STAY INTERVIEWS: THE NO-COST, HIGH-IMPACT RETENTION STRATEGY

What would it cost you to lose your most effective and influential teachers? Too much! Stay Interviews are a great no-cost method of collecting valuable data and insights surrounding what keeps them coming back every year, allowing leadership to move the needle on engagement and retention. Well-executed Stay Interviews can prevent the need for Exit Interviews.

Stay Interviews are:

- Deliberate, scheduled, one-on-one conversations with top performers, flight risks, and high-potential staff members.
- An opportunity to build relationships, demonstrate value, and build trust while discovering areas for celebration and improvement.
- Proactive, Motivational, and Informative: educators who feel like their voices are being heard are more engaged, and leaders who know what makes them tick can impact positive change before losing great teachers!

Stay Interviews are not:

- Punitive or negative in any way.
- On-the-fly conversations or check-ins.
- Associated with performance appraisals or annual review.

Questions like the ones below invite open dialogue and, when met with supervisory action, show the employee how much their feedback is valued.

Suggested Questions	Considerations
What do you look forward to when you come to work each day?	Start the conversation on a positive note; give the employee an opportunity to celebrate. Probe past "I love my students."
What kind of feedback or recognition do you like to receive?	Employees often talk about feedback they have received recently, which provides bonus insight into leadership interaction and impact. Recognition is not one-size-fits-all.
What professional development has provided you the most value, and what do you feel would enhance your employee experience?	This question affords insight into current and future PD offering opportunities as well as potential career goals of that staff member. Key in on trends as you ask this question of multiple employees.
What are some aspects of this role that you would like to see change?	The employee may lead with something like, “I need more time/money/staff”. Be sure to probe further for more feasible opportunities and identify the root issues.
If you were to consider leaving this position, why would that be? What factors may trigger a departure? *	*This question requires an established level of trust. It can be powerful when used wisely! If you choose this question, do not allow defensiveness to taint your reception of the answer.
What can I do to make your experience here better? **OR** What could your leadership team do to make your experience here better?	If the conversation has been candid to this point, this question shouldn’t be a stretch. Remain open, ask clarifying questions, and reassure employee of the value of his/her feedback.
If you could change one thing about your job (or school, or district) with a snap of your fingers, what would it be?	Ending with this question invites some levity to wrap up on good terms and allow for a “dream big” mentality going forward.

Remember: Suggestions made by employees do not equal an obligation to make those changes. Continue to ask probing questions that will elicit the most valuable feedback.