



‘Simon Says’

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Edward George

Did you know...

Most employees choose to leave their place of work for completely preventable reasons. While the reasons vary greatly, they basically come down to a simple list of ‘lack of’s; Lack of challenge, career development, recognition, engagement, productive relationships and opportunities for innovation. Wouldn’t it be great to understand how we could change all that?

I love you and goodbye: 5 ways to extract maximum value out of your Exit Interviews with your very best employees

“Employees are such a rich source of ‘inside’ information and appreciate having their ideas and observations heard... Strategically, this is your last chance to learn what you can!”

In early 2013 you lose a high performer in your team. It’s unexpected and it hurts but the data suggests it is inevitable. Typically the first quarter sees a spike in the job market as companies look to build highly capable teams to support them in realising their strategic goals. In the past month SEEK.com data shows job advertisements have risen 2.5%; the first rise in 12 months, with WA and Victoria leading the way. Growing market buoyancy and optimism combined with unprecedented access to the best employees via social media platforms like LinkedIn creates a perfect environment for ambitious high performers who have been contemplating a move, to seize their opportunity.

Now you’ve done your very best to persuade your high performer to stay, but the ‘horse has bolted’ so to speak. It’s exit interview time. Employees are such a rich source of ‘inside’ information and appreciate having their ideas and observations heard. Exit interviews allow you to complete a relationship with someone you are very likely to encounter professionally in the future and strategically, this is your last chance to learn what you can!

Before I cover off the key questions you should be asking to extract the absolute maximum value out of the exit interview process, I would recommend you avoid these common traps:

- Online Surveys. Don’t waste your employees’ time or your own. Online surveys are impersonal and there is no opportunity to probe further. People are generally reluctant to provide constructive and critical feedback in writing.
- Engaging your employee’s direct supervisor to perform the exit interview. If the supervisor/employee relationship is actually part of the problem, the feedback you will receive is going to be tainted. Ideally nominate a senior and unbiased team member with superior questioning techniques (note: not all people are equal in this area.) The most valuable information often comes from follow up questions, not the original, so an inquiring and investigative mind is a must.

Here are my top 5 value drivers and some sample questions to help you prepare for your next exit interview:

Leadership and Cultural Values

- Where do you see the main areas we could improve in relation to the growth and development of our future leaders?
- How would you describe our culture here and how well do you feel this is communicated?
- What are we doing well?
- What would need to change for you to consider re-joining us in the future?

Knowledge Transfer

- For the new person coming into your role what are the biggest priority areas that will require their focus?
- What has your supervisor discussed with you in terms of managing the handover process?

Systems Feedback

- How have you found our business systems?
- Are there any particular systems or processes that you feel are really holding the business back?
- How could we make improvements here?

Risk Management

- What do you believe to be the 3 most concerning issues you have observed in your department or the business over the last 12 months?
- What could have been done to address these issues more effectively and achieve a better result?

Business Development

- What do you perceive to be the biggest opportunities we are missing out on to develop and grow our business?
- What do you feel are the main barriers to achieving these?

It is always going to be painful when you lose a high performer from your team. When it does happen take the positive approach and don’t underestimate the value that can still be gained by simply asking the right questions of your best people.

Edward George provides comprehensive Human Resource Solutions specialising in recruitment and retention strategies, exit interviews and outplacement services. If you would like further information about any of our services, email us at perth@edwardgeorge.com.au or phone us on **9457 4566**.

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