible, shared location (e.g., SharePoint or a dry erase board).
	More knowledge of department goals and current projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with employee individually to provide information on department goals. • Encourage employee to talk to other employees within the department about their projects.
Role confusion	Clarify responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and/or provide an up-to-date role description that includes the purpose and scope, duties performed, services provided, reporting relationships, interactions with other roles, and key performance expectations. • Hold regular team meetings to enable employees to discuss any potential role conflicts.
	Ensure balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid making the employee accountable on a long-term basis to more than one immediate supervisor. This will help to avoid any potential conflict in work demands. • Avoid placing inconsistent demands on the employee. • Ensure that the requirements of different projects are compatible, when possible. • Ensure projects match the employee's role.

SAMPLE STAY PLAN

Robert Morales
Employee Name

Judy Pineda
Supervisor Name

Staff Analyst
Employee Job Title

Administration
Unit/Work Team

06/08/2018
Date of Stay Interview

07/15/2018
Date of Follow-Up Meeting

Did the employee agree to notify supervisor of changes to his/her intent to leave or stay?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Stay factors discussed (summary bullets)

1. Flexibility
2. Influence over work product
3. Short commute
4. Friendships established with two co-workers

Concerns discussed (summary bullets)

1. Leaving work late due to meetings scheduled for 4:00 pm or later
2. Co-workers do not provide proper support
3. Doing too much clerical, rather than analytical, work
4. Not being challenged enough

Responses to employee requests

1. Request: Do not schedule meetings after 3:00 pm

Addresses: Concern #1

I cannot approve Robert's request because the nature of our work is such that most team members are often not available until late afternoon. I will continue to schedule meetings when most of the team is available. I will ensure that team meetings do not run late and that everyone's scheduled leave time is taken into consideration.

2. Request: Advise the team on how to properly give feedback

Addresses: Concern #2

Performance, Education & Resource Centers (PERC) has a module on this topic and I will require all team members to complete it by 08/01/2018. I will also monitor feedback given between team members for a short period thereafter to check it for improvements.

3. Request: Hire clerical support for the team

Addresses: Concern #3

Our team does not have a budgeted vacancy for a clerical position. I will, however, speak with the program managers about whether and how the team can obtain greater assistance with clerical tasks from the secretaries and/or support staff.

4. Request: Challenging work

Addresses: Concern #4

I will gradually assign Robert work from other functional areas of our unit. As we discussed, Robert sees learning something new as a welcome challenge. This action is contingent upon Robert continuing to complete his current work with the same high standards.

Note: This plan is intended to enhance the employee's job satisfaction, engagement, and commitment. Both supervisor and employee are responsible for fulfilling their roles to achieve these goals.

STAY PLAN

Employee Name

Supervisor Name

Employee Job Title

Unit/Work Team

Date of Stay Interview

Date of Follow-Up Meeting

Did the employee agree to notify supervisor of changes to his/her intent to leave or stay?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Stay factors discussed (summary bullets)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Concerns discussed (summary bullets)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Responses to employee requests

1. Request:

Addresses:

2. Request:

Addresses:

3. Request:

Addresses:

4. Request:

Addresses:

Note: This plan is intended to enhance the employee's job satisfaction, engagement, and commitment. Both supervisor and employee are responsible for fulfilling their roles to achieve these goals.

SOURCES

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STAY INTERVIEW GUIDE September 2018

Employee Retention Tool
for Supervisors



Public Health

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