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Is change in the air? 6 questions managers should ask

As a manager, if a company you work for undergoes any major changes, such as layoffs, acquisitions, mergers, or even just adding new leadership into the mix, it can result in your direct reports feeling confused or uneasy. By asking the questions below, you can gain clarity about reasoning, timing, and expectations and be prepared to support your team.

1. What is the reason for the change, and what are the expected outcomes?

Understanding the reasons behind a change and what the organization's leadership hopes to achieve can help you better understand how to navigate it and how it may impact your role, responsibilities, and the jobs of the people who report to you.

2. What is the timeline for the change, and what are the key milestones?

Knowing the timing expectations and critical milestones can help you prepare for what is coming and understand when and how the change will affect the way your team works.

3. What support will be provided during the transition?

Change can be challenging, and it is important to understand what resources and support will be available to help you and your team adapt to the new way of doing things.

4. What are the potential challenges and risks associated with the change, and how will they be addressed?

Understanding the potential challenges and risks can help you anticipate and address potential issues before they become significant problems.

5. How will communication be handled during the transition, and how can I stay informed?

Clear and transparent communication is critical during times of change. It is important to understand how information will be shared, who will be responsible for communication, what details you need to share with your reports, and how you can stay informed.

6. How can I support this process and help ensure a successful transition?

Understanding how you (and your team) can contribute to the success of the change process can help you feel more engaged and invested in the transition and help ensure a smoother transition overall.

At Brightly, we're familiar with change and the opportunities it brings, and we would love to help your team navigate the ins and outs efficiently. To learn more or connect with an expert, please reach out today.

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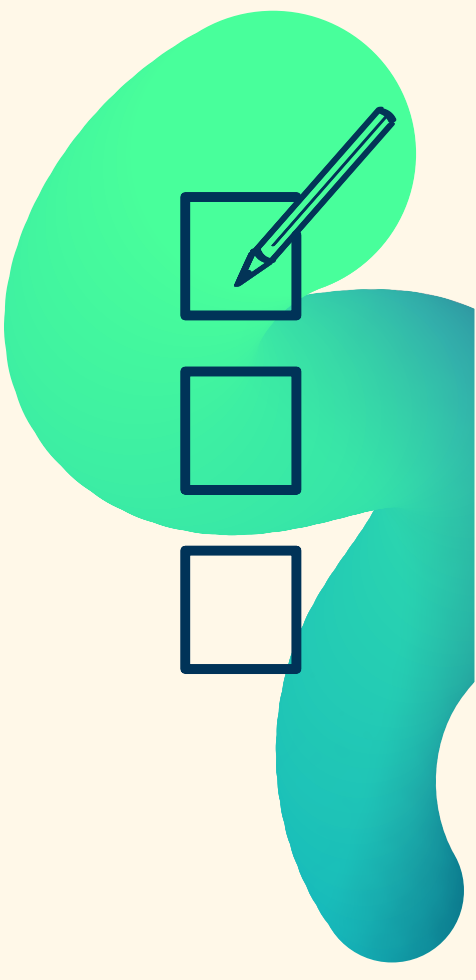
Checklist: 8 essential types of information to gather from departing employees



As an employer, it's important to collect certain job-specific information from an employee before they depart to ensure a smooth transition and to protect your organization's interests—especially if they've been a longtime worker with deep institutional knowledge.

One of the best ways to ease the transition of a departing employee is to have another shadow for as long as possible to learn the nuances of the role and gather information you might not be able to capture elsewhere.

While it might not be possible to collect everything, the following checklist will help you document as much as you can to help your organization and the following employee maintain successful day-to-day operations.

1 Passwords and login information

One of the first things to do when an employee is preparing to depart is collect any account, password, and login information the employee uses to access company systems or applications.* Be sure to stay in communication with your organization's IT department to ensure you've collected all the information prior to the employee's departure.

***Remember to change passwords and access codes after each employee departs to prevent unauthorized access.**

2 Job duties and responsibilities

If possible, have someone shadow your departing employee to observe and understand their approach to the role. Then, ask the departing employee to provide a detailed list of their job responsibilities, including any ongoing projects they were working on or specific activities such as monthly maintenance checks that they performed.

Some questions to ask include:

- **When do you conduct routine inspections (and what are they)?**
- **How do you schedule repairing and maintenance of equipment?**
- **What is your method for responding to work orders?**
- **Describe how you manage inventory of supplies**
- **How do you keep work areas clean and organized?**
- **How do you track/document work performed?**

3 "Good to knows"

For workers in unique, site-specific or machine-dependent roles, such as with maintenance jobs, ask the employee to record any tips or best practices that they follow to keep things running smoothly.

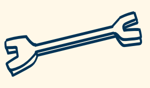
"Good to knows" might be things such as:

- **Common issues with machines and how to resolve**
- **Building or facility-specific challenges and how to overcome**
- **If they go to certain individuals because they know how to do specific types of tasks, i.e., if someone is good with electrical issues**
- **Daily best practices, i.e., check the boiler every morning**

4 Training materials and job aids

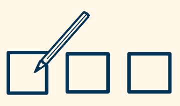
If the departing employee created or used any training materials, don't forget to collect them so they can be used by their replacement or others in the organization. Or, if they do not exist and there is time left with the worker who is leaving, have them create some guides for the next person.

Training materials can take the form of:



Videos of specific repair processes

SOPs (standard operating procedures) for various things they encounter



Checklists

How-to guides

5 Client and vendor contacts

If the departing employee had frequent interactions with clients or vendors, have them make introductions and ask for a list of their contacts and any important information about those relationships.

6 Intellectual property and confidential information

Check with your in-house counsel and follow company or organizational procedures regarding intellectual property and confidential information to safeguard confidential or sensitive information after the employee departs.

7 Company property and hardware

Follow your company guidelines and procedure for collecting company property. Make sure to collect any company property the employee may have had in their possession, such as laptops, cell phones, tools, keys and access cards.

8 Performance evaluations and feedback

Collect any performance evaluations or feedback the employee received during their tenure with the organization. This information can be useful for future references or to inform future hiring decisions. Additionally, it can be helpful to hold an exit interview to gather insight from your departing employees that they might not have otherwise been willing to share.

Collecting the above information from a departing employee can ensure a smooth transition while protecting your organization's interests. Though challenging, a departing employee can help evaluate how certain processes work for your organization or identify where new tools can optimize the systems and workflows for your teams.

For example, if your company has "always done it this way," now might be the perfect opportunity to try a more modern approach, such as implementing an asset management tool. These solutions can help you gather and centralize most of the departing employee's information so it's readily available if anyone needs it in the future, as well as streamline workflows, inventory management, maintenance schedules and more.

Get ahead with Brightly

At Brightly, we have deep experience helping maintenance and operations leaders leverage technology to optimize how they do business. To learn more or connect with an expert, please reach out today.

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Tips to communicate with your team during times of change

Work is a huge part of people's lives. When change happens, it can leave your employees and team members feeling unsettled or insecure in their roles. For managers and leaders in companies experiencing (or about to experience) change, we've gathered some top tips to help communicate with your team and ease transitional times.

Take a transparent approach

Transparency helps to build trust with employees and reduce any anxiety they might feel. Be open and honest about why the change is necessary and what it will entail.

Show empathy

Acknowledge the uncertainty and concerns that employees may have about the change, and communicate that you understand their perspective.

Provide context

Give employees the context and background information they need to understand the change and its implications.

Use multiple channels

Communicate through a variety of methods, such as meetings, emails, and even text messages in certain scenarios, to ensure that employees receive the message and have multiple opportunities to ask questions and provide feedback.

Explain the benefits

Reinforce positive elements and clearly articulate the benefits of the change and how it will help the organization—and individual employees—in the long run.

Be consistent and timely

Ensure that all communication is consistent and aligned with your organization's messaging and goals, and communicate early and often about the change, so employees have time to adjust and prepare.

Answer questions, and follow up

Be prepared to answer questions and address employees' concerns about the change. Continue to communicate and check in with employees after the change has been implemented to ensure that they are adjusting well and to address any issues or concerns that may arise.

Change affects people differently; your employees may not all react the same. By following these tips, you can be prepared to provide a sense of consistency and the information needed to help workers and your organization smoothly adapt to whatever is next.

At Brightly, we're familiar with change and the opportunities it brings, and are happy to share how a combination of the right tools and a plan can make all the difference. To learn more or connect with an expert, please reach out today.