

## **Exit Interviews (Christian Organisations)**

### **1. Process**

Exit interviews are often completed either by a senior organisational leader, board member or by an independent consultant or counsellor commissioned by the organisation to enable reflection on the staff member's involvement with the organisation and the circumstances of concluding the relationship. A report is usually compiled. Recommendations in relation to the after care of the staff member may be given if needed. Information relating to the organisation is important and provided but recommendations should not be given based on the perceptions of one former staff member. Organisational change may arise from the process if the organisation deems the information useful and the reflections objective.

### **2. Purpose**

Exit interviews serve several important functions for both a former staff member and for the organisation's leadership especially if the conclusion of involvement or employment has been conflicted or difficult.

- 1.** They provides an opportunity for organisational improvement based on the observations made by the departing staff member and the reasons for the member leaving. These reflections are usually constructive and can provide helpful insights not as easily gained from staff still in position. In situations of conflict it is important to remember an exit interview is not a primarily a resolution process, and only collects reflections on one side of the situation. The opportunity to talk things through does in practice allow individuals to 'make peace' around their leaving.
- 2.** An effective exit interview also assists the departing staff member place their involvement in a larger perspective than that of the immediate reasons for leaving. It helps recall their overall involvement and the positives they experienced while with the organisation. In this sense there is a pastoral element of the process for the individual.

## **Suggested Questions and Topics for Exit Interviews**

Name the 3-5 events, projects or processes you look back on with gratitude, joy and satisfaction during your time with this organisation.

What were your most valuable learning and growing opportunities in this organisation.

What are the contributions you feel you have made to this organisation?

Name the 3-5 events which were the most frustrating, difficult and painful for you.

Of all the tasks you were involved with which did you generally enjoy the most?

What could you have done better or more for the organisation had you been given the opportunity?

Which were the most frustrating and least successful?

What 3 strengths do you see in this organisation?

What 3 concerns do you have for the organisation? How do you see these best being addressed?

What factors did you consider when reaching your decision to move? Which of these were most important or significant for you?

What can you say about the processes and procedures or systems that have contributed to the problem(s)/your decision to leave?

Reflect on the expectations you had of the organisation when you joined. What have you learned about the organisation during your time of involvement that you wish you knew before coming.

How would you describe the culture or 'feel' of the organisation?

How do you feel personally about the organisation?

How clear were the organisation's expectations of you in your role? In what ways did you find those expectations to be reasonable, or unreasonable?

Are the terms and conditions of the position appropriate in your view? What adjustments would you recommend?

Are there unresolved issues or conflicts, either in our recent or more distant past that you feel still need to be addressed and resolved?

Please leave us with some "pearls of wisdom." What advice would you give the organisation and its leadership for the future of this ministry? What would you really like to say to us that you haven't yet had the opportunity to express?

Would you consider working again for this organisation if the situation were right?

Is there anything you would like from the organisation that would make departing easier?