

Exit interviews – should you tell the truth ?

The real reason why most people leave an organisation is because of a poor relationship with their manager. However, when HR people look at exit interview data – the two most often cited reasons are either “I was offered a better salary” or “There will be better career prospects”. Typically these reasons are true too – but importantly these were not the original motivation to look for a new job. The simple truth is that when we look for a new job, we also look to improve our “lot” overall.

Of course what this means though is that the organisation remains ignorant or at best slow to realize where they have problematic managers. It may take a number of people to leave the same department before someone realises it may not just be “coincidence”. Some managers can be great at “managing upwards” and so their manager never realises there is a problem.

If you choose not to give full information to your soon to be ex-employer – the likelihood is someone else will suffer the same difficulties, it may be too late to change things for you, but you may be able to influence change for those who follow you. Clearly if you do choose to give feedback you need to manage this constructively – you never know when paths may cross again! Try to depersonalise your feedback e.g. if you had a personality clash with your line manager consider what the organisation could have done to mitigate the difficulty. Perhaps they could have provided alternative people for you to discuss things with when you had a different perspective from your direct line manager.

Interestingly when we try to think about difficulties in this more objective way, we can sometimes see how we might have handled the situation differently. Could you have done something earlier when you sensed there was a problem which may have prevented the matter escalating? Did you really do the best you could to try and resolve the difficulty openly and directly with the person involved? Could you have talked to other people in the organisation that might have given you some insight into how to manage your manager more effectively? Did you act hastily in your decision to leave the organisation when there may have been an alternative position already within the Company?

There will be some situations where it's absolutely the right thing to do to leave a company – however, sometimes we leave for the grass that appears greener only to find the issues we thought we'd left behind re-appear again. If this has happened to you then maybe its time to do an exit interview on yourself?!

For further information please contact: Michelle Lucas at www.coachU4success.co.uk

Ends

T: 07717 122 950

E: michelle@coachU4success.co.uk

W: www.coachU4success.co.uk