

## Conversation 24 – The Stay Interview: *Is Staying an Opportunity?*

**Question Preview:** *Are you thinking of staying or leaving your current employer? Could one of those be a positive career strategy? Which would propel your career more quickly?*

**Purpose:** To help your mentee see how staying can make a positive contribution to their employer and advance their career. These questions can *also* be considered to determine if changing jobs might be beneficial.

**Background:** Employee turnover rates have increased dramatically in recent years. Blame it on COVID, the gig economy, pay/benefit differentials, mental health stressors, generational change, or life balance, but turnover is real. It has direct costs in time (hiring process, onboarding, new person becoming effective) and dollars (customer/order loss, unemployment costs, etc.). There's also an institutional knowledge or team contributor loss that can derail new or ongoing work.

With so much change, could the person you are mentoring benefit by staying with their organization? Could staying be a career advancement strategy?

Many organizations use Richard Finnegan's seminal idea of the stay interview to learn what actions can improve employee engagement and retention. You can modify this idea and conduct a brief, *nonformal mentoring* conversation to help someone gain insight around their current position and consider opportunities that might avail themselves by staying or leaving. Investing time in thinking this through is key.

**The Discussion:** Here are four essential questions you can use to conduct a nonformal stay interview:

1. Are you thinking of staying or leaving your current employer?
2. Could one of these be a positive career strategy?
3. Or would changing jobs propel you more quickly?
4. As organizations see increased turnover, what opportunities may exist if you stay?

**More Stay Interview Questions:** Ask your mentee to consider these *to determine potential career movement*.

1. What do you look forward to when you come to work each day?
2. What do you like least about your current position?
3. What keeps you working here?
4. What might tempt you to leave?
5. If you could change something about your job, what would that be?
6. What talents are not being used in your current role?
7. Are there other positions at your current organization that you could aim for advancement?

**Reference:** Finnegan, Richard (2015). *The Stay Interview*. Finnegan Institute. AMACOM Books. Additional information: <https://www.finneganinstitute.com/stay-interviews/>  
SHRM (Society for Human Resource Management) (n.d.) Stay Interview Questions. Available at: <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tools-and-samples/hr-forms/pages/stayinterviewquestions.aspx>