

Worksheet: Exit Interview Question Guide

Farm businesses initiate exit interviews with employees who voluntarily decide to leave the business. Conducted between when an employee gives notice and when he or she last reports to work, exit interviews tend to collect candid feedback because the employee knows that sharing information — even negative comments — will not compromise his or her employment.

Employers value exit interviews because the conversation provides a forum to gather ideas about how to improve the work environment. With this input in mind, employers can make changes to human resources processes and possibly prevent other employees from resigning. Plus, an exit interview enables the exiting employee to provide a status update about active projects and helps farm managers determine how to reassign responsibilities to other employees or a new hire.

Before conducting an exit interview, generate questions you would plan to ask the employee who's leaving the business. The following question guide gives you a place to start.

Work Environment

- What did you most enjoy about working on our farm?
- What did you like the least about working on our farm?
- How well did we explain the farm's vision and goals?
- How well did we explain farm policies and procedures?
- To what extent do you feel like the farm communicated news and information to you?
- To what extent did you feel welcome to share ideas to help reach farm goals?
- To what extent did you feel safe when working on the farm?
- To what extent did you feel like the farm provided an equal opportunity environment?

Job Role

- What did you enjoy most about your job role?
- What did you like the least about your job role?
- How well did you understand your job responsibilities and expectations?
- What additional onboarding or training would have helped you perform better at work?
- How well did you understand how your job contributed to meeting the farm's goals?
- To what extent did the job's compensation meet your expectations?
- To what extent did the job's benefits meet your expectations?
- How well have the farm's incentive programs motivated strong job performance?

- To what extent did you feel like this position opened opportunities for you to advance?
- Can you provide a status update about your active work projects?
- If you had an opportunity to talk with the individual who will fill your position, then what would you want that individual to know about the job?

Team

- What did you enjoy most about working within our farm team?
- What did you like the least about working within our farm team?
- To what extent did your direct manager provide constructive feedback?
- To what extent did the farm's mentoring program meet your needs?
- If you supervised employees, then what are your direct reports' strengths and weaknesses that their next manager should know?
- What do you feel like are the greatest human resources gaps on the farm?
- Is your decision to leave based upon a negative incident with a current team member?

Funding for this project was provided by the North Central Extension Risk Management Education Center and the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture, award number 2021-70027-34694. University of Missouri Extension also provided funding support.