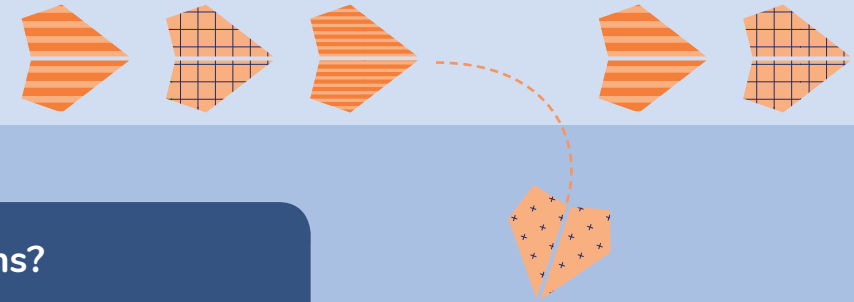


Exit interviews: a wealth of information

Handout on the value of exit interviews for diversity and inclusion policies



Why this handout?

Exit interviews with employees who are leaving the organisation can provide valuable insights for organisations and their D&I policies.

This handout shows why it is important to pay attention to the experiences of departing employees, how exit interviews can be of added value to D&I policies, and how organisations can effectively conduct them.

Interested in sample questions for an exit interview? [See page 4.](#)

What do we see in organisations?

Although organisations track employees' reasons for leaving, for example through exit interviews, insufficient attention is given to assessing the experienced diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

55% Tracks reasons for leaving

15% Asks whether employees felt included

10% Tracks reasons for departure of specific groups of employees

Source: Monitor Diversity Charter 2021, Regioplan/SER Diversity at Work, July 2022

Bron: Database Netherlands Inclusivity Monitor, December 2022 N = 60 organisations

Why do employees actually leave an organisation?

Have departing employees felt safe, at home, and appreciated?

Do specific groups of employees leave faster, more often, and for different reasons?



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Reasons for the limited focus on outflow

“Outflow doesn’t feel urgent. These employees will be leaving our organisation anyway.”

(HR employee)

Know what is going on in the workplace

Employees have different reasons for leaving the organisation. By examining why employees are leaving, and specifically by paying attention to the organisational culture, an organisation can identify areas for improvement for current and future employees.

“Our D&I policies are still in their infancy. We therefore focus on inflow and inclusion first.”

(D&I Officer)

Prevent the revolving door effect

If employees do not settle in well or have opportunities for growth within an organisation, they may leave quickly. This can result in high employee turnover. This is a waste, especially if employees have been recruited with great effort.

Pay attention to departing employees

Gain insight into experiences

A departing employee may feel more comfortable speaking up and sharing experiences about (lack of) inclusion and social safety in the workplace.

Ambassadors

Departing employees who speak positively about the organisation can be ambassadors for future employees.

Boomerang recruitment

Departing employees may return to the organisation in the future.

Pay attention to employee outflow in D&I policies

Learn from groups of employees

By identifying the reasons for departure and turnover rates among diverse groups of employees, an organisation can determine if there are certain groups of employees who leave the organisation (in)voluntarily more frequently or earlier than other groups, and for what reasons. For example, if you observe that women, on average, leave the organisation more quickly, it is worth knowing the underlying reasons and how they perceive the work climate.

What do we see in organisations?

Organisations pay the least attention to the HR domain of outflow in their D&I policies.

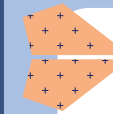
18%

Has set a goal to reduce disproportionate outflow¹

Few organisations monitor the outflow of specific groups of employees.

30%

Monitors the outflow of specific groups²

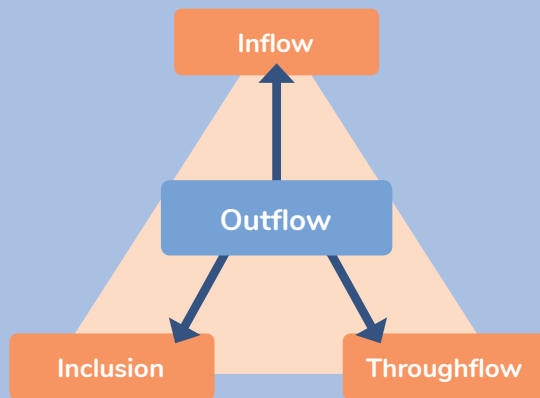


On a voluntary basis, it is possible to collect background data (see the documents [Measurement is Knowledge](#) and [Privacy and D&I policy](#)).

1. Source: Database Netherlands Inclusivity Monitor, December 2022 N = 60 organisations 2. This is an average percentage. The monitoring of outflow varies by dimension of diversity. Source: Database Monitor Charter Diversity 2021 N = 150 organisations

A wealth of information for D&I policies

Insights from exit interviews can be used by an organisation to make the processes of recruitment, selection, and throughflow of employees more inclusive, and to improve the work climate. If necessary, D&I policies can be adjusted.



In order to implement cohesive D&I policies, it is important to consider the entire employee journey. This means that organisations need to develop policies for the inflow, throughflow, outflow, and inclusion of employees.

How do you translate exit interview insights into policy actions?

Insights from an exit interview	Follow-up questions	What actions will we take?	
"I do not see the workplace as a reflection of society. I hardly recognized myself in my colleagues and felt a lack of connection."	How diverse is our inflow actually? What do the numbers from the past year show? Is there a diverse pool of candidates?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » We align recruitment efforts with specific groups. » We determine in advance which selection criteria are important and how applicants can meet them. 	Inflow
"I was constantly overlooked for a promotion within my team."	How do we ensure equal opportunities for all employees in performance evaluations and selection procedures? How diverse has our promotion practice been in recent years?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » We train those who evaluate employees and make promotion decisions on how to do so as objectively and transparently as possible. » We monitor and evaluate our approach. 	Throughflow
"I often did not feel like I belonged or could be myself in the workplace."	How can we determine whether employees experience an inclusive work climate? What tools are available for this purpose and which ones are suitable to us?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » We include questions about inclusion and the work climate in employee satisfaction surveys. » We discuss the findings and follow-up actions with employees at all levels of the organisation. 	Inclusion

Recommendations for exit interviews

(Exit)interview or survey

Organisations can gather information from departing employees through an exit interview or an exit survey. It is also important to regularly collect information from current employees, for example, through employee satisfaction surveys, staff monitors, short surveys (pulse measurements), performance reviews, and focus groups. With the collected information, organisations can take actions aimed at retaining employees and preventing unwanted turnover.

Points to consider for an (exit)interview or survey

- 1 Prepare employees. Clearly state the purpose of the interview or survey beforehand.
- 2 During an interview, ask about motives and reasons. Do not just stick to the initial answer, but delve deeper into the underlying reasons. In a survey, ensure there are open-ended questions in addition to closed-ended questions, allowing employees to provide their own responses.
- 3 Create a safe environment and treat the information confidentially. Ensure a neutral conversation partner during an exit interview. This should be someone who is not the (direct) supervisor, such as an HR employee, a personnel officer, or an external agency.

Sample questions for departing employees

- » What made you decide to leave?
- » What attracts you to your new job?
- » Could we have prevented your departure?
- » How would you describe the work climate? Did you feel at home?
- » Were you able to be open about all aspects of your identity with your colleagues?
- » Did you feel free to express a different opinion without fear of negative comments or consequences?
- » Have you experienced any unwanted behavior?
- » What did you think of the provided opportunities for development?
- » Did you have the same opportunities as your colleagues to develop your career?
- » Would you recommend the organisation to a friend?
- » Does the organisation pay enough attention to diversity and inclusion?
- » In your opinion, what is needed to make the organisation more diverse and inclusive?

These questions can also be adjusted in order to gather information from current employees.

For example:
"What could be possible reasons for leaving in the future?"

Tips

Formulate

a vision and specify goals in D&I policies to reduce disproportionate outflow.

Communicate

insights and follow-up actions to employees and demonstrate that their input is valued.

Learn

from various sources about work climate (such as confidential counselors, employee networks and occupational physicians).