

## **KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND EXCHANGE - CHECKLIST**

- When an employee leaves their role there is a loss of specialist and organisational knowledge.
- In order to minimise or overcome this loss managers are encouraged to think through the Knowledge Exchange questions with the employee and implement the suggested actions.
- This will ensure service continuity (where applicable) but can also support the employee who is leaving in giving a sense of legacy and recognising the valuable contribution they have made to their service.
- It will also enable an opportunity for career progression for existing employees by learning new skills or undertaking new roles.

### **KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE – WHAT IS IT?**

- Knowledge exchange takes place when someone is moving on from their current position.
- It is a structured meeting (either virtually or face to face) with the aim to recover unique and valuable information from them before they leave.
- The knowledge exchange occurs between the knowledge holder and a facilitator. The knowledge holder is the employee who is departing. The facilitator is typically a line manager or trusted team member – someone who is close to the leaver and can ensure the questioning is of sufficient depth and relevance.
- Ideally, the knowledge exchange will also involve the person replacing the knowledge holder or carrying out the tasks they leave behind but this may not always be possible. If appropriate, consider including other members of the team to ensure the knowledge is wider than one person which will help to build resilience within the team

### **WHY SHOULD I USE KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE?**

- When an employee leaves their role, they take with them the vital knowledge, experience and contacts they have built during their time there.
- The organisation suffers if this information is not passed on before they leave.
- Many teams will already have some informal process in place to capture the knowledge of leavers. However, the best efficiency gains come from a formalised, structured knowledge exchange process.
- This process can be included in the performance appraisal process to eliminate risk of loss of knowledge to the team and organisation when employees leave. If used as part of ongoing team development / succession planning, including

checks of handover notes through the appraisal process protects organisational memory.

### **NEXT STEPS TO CONSIDER:**

- Does the role which your leaving team member currently hold need to continue in some way?
- Ask leaving employee to compile up-to-date job description, responsibility profile and task list including regular meetings / forums attended as a representative, the systems used and key contacts
- Identify which tasks / responsibilities in the Job Description will cease and what impact this will have on other colleagues / services or customers.
- Do you need to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment? If you're unsure, there are three simple questions to determine whether your proposed activity requires one, which can be found in Guide to EIAs (page 6). The EDI team is also available for guidance and advice ([equalities@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@warwickshire.gov.uk))
- Where responsibilities / tasks remain, ask the current postholder to thoroughly document procedures, including reporting and record keeping systems and schedules, plus manual and electronic files – see the attached 'Knowledge Exchange' pro-forma to help you structure this exercise. Ensure stored in shared one drive or central place so can be accessed by team.
- Identify who will take on the remaining responsibilities and ensure their job is re-defined to create capacity.
- Plan time to complete a Knowledge Exchange exercise either virtually or face to face and to give opportunities for work shadowing, handover, and mentoring whilst the current employee is in post - if this exercise results in a vacant post to be filled, review the job description and consider grading and recruitment
- Discuss and agree additional learning and development needs for new responsibilities and set targets for handover.

- If recruitment to the role is required, consider timing and if there is a gap between role holder leaving and new employee starting ensure all information is documented as per knowledge transfer below so you can use information to induct new employee
- Monitor progress and workloads through regular 1:1 supervision sessions and appraisals.
- Ensure that discussions are held with stakeholders to inform them of any changes.
- If this process is undertaken as part of Business as usual review the outcomes may be utilised for succession planning
- Below is a suggested technique to manage knowledge called 'Knowledge Exchange' and is based on material published by ID&EA.

## **HOW TO RUN A KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE MEETING**

This proven methodology has five steps:

**STEP 1.** Provide the knowledge holder with a copy of the questions well in advance of the meeting.

**STEP 2.** At the meeting the facilitator follows the questions as a guideline but should ask further questions to aid clarity and understanding.

**STEP 3.** Relationship mapping provides an overview of the relationships the knowledge holder has with key contacts in the organisation.

**STEP 4.** The facilitator must then decide the best way to package this knowledge for the organisation. This may include:

- ◇ • drawing up instructional guidelines
- ◇ • mapping business processes
- ◇ • producing a list of useful contact information and relationships
- ◇ • recording as audio or film some of the knowledge holder's information.

**STEP 5** The facilitator may then choose to upload this information to share with team or save as a standalone file for future reference – the facilitator must ensure key contacts / stakeholders are updated with the outcomes.

## **KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE QUESTIONS TEMPLATE**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

**What do you consider to be the most valuable and/or unique knowledge that you hold in your current role? (Prompts:** Do you hold any valuable knowledge or specialisms that you would consider hard to replace? Do you hold any knowledge or skills that no one else in the team/organisation has?)

**How have you learned what you know? (Prompts:** On-the-job training and work assignments, previous jobs, educational background, mentors, other people.)

### **PEOPLE AND PEOPLE SKILLS**

**Who are the people you work / interact with most often? Please list them indicating whether they are internal or external. (Prompts:** Is there anybody for whom you are the main or only point of contact in the team? Think internally and externally)

**Who do you consider are your key contacts, both inside and outside the organisation? (Prompts:** Do others in the team know about these? Do you have any useful 'short-cut' contacts who can help you get things done? Do you have a relationship with specific vendors and contractors? Is there anyone you can go to for expert advice, decisions, or permissions? Was anyone particularly helpful / difficult?)

<b>KEY OPERATIONAL INFORMATION</b>
<b>What are the key factors contributing to you being successful in your role?</b>
<b>Are there any key documents that are vital to your role or that you find particularly useful? (Prompts: Are these readily available to others? Is there anything you feel was missing and would have made your life easier if you had access to? Think about procedures, manuals, software, reference materials, websites, e-newsletters, and subscriptions.)</b>
<b>Are there any immediate issues specific to your role that in your view need to be resolved? (Prompts: think about any decisions, threats and opportunities.)</b>
<b>Are there any dormant issues specific to your role that in your view need to be resolved in the longer term? (Prompts: Think about any decisions, threats and opportunities.)</b>



## LESSONS LEARNT / BEST PRACTICE

**In your position what is generally likely to go wrong, and how would you usually respond or resolve it? (Prompts: Do you have any specific skills you use for troubleshooting or rapid ways of finding the cause for a fault?)**

**How have you identified and managed potential risks or problems in the past? (Prompts: Do you have special knowledge for spotting deteriorating performance or imminent problems and failure?)**

**What hasn't worked so well that you think could be avoided in the future? (Prompts – can you give examples of when you have come across obstacles and how they can be avoided in the future)**

**Are there any unexploited ideas or potential improvements/innovations that you want to mention? (Prompts: do you have any suggestions for potential improvements or innovations)**

**Are there other roles that you perform (officially or unofficially) in the organisation?**

**Is there anything else that we should be aware of?**