



EXIT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

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An exit interview is an opportunity for a CEO to learn things which may not be available otherwise. The CEO should use it as an opportunity to get a good look at things from the perspective of someone who has made an important decision—to leave your company. The longer the employee has been with the company, the more powerful the insights can be.

Here are some questions which may be useful to guide the conversation. Use as many or as few as apply to your situation. Know you will encounter differing levels of cooperation and don't bash to fit. Take it easy and learn. Move through the exit interview at a quick pace. You are looking for the first thoughts which occur to the interview, not literature. Keep the discussion airy and light.

If you cannot conduct the exit interview yourself, have it conducted by an objective party such as an HR person. Do not have the exit interview conducted by the employee's immediate supervisor or boss.

- 1. Why are you leaving the company?*** [When the interview is finished, revisit this question as the discussion may have changed this answer.]
- 2. Are you going to a new job? What drew you to that job? How long had you been looking?***
- 3. During the term of your employment what assignment or objectives did you enjoy the most?***
- 4. During the term of your employment what assignment or objectives did you enjoy the least?***

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5. *With whom did you have the best working relationship within the company?*
6. *With whom did you have the most difficult working relationship within the company? Was this a consideration in your decision to leave?*
7. *Which client relationships did you enjoy the most?*
8. *Which client relationships did you enjoy the least? Why?*
9. *What initiatives, projects, or programs with which you were involved during your tenure with the company do you judge to have been the most successful?*
10. *What initiatives, projects, or programs with which you were involved during your tenure with the company do you judge to have been the most successful?*
11. *Do you feel like you knew the Vision, Mission, Strategy, Tactics, Objectives, and Values of the company at all times?*
12. *Did you have a clear Job Description?*
13. *Did you at all times have a clear set of objectives? Were they in writing? Attainable?*
14. *Did you have the skill set to do your job? The time?*
15. *Did you have the tools and equipment to do your job?*
16. *Did you receive adequate supervision to accomplish your objectives?*
17. *Did you receive fair performance appraisals? If not, what was unfair?*
18. *Were your performance appraisals based on the attainment of objectives?*
19. *Did you have an opportunity to provide input to the performance appraisal process?*
20. *Did performance appraisals impact or change your performance?*
21. *Who do you consider to be the Most Valuable Player in your work team? In the company?*
22. *Whose departure would you consider the smallest loss to your work team? The company?*
23. *What do you consider to be the greatest strength of the company?*
24. *What do you consider to be the greatest weakness of the company?*
25. *Where do you see the company in five years?*
26. *If you could change one thing about the company right now, what would it be?*
27. *Were you fairly compensated for each position you held during your employment?*

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28. *Was the company's benefits package competitive? Better, the same, worse than our competitors?*
29. *Are there any benefits we do not offer, we should consider?*
30. *Did your job fit into your life? Did you have sufficient time for yourself and your personal life?*
31. *If there was some particular reason you decided to leave, did you ever attempt to communicate that reason to your supervisors? When and how did that work?*
32. *Were you ever the victim, exposed to, or observe any form of discrimination? Did you report it? If so, why not?*
33. *Did the company ever engage in any unsafe practices?*
34. *Did the company have a fair Employee Policy Handbook?*
35. *Would you ever consider returning to the employ of the company in the future? Under what conditions?*
36. *Would you recommend a friend to work here?*
37. *What else do you think we need to know that would be helpful to the company?*

You do not want to learn about problems within your company for the first time from an exit interview. If you do, make sure you verify them. Departing employees can be brutally candid and can also be settling old scores. Consider these possibilities.

Take a look at your last **Anonymous Company Survey** and compare what it says about your company versus this exit interview. If they are highly correlated, then you should have a higher level of confidence that your former employee is telling you the truth. If they are not, then you are right to be skeptical.

Learn. Act on your learning.