Regardless of when you start this dialogue, remember to set the context by telling your employees how critical they are to you and your team and how important it is to you that they stay. Then find out what will keep them. Listen carefully to their responses. Most of this chapter focuses on the questions “What keeps you?” and “What might entice you away?” But there are other questions you might ask to try to engage and keep your employees in a Stay Interview—Here’s some ideas:

☆ What about your job makes you jump out of bed in the morning?
☆ What makes you hit the snooze button?
☆ If you were to win the lottery and resign, what would you miss the most?
☆ What would be the one thing that, if it changed in your current role, would make you consider moving on?
☆ If you had a magic wand, what would be the one thing you would change about this department?
☆ If you had to go back to a position in your past and stay for an extended period of time, which one would it be and why?

There are other times when you can also “weave” the stay interview concepts into existing processes. Here’s a few more ideas:

At Orientation
☆ Find out from new employees what motivates them and what will make them stay on the job.
☆ Begin getting to know them as individuals.
☆ As questions about what is important to them and why they accepted the position.
☆ Ask them to tell you the work they feel they are best at, what they most enjoy doing, what they value, what they need to learn to work at their best, and the results they feel they can be expected to deliver.
☆ Show respect for their previous experiences and encourage them to provide insight and suggestions from their fresh perspective.

During Performance Appraisals
☆ What makes for a great day?
☆ What can we do to make your job more satisfying?
☆ What can we do to support your career goals?
☆ Do you get enough recognition?
☆ What can we do to keep you here?
Let these ideas serve as catalysts for your own thinking. Create a list of your favorite questions. Ask them of your talented people in a Stay interview. And ask them again, listen carefully, and customize your retention efforts. And if you need “tips for the asking”…

3 Tips for the “Asking”

**Conversation Starter**

“You’re a valued member of our team and company. I want to be sure that we’re doing everything we can to help you be satisfied and productive…so let’s spend a few minutes talking about that.”

**Ask**

- What keeps you—what contributes the most to your job satisfaction?
- What might entice you away?

**Deepen Your Understanding**

- What talents or skills do you have to contribute, that I’m not aware of or haven’t recognized?
- Are you recognized for your accomplishments?
- Do you feel challenged in your work?
- Are you getting enough feedback?
- What aspects of your job do you like best..least?
- How can we help you develop on-the-job?
- What are your current job and career goals?
- What can I do to support them?
- What are you struggling with? What would make your life easier?
- Yours __________________________________________________________
- Yours __________________________________________________________

1. “Double Click” on the blinking word
   - Tell me more about…
   - How do you see…
   - When do you find that you…
   - What’s a recent example…

2. Deepen your understanding
   - What else should I know…

**Hints**

- Use positive body language to show that you’re listening.
- Make comfortable eye contact.

3. Confirm priorities
   - What’s important to you is…
   - What I heard is…
   - So if we continue to…
   - If we started to…

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