



Knowledge to lead

Conducting an Exit Interview

Step by Step

1. Start planning the exit interview early (possibly, as soon as you know that a person is leaving).
2. Consider that exit interviews are only appropriate for people who leave the company voluntary or retire. Avoid using this tool with employees who have been made redundant.
3. Think about the information you are interested in. "Traditional" exit interviews usually provide information concerning human resources; while knowledge-focused exit interviews aim to gather information related to the job the leaver was doing.
4. Capture both explicit and tacit knowledge before the employee leaves. In the case of explicit knowledge, verify that relevant files are saved in shared folders and ask the leaver to rationalize and organize them. In the case of tacit knowledge, interview the leaver face-to-face: ask him/her which knowledge and skills the successor needs to have or to acquire.
5. Create an overlap period between the leaver and his/her successor, whenever possible.
6. Think about the most suitable person to be the interviewer. You need to consider the kind of information you would like to obtain from the leaver (human resources/knowledge) and trust/honesty's issues. For instance, if the leaver has had a difficult relationship with a colleague, avoid placing him/her as interviewer.
7. Think about introducing the "3E method" in your company, since the less information you gather on a normal basis, the more you need to gather when an employee leaves the organization. The three Es stand for Entry, Expert and Exit: you should capture knowledge from employees when they first join the company (they have a "fresh" point of view at that moment), when they become experts in a specific field and when they leave.



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