

A Sample Interview with a Staff Member

This is an example, to illustrate the kind of interview you could have with your staff member. The questions suggested in your Supervisor Interview Form are highlighted in blue. Actual responses will differ from those in this example, depending on your interviewee's answers to your questions.

A. The Welcome

John, I'm so glad we are going to have an opportunity to talk today about your work here in the Library. You've been with us for 1-5 years now and have become a valuable member of our team. I want to make sure we're doing what we can to help you build a rewarding career for yourself here. I'd like to ask you a few questions to help me understand where we are and what we might be able to do. Would you mind if I took a few notes?

B. Present Work Experience

B1. Opening Questions

Tell me a little bit about how you first decided to take a job in this library.

After five years at the library, what do you like most about your job here?

And what are some of the things you find to be less positive?

Appreciate. Restate. Validate. Prompt for Clarification

What you've told me is very helpful. It sounds like you love working for the University in general, especially because of the day-to-day work and the flexibility you have, but that you're feeling like you're not being challenged enough and that's a major concern for you. Is that a fair restatement of what you have said? Before we talk about the lack of challenge in this job – which sounds like a major concern -- let me just ask you a few more questions to make sure I have a good overview.

B2. Checking Topics that Weren't Mentioned

Let me ask you about something you didn't mention. **The people you work with.** I know that people can often make or break a job experience. **What about them? How well are the people you work with able to provide the support you need?**

I hear you saying that you like everyone you work with as individuals, but that you would like to see them work together better as a team. Can you give me some examples of where teamwork could be improved?

Here's another thing you didn't mention – recognition. **In this past year, you have** been helping our new staff members get up to speed quickly and in doing that you have helped us improve our efficiency quite a bit! **Do you feel you have been getting recognition for this kind of contribution? What kind of recognition means the most to you?**

B3. Wrapping It All Up

Now I want to go back to what seemed to be your major concern. That you feel like you are not being challenged enough here. **Can you say a little more about the lack of challenge you feel? How much do you feel you can still grow on the job? Is that the kind of challenge you want?**

We talked about the people you work with a few minutes ago, but we didn't touch on our relationship -- yours and mine -- and of course that's important too. **What would you say the strengths are in our relationship? Are there things we could do differently to improve it? Things you would prefer that I did differently? Things you could do differently to help us strengthen our relationship?**

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So it sounds like you really like your job and the people you work with, but that you would like to see a little more teamwork on the job, want more support from me, and most of all, would like more challenging assignments. Does that sound about right?

C. Moving On to the Future

C1. Identifying the Target

I've been wondering where you would like to be in your career in, say, the next five years. What have you been thinking?

You know, the next obvious step in your career ladder is supervising new employees. Would that be of interest to you? Do you think you would like to continue at this library? Have you considered the other libraries across campus where there may even be more opportunity? It sounds like you are also considering other libraries outside the University. Am I right?

What would keep you excited about your job? Let's see if we can get you some of that here.

C2. Finding Ways of Getting to that Future

You say that one thing you would like is to know what career path to aim for. Let's just look at the Career Navigator website <http://careernavigator.umjobs.org/> together and see if you can identify where you might want to focus.

Are you ready to set some goals about things that would make your work life more satisfying in your present position, your career development hopes, and some goals about your future on the career path you have chosen?

What career progression goals would you like to set?

C3. Completing the Job Satisfaction and Growth Plan

What other action plans can we make together to help you get what you want most in this job? Let's start with "Skills you want to develop"... Record these on the Job Satisfaction and Growth Plan Form, setting specific goals and where possible, dates when those goals will be met.

How do you think we should follow up to make sure we stay on track with the action plans?

John, we have the action planning sheet filled out and our work cut out for us. I should have the information I promised you by the beginning of the month. When do you think you'd be ready to get back together and see how we're doing? Let's set a date now. Please let me know if you run into any problems about the things we've planned before our next meeting. It's been good talking with you and I look forward to meeting with you again on [insert date of follow-up conversation].