

The Knowledge-Based Exit Interview

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Abstract : *Purpose – Exits have become common, employee exit surveys capture the reason why employees quit. In this paper we are going use exit surveys in combination with knowledge management. The employees while leaving the organization take away precious knowledge so exit surveys can be extended to obtain knowledge along with the reason of leaving the organization.*

How does a knowledge-focused exit interview differ from a traditional exit interview?

A traditional based exit interview the focus is more on the factors and reasons why the employee quits. In a knowledge-focused interview, primary focus is on knowledge -- that would be helpful to the next person who takes over the job or to others in the organization with similar roles and responsibilities.

Design/methodology/approach – Data can be obtained through semi-structured interviews. We use factor analysis and structural equation modeling.

Findings –a way to build a future employment recruitment relationship with the departing employee. The combination of exit surveys and knowledge management results in actions like succession planning for key roles as well as other levels also.

INTRODUCTION:

Exit Survey is an important tool that finds out the employees opinion on the organization while getting relieved. If carried out properly exit interviews will bring out the perception of the employees right from basic needs to specialized needs. The reason for employee leaving the organization is due to 3 areas: money, technology and opportunity.(Get more value from the exit interview AnonymousComputerworld; Apr 7, 1997; 31, 14; ProQuest pg. 90). Generally the exit survey is carried out by the HR department of organization. Though this topic is HR specific yet it is used by all the functions. One of the advantages of exit interview is that sometimes it convinces the employees to stay.

In the process of recruiting high quality employees, organizations are loosing out their current wealth of employees.Exit survey not only deals with current job losses but also with the future ones. Exit survey

brings out the unfulfilled issues of an employee. Exit interviews can be clubbed with knowledge management by storing intangible information about the employees who leave the organization. Knowledge sharing and Knowledge transfer are important aspects that can be combined with exit interviews. Not only in knowledge management, exit surveys pay a vital role in succession planning also.

There are two types of exit surveys :

- For retiring employees.
- Those who are generally leaving the organization. This paper has both retiring and non retiring employees.

Retiring employees will also contribute with their views of how the organization be and also evaluate their interest in continued part-time or temporary work [Maureen, 2000]. Employees who exit during retirement are from PSU's, while younger generation exit in short tenures. Retiring employees may concentrate on retirement benefits while younger employees focus on other factors. The organizations must figure out the impact of high performances leaving it, replacing them would be time consuming and costly(for both recruitment and training of the replacement). There are varieties of exit interviews such as online, phone based and with third party intervention. Third party intervention is advantageous as the employees can voice out their feedback by being honest. There are two discrete type of quitters i.e., those who quit to accept alternative jobs offering superior terms and conditions of employment and those who quit for other reasons and without having alternative jobs [Sutherland 2002]. Hence the organization should focus on the type of quitting and take appropriate steps especially with the second type of quitters.

Exit survey method is said to the extension of job satisfaction, job satisfaction is the satisfaction of employees in the organization, while exit is satisfaction during leaving the organization. There are some similarities been these two tools.

Questions	Job satisfaction	Exit Survey
a.Acceptance and Treatment:	Y	Y
b.Teamwork and interpersonal relationship:	Y	Y
c.Communication:	Y	Y
d. Welfare, Grievance Handling and Safety:	Y	Y
e.Training and Development:	Y	Y
f.Recognition,Compensation and Rewards:	Y	Y
g.Job Security and Career Growth:	Y	Y
h.Work environment:	Y	Y
i.Participation in Management:	Y	Y
j.Loss of Personal and Family Life:	Y	Y
k.Overall, how satisfied are you with XXX as an employee?	Y	Y
l.Pension benefits	N	Y
m.Reason for shifting	N	Y
o. Did anyone in this organization discriminate against you, harass you, or cause hostile working conditions?	N	Y

EXIT INTERVIEW AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT.

Employee who are fired by boss should also undergo exit interviews. Terminating employees also provide useful information.The feedback thus obtained should be stored as tangible assets.Exit interviews are carried out in many different ways, they are online,telephone, paper,face to face by the manager or the HR department. Face to face interview along with the questionnaire is the best way to conduct exit interview.

Give the employee comfort by starting with a light discussion. Assure the employee that negative consequences will not occur due to his revealing of his opinion.

Another dimension of what we were discussing is succession planning. The feedback of a CEO helps an organization to develop and to face a key employee leaving the organization. According to Sambrook (2005, p. 580), succession planning refers to the ‘‘attempt to plan for the right number and quality of managers and key-skilled employees to cover retirements, death, serious illness or promotion, and any new positions which may be created in future organization plans’’.Knowledge should be transferred before the key employee leaves the organization so exit interview is a tool through which knowledge can be transferred.Exit survey with proper questions to absorb knowledge and transfer it to the organization can be classified not only as HR tool but also as knowledge management tool. Employee in the course of exit interview which normally studies the satisfaction level but also tries to capture the reason for his leaving and inputs the knowledge of employees who are going to leave. In this paper we are going to have an exit interview that not only measures satisfaction level but as a blend of inputs for knowledge management from employees and

reason why he is leaving, this is similar to succession planning but extended to all level employees.

For those who taking up the job from the leaver, benefits from the knowledge transferred by the quitter. Explicit knowledge from documents and implicit knowledge both have to be transferred from the departing employee to the employees who are with the organization. A plan has to be developed so that knowledge can be captured from the person who leaves. The results thus obtained possess information regarding how tasks are carried out and acts as a guide, orientation tool to the employee who takes over.The quitter must share his knowledge explicitly by documenting it both in paper and electronic.He could be asked to train his successor during his notice period. According to Pam Holloway the kinds of questions for knowledge based exit interview is as follows:

- What did you do?
- How did you do it?
- Why did you do it?
- What skills and competencies are most critical?

This type of exit interviews is a win-win for both the organization and the exiting employee. The questions enable the departing employee to contribute his unique contributions to the organization, and in doing so, it is beneficial to both the one who leaves i.e feel better about leaving, and immediate shaping of the organization that no lack due to the departure of the employee.

Benefits according to Pam are:

1. Vital knowledge is not lost to the organization when people leave
2. The learning curve of new people joining the organization is shortened

3. The people leaving have a more positive view of the organization
4. You collect quality information relatively quickly and inexpensively

References

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