

A BEST PRACTICE FRAMEWORK FOR CONDUCTING EXIT INTERVIEWS

Exit interviews are voluntary

Exit interviews can be an extremely powerful tool to discover first hand perspectives of what it's actually like being a member of staff in a school. They can be used to help to develop a strategy to reduce staff turnover if this is an issue and they are a good way to add value to the culture of the school. Therefore, they should be actively encouraged by headteachers. However it must be remembered that interviews are undertaken voluntarily by employees and are not a requirement at the end of the employment contract.

Exit interviews are informal

Interviews should be undertaken on a one to one basis in order to promote honesty by encouraging a good exchange of information which highlights both the strengths and weaknesses of the schools practices and procedures.

Exit interviews must ensure confidentiality where possible

It is important that guarantees of confidentiality are well publicised alongside the value placed on exit interviews. This will help to gain the leaving employee's co-operation.

Exit interviews are taken seriously and structured

The school must be seen to be supportive of the procedures put in place and, more importantly, take a proactive stance on acting on the findings of the interviews. The best way to do this is to ensure that the interviews are appropriately structured and the questions are thought about carefully in advance.

Empathy is the key to success

To encourage true flow of information the exit interview should be undertaken by someone the employee is comfortable with. It can often be useful to use somebody who is truly impartial and not connected directly with the school.

Exit interviews must ensure accuracy of information recorded

At the end of the interview session, or soon after, the employee should be given the opportunity to view the information recorded and, if they wish, sign to agree that the information recorded is correct.