

GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING EXIT INTERVIEWS IN THE OPERATIONS EVALUATION DEPARTMENT

Rationale. Exit interviews are one of the most widely used methods of gathering employee feedback together with staff engagement surveys. The less an organization captures knowledge on a regular basis, the more it needs to capture it at exit. Exit interviews are a unique chance to survey and analyze the opinions of departing employees, who are generally more forthcoming and objective on such occasions.

From an employer's perspective, the purpose is to learn from the employee's departure on the basis that feedback is a helpful driver of organizational performance improvement. Exit interviews can yield information about an organization that may be used to enhance all aspects of its working environment including culture, management, business processes, and intra-organizational relationships.

More recently, the practice of exit interviews has been revisited as a knowledge management tool to capture and store knowledge from departing employees and minimize its loss through staff turnover. This is especially relevant in roles where the employee embodies significant human capital that may be passed to appropriate employee remaining in the organization. Most departing employees are pleased to share knowledge, to help a successor, or to brief management. Notwithstanding, participation in exit interviews by the employee leaving, as well as responses to exit interview questionnaires, must be voluntary.

Benefits. The benefits of learning-based exit interviews are that, at negligible cost, they

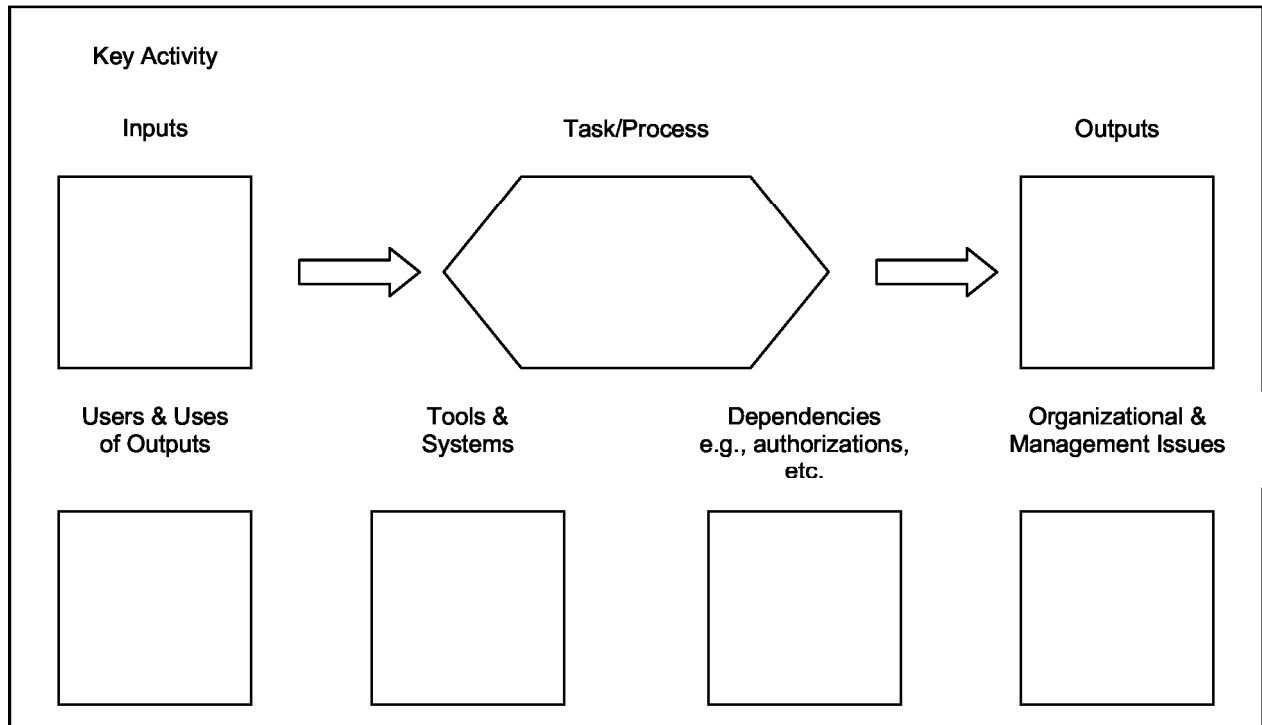
- Help retain vital knowledge in the organization.
- Shorten the learning curve of new employees or successors to the departing employee.
- Catalyze identification of specific mistakes and improvement opportunities.
- Enhance the understanding and experience that managers have of managing people and organizations.
- Inform management succession planning.
- Support an organization's human resource practices.
- Provide direct indications on how to improve staff retention.
- Generate useful information for training needs analysis and training planning processes.
- Result in the departing employee having a more positive view of the organization and its culture.

Preparation. Face-to-face interactions are central to exit interviews. The management of the exit interview process must be initiated as early as possible after it is known that the employee is leaving. In preparation, it is important to

- Consider who currently accesses the departing employee's knowledge and what they need to know from the replacement staff. It is useful in this respect to think about documented explicit knowledge (in files, documents, and electronic mails) as well as tacit knowledge (know-how) that need to be explained.
- Develop a plan in a participatory way to ensure that knowledge can be captured and stored during the departing employee's notice period. This requires a review of key tasks, drawing from the original terms of reference of the departing employee. For explicit knowledge, the departing employee should move relevant files into shared folders or a document library. Ideally, they should organize all

files and draw up a related set of notes for the successor. For important tacit knowledge, Activity-Based Knowledge Mapping could prove useful, providing a framework for conversations about how key activities are undertaken, what inputs and outputs are involved, or what obstacles and bottlenecks might exist. Internal and external networks and other sources of knowledge could also be discussed.

Activity-Based Mapping Template



EXIT INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE OF THE OPERATIONS EVALUATION DEPARTMENT¹

DETAILS (to be completed by the Operations Evaluation Department but checked by staff)	
Name:	
Gender:	
Nationality:	
Position:	
Level:	
Type of Contract:	
Start and Finish Date at OED:	
ABOUT OED	
Do you feel the description of your job in the engagement process was accurate?	
Were the purpose and expected results of your position clear throughout your work in OED?	
Could your qualifications, experience, and skills have been used to better advantage?	
Do you feel you received appropriate support to enable you to do your job?	
Was the training you received at OED adequate to enable you to accomplish your job?	
Are there further training opportunities you think OED should be offering?	
What did you see as your promotion and career prospects in OED?	
How might those prospects have been improved?	
How was your working environment generally?	
Can you list three positive aspects about working in OED?	

¹ Please return to the Director General, Operations Evaluation Department with copy to your designated Director.

Can you list the three most important things that should be done to make OED more effective in terms of influencing decisions in ADB?	
Can you list the three most important things that should be done to make OED a better place to work?	
Are there any other issues you wish to raise?	
OTHERS	
Can you suggest ways to improve this questionnaire?	

Signed:

Date: