

# Board Director Exit

## Interview or Survey

An exit interview/survey for an outgoing board director is a good way to thank them for their contributions to the Board while seeking their feedback on the operations and culture of your Board.

An exit process, which celebrates the achievements of the outgoing director and provides information on improvements the Board may consider, contributes to the director having a positive closure to their time with your Board.

This process is suitable for an outgoing director who is remaining within your sport community in another role. This discussion may encourage this continued relationship with the sport.

It is beneficial for regular feedback to be sought and given to directors, this exit process is not designed to replace other feedback mechanisms.

### Developing the Process

The Board should decide what they are hoping to learn from the exit process, which may determine how the process is conducted.

Having areas of focus and a structure to guide discussions ensures that the feedback gained is targeted to tangible elements of the Board that can be improved or enhanced.

#### Areas of Focus to consider

- Recruitment and induction
- Board use of individual skills
- Culture of the board
- Effectiveness of board operations
- Committees

### Decide how the feedback is to be collected

Ideally, the exit interview would be conducted face to face by a Board director (or two) that the outgoing director feels comfortable with.

You might consider offering them the option to complete the questions as a written survey, either paper or online.

What matters most is that you establish a process to routinely thank directors and learn from their experience with your Board.

### The Exit Interview

You might consider this as a chat amongst colleagues rather than a formal interview. If the outgoing director would rather just write out their answer, that's fine, the intention is to gain feedback.

Decide if the interview is confidential and discuss how to ensure this confidentiality while providing the feedback to the Board.

Thanking the outgoing director for their contributions; using specific examples of their achievements on your Board will recognise them as an individual.

### Selecting questions to ask

When selecting the questions you will pose, the Board might take into account:

- The role that the outgoing director has had on the Board.
- The length of service of the outgoing director.



- Whether the director was elected or appointed to fill a skills gap.
- What processes you have in place to support the directors that you want to examine in this process?

### Are there set questions we can use?

A list of general questions is available in a word document to download and customise. This list is not exhaustive, and your Board may want to change the wording and pose their own questions.

The number of questions you select will be your choice. It is a balance of covering as many of the areas of focus in reasonable time / length. It is suggested to aim for 8-10 questions in an interview and around 12-15 questions in a survey.

It is suggested that, where possible, you use the same questions for the exiting directors so that you can evaluate their different experiences using the same criteria. This can assist with balancing the experiences expressed by individuals based on their own perceptions.

If you are going to offer this as an online or paper survey, you may need to change the questions to suit a score or ranking system.

[Download the word document of questions here.](#)

### What to do with the information gathered?

Analysing the data can identify trends and specific issues to support continuous improvement of your Board operations.

If you collect verbal or written responses, these may be presented to the Board to inform discussion in total or as an overview. Remember that if you offer confidentiality to the outgoing director, this is to be honoured.

If you use an online or paper survey, the collation of the results may be developed into a report that can show changes over time.

### Considering confidentiality

If more than one director leaves at the same time, the information can be collated. If only one director leaves, the directors involved in the interview may present the key areas for development and strengths rather than the full discussion.

### Board discussion of results

It is suggested that the Board focus on:

- Information that identifies whether your processes or documentation are sufficient or could be improved.
- Individual factors that impacted on the directors' experience. Was the induction process suitable? Are our meetings focussed on strategy or operations? Does our chair keep the meetings on track on within time?
- Aspects of your Board culture which include or exclude directors.
- What actions do we need to take to improve the experience of our directors and the Board?
- What are the key positive elements of our Board that we can celebrate?

### Take Action

You may consider developing an action plan to record activities you wish to undertake as a result of the feedback you have received. This could be set out under the focus areas, example below.

Area	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe
Induction	Develop standard pack	Governance Committee	Two months before AGM

If you receive positive feedback, this is a strength that you can build on and articulate to incoming directors. Further information or support is available for your Board.

A range of governance resources are available on our website, [www.ors.sa.gov.au](http://www.ors.sa.gov.au).

## **Questions that a Board may consider using in a board director exit interview / survey**

Was the information provided during the board nomination process adequate for you to understand what the role of the board is and your responsibility as an individual director?

Did you feel prepared for your board responsibility?

When you were recruited, were the obligations of being a board member clear to you? (meetings, committee assignments, events, etc)

Did you receive an orientation when you began on the board? What, if anything, do you wish had been included?

What are some things that would be important to tell board candidates about the board?

Does the board use Directors' skills as fully as they should? Do you have any suggestions for alternative ways to better use the Directors' skills?

Did your committee assignments and other roles use your skills and knowledge appropriately?

What are the skills on the board that need to be developed?

Does the board, through its committees and overall board interactions, efficiently and effectively use Directors' time? In what ways could this be improved or enhanced?

How would you describe the culture of the board?

What would you say the board's strengths are?

What improvements could the board make?

Did you feel that your contributions in meetings were listened to and respected?

Is the culture of the board welcoming to all voices during board meetings? Why or why not?

What is your opinion of the decision-making process the board used? How could it be improved?

How do you feel the board work addressed the fiduciary, oversight of operations and strategic aspects of its work for the organisation? Which of these, if any, did the board spend too little or too much time on?

During your time on the board, was the separation of powers and responsibilities between the Boards and management of the organisation clear and adhered to? How was this supported or not supported?

Did a long-range planning process occur during your time on the board? What was your impression of the process and what would you suggest be changed for future planning processes?

What is the single most important project or process the board has accomplished in the last year? What should it undertake next?

What did you like about your board service?

Would you still like to contribute to the organisation in another capacity? What would that be and how can we facilitate that?

Is there any information / feedback that you wish to share that the questions didn't allow you to share?

### **Questions specifically for Directors who were appointed by the board**

Which skills or attributes do you feel that the board was looking for in you when you were asked to join the board? Was this made clear to you?

How were you asked to join the board? Do you feel that the approach was appropriate?

