
Exit interview questions and answers

Use these sample **exit interview questions** to identify areas of improvement at your company and end things on a positive note when an employee quits.

Why you should conduct an exit interview

Taking the time to talk to a departing employee can be beneficial for your company. Conduct exit interviews to:

- Find out how employees perceive company culture and whether they feel valued and respected by peers and managers.
- Discover ways to improve performance appraisals and employee relations.
- Find out what training and development opportunities employees want.
- Gather benchmark data around compensation packages (e.g. if an employee leaves due to a better offer or more attractive benefits.)
- Learn what would motivate employees to stay with your company.
- Boost your employer brand by showing that you care about current and former employees' opinions.
- Unearth problems that employees didn't feel comfortable talking about before leaving (e.g. micro-management, victimization, retaliation, lack of direction.)

Examples of exit interview questions

- Please describe your general feelings about working here. If possible, please tell us why you are leaving.
- What did you enjoy most about working here?
- If you could change three things, what would they be?
- How do you feel you were treated by your supervisor and your coworkers?
- How well do you believe your work was recognized and appreciated?
- Do you feel you were given adequate training and assistance?
- Are there things you wish you had known earlier?
- Do you think your work was aligned with your personal goals?
- What can we do to make this company a better place to work?
- What kind of tools, resources or training would have helped you perform better?
- Would you recommend our company to friends of yours who're looking for a job? Why or why not?

How to conduct exit interviews effectively

- **Assign a member of your HR team to conduct exit interviews.** Employees might feel uncomfortable talking to their former manager about what led them to resign, if for example they felt undervalued.
- **Prepare well before conducting exit interviews.** Think about what kind of feedback would be valuable and plan your questions beforehand. Don't make your discussion feel scripted, though.
- **Be ready to act on feedback you receive.** Conducting an exit interview just for the sake of it is a waste of time for both the employee and you. Use the feedback you collect constructively so that you can improve your company procedures and retain employees in the long run.
- **Always end things on a positive note.** Trying to dissuade employees from leaving or criticizing them for giving you a very short notice, will leave a bad taste in their mouth. Instead, thank them for their work and wish them good luck in their future endeavors.

How to overcome challenges during exit interviews

It's not uncommon to face challenges getting employees to open up during exit interviews, or to have them agree to be interviewed at all. Here are some typical exit interview challenges you'll face with employees, with tips on how to get around them:

- **Employees who hold back information.** Employees leaving your company may still want to maintain good relationships with their former managers and colleagues. Therefore, they might hesitate to mention what they didn't like about their collaboration. Try to ask questions with a pinch of positivity: "*What do you think would have made your day-to-day at work better?*" or "*How would you suggest improving our workplace?*"
- **Employees who don't want to participate in exit interviews.** Your soon-to-be former employees might view exit interviews as a waste of time if it's just a formality for your company. Don't wait for employees to quit before you ask for their opinions. Build an open communication culture through regular meetings and informal discussions. This way, employees will be willing to give you feedback once they decide to leave.
- **Employees who are overly emotional.** The decision to quit often comes with strong feelings, either of sadness or anger. So, an employee's last days at work might not be the best time for them to offer objective feedback. If employees feel too uncomfortable having an exit interview, offer alternatives: a phone exit interview some time after they leave or a questionnaire via email. These methods might be less personal, but will still give you some valuable data.
- **Employees who worry about their privacy.** Employees won't open up about the reasons of their resignation, unless you reassure them their interview remains confidential. Explain that the scope of exit interviews is to help your company become a better employer and not place blame on anyone. Maintain a casual, friendly tone during your discussion to make employees feel at ease. If they're still doubting, don't force them into the exit interview; it should be voluntary.