EXPLORING THE BEHAVIOURAL OPTIONS OF EXIT AND VOICE IN THE EXIT INTERVIEWS PROCESS

ABSTRACT

Exit interviews are often considered to be a powerful tool for providing information to monitor and analyse employee turnover. The main objective of this study was to analyse the exit interview procedure adopted by a large professional publishing organisation. In doing this the effectiveness of the exit interview process was examined as a tool for employee voice on departure from an organisation. The exit and voice components of the 'Exit-Voice-Loyalty-Neglect' model were used to determine the efficacy of the exit process. The results indicate that despite the praise awarded to exit interviews for employees to voice their dissatisfaction, the exit interview process may not be as effective in practice as we have been lead to believe.

INTRODUCTION

A central feature and concern for the field of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) is the overall effective management of an organisations' workforce (Paauwe and Boselie 2003). Typically SHRM research has centered on the achievement of organisational objectives and goals, with analyses almost exclusively using the employer's perspective (Keegan and Boselie 2006). Whereas the focus on how individuals and groups of employees act in organisations' has generally been the focus of the field of organisational behaviour. The field of organisational behaviour characteristically concentrates on single practices as opposed to SHRM that emphasises multiple practices or systems (Wright and Boswell 2002).

In the field of SHRM, exit interviews are a practice used to monitor and analyse employee turnover with a view to improve overall organisational effectiveness

(Giacalone and Knouse 1989; Grensing-Pophal 1993; Zima 1983). In contrast, organisational behaviourists see exit interviews as tool to aid in understanding employee issues such as motivation, turnover, commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour (Boselie 2010). The exit interview is a discussion between an employee who is departing an organisation and their employer. The discussion can differ greatly in both structure and formality but the aim is to gain information about the employment experience and motivations for an employee leaving (Goodale 1982; Williams, Harris and Parker 2008; Zima 1983). Exit interviews theoretically serve several further functions such as identifying the actual push and pull factors for voluntary terminations, obtaining information to identify areas for improvement and maintaining employee goodwill once he/she becomes an ex-employee (Goodale 1982; Johns 2007; Zima 1983).

An employee voluntarily leaving an organisation is generally the final expression of dissatisfaction in the workplace. The relationship between job dissatisfaction and employee turnover has been extensively studied (Mobley, Griffeth, Hand and Meglino 1979; Farrell 1983; Hom, and Kinicki 2001). In order to understand the complexity of the employee turnover process various researchers, such as Price and Mueller (1981) and Holtam et al (2005) have put forward multi-faceted models. Other researchers have extended these models by exploring dissatisfaction and turnover in relation to the role that exit interviews can play in understanding these processes (Kulik, Treuren and Bordia 2012; Gordon 2011).

A model that provides an integrative approach to the research associated with the consequences of employee dissatisfaction in the workplace is the Exit-Voice-Loyalty-Neglect (EVLN) model (Grima and Glaymann 2012). The EVLN model was originally put forward by Hirschmann (1970) as an exploration for a decrease in organisational performance. It was initially focused on the behaviours of customers but was later expanded to wider organisational contexts.

The EVLN model outlines that employees may behave in certain ways depending on their levels of dissatisfaction within an organisation. These behavioural options include leaving the organisation (exit), verbalising their dissatisfaction (voice), choosing to remain in the firm and support the organisation (loyalty) or electing to do nothing about their dissatisfaction and ultimately allow the employment relationship to deteriorate (neglect) (Withey and Copper 1989). The EVLN model has been re-conceptualised and extended to include additional behaviour response factors such as economic and psychological costs, efficacy of the various responses, and the introduction of another response typology in the form of organisational cynicism, (Allen and Tuselmann 2009; Naus, van Iterson and Roe 2007; Withey and Cooper 1989). A further extension of the model by Grima and Glayman (2012) outlined that it is vital to maintain the distinction between actual versus planned exits, constructive versus passive voice and passive versus active loyalty when assessing employee dissatisfaction.

The EVLN model provides an excellent framework for the investigation of the exit interview process, as exiting and voice are the behavioural options exhibited when an employee decides to leave an organisation. Through the process of exit interviews, the source of employee dissatisfaction can theoretically be located with ensuing changes made so that turnover can be reduced (Giacalone, Knouse and Montagliani 1997).

While there is a great deal of practitioner support for the use of the exit interview process as a tool for identifying and resolving organisational problems, there is a growing body of literature arguing that in practice exit interviews are not entirely useful. A number of researchers have questioned the process in terms of its reliability and validity (Black 1982; Feinberg and Jeppeson, 2000; Lefkowitz and Katz 1969; Williams, Harris and Parker 2008; Zarandona and Camuso 1985). Other researchers have sought to evaluate the truthfulness of exit interview responses (Giacalone and Duhon 1991; Giacalone, Knouse and Montagliani 1997; Giacalone, Knouse and Pollard 1999; Zarandona and Camuso 1985). Further studies by Knouse et al (1996), Feldman and Klass (1999) and June (2009) have explored the circumstances in which more truthful answers could potentially be obtained via the exit interview process. Given that most people who voluntarily leave an organisation tend to keep the real reasons to themselves for fear of burning bridges with their employer, some researchers question the value of the process beyond a public relations exercise (Black 1982; Woods and Macaulay 1987). Another common problem associated with exit interviews, is the misuse and underutilisation of data attained from exit interviews (Giacalone and Knouse 1989). According to Williams, Harris and Parker (2008), exit interviews fail to uncover relevant information regarding the true nature of the employment relationship and its dissolution.

The purpose of this study is to describe and analyse the exit interview process utilised by a large professional publishing organisation. The EVLN framework will be used to evaluate employee exit and voice upon departure. For the purposes of this paper the main focus of the framework will be on both Exit and Voice. In doing this it is envisaged that the effectiveness of exit interview process will be assessed as a HR practitioner tool for understanding and improving the employee turnover.

METHODOLOGY

A case study methodology (Yin 2013) was adopted to provide an in-depth examination of the exit interview process at the Asia Pacific head office of one of the world's leading providers of integrated information solutions to business and professional customers. Located in Sydney, Australia, its workforce consists of approximately 700 full-time equivalent employees in five countries.

This study formed part of a larger project that was conducted to examine the rationale for voluntary employee turnover within the case organisation. The research population consisted of employees who were primarily involved in developing and managing the online content for global law guides. The duties included assisting the editorial team in the technical legal editing of legal know-how articles, the writing of support material for the guides (such as brief articles and comparison tables), copyediting, proofreading and sub-editing. All employees reported to the Head of Editorial for that relevant division.

As previous research (Black 1982; Woods and Macaulay 1987) has suggested employees are cautious not to burn any bridges when parting ways with their current employer the potential distortion of information during the exit interview process is a feature for the current study. It is therefore worth noting that for the research population under examination like roles are relatively limited. Hence if an employee was to voluntarily leave the case organisation and in the future sought to return to the same type of role, it is likely they may seek reemployment with the same employer. Employment options would be expanded if the employee were to seek general editorial work.

It is important to note that many of the employees in the case organisation were female who initially took up their positions because they were legally trained but found the hours of private legal practice were not conducive to balancing work and family needs. Therefore it could be assumed that at some point, some of these employees may want to return to their former vocation after resigning from the case organisation. This could have important implications for the research findings.

Qualitative research techniques (observation, archival evidence and interviews) were chosen to study the behavioural options of exit and voice. As a participant of the human resources department, unique opportunities were bestowed upon the lead researcher, such as the ability to gain unrestricted access to archival evidence. This access included, but was not limited to, personnel records and exit interview transcripts. Participant observation also enabled the researcher to gain a rich, in-depth description of the organisation, its people and the functioning of the exit interview process (Schmitt and Klimoski 1991).

Semi-structured face-to-face interviews were conducted with five female (N=5) and five male (N=5) employees who had chosen to voluntarily terminate their employment. The duration of the employee interviews was approximately one hour. All employees had been employed in the publishing department of the case organisation as editorial staff for between one to five years and ranged in age from 27 to 34 years. Two (N=2) members of the human resource department were observed whilst they carried out the exit interviews of the ten terminating employees. A semi-structured face-to-face interview was also conducted with each of the human resource personnel. The duration of the face-to-face interview with the human resource personnel was approximately one and half-hours. Both were females' aged between 25 and 28 years with university qualifications and prior experience in corporate human resource departments. Finally a follow up telephone interview was conducted with the same employees who had chosen to voluntarily terminate their employment two weeks after their departure from the case organisation. The interviews, field notes and archival evidence were all part of a triangulation process to confirm the data.

The interviews assessed the beliefs and expectations of both the terminating employees and of the human resources personnel of the exit interview process. The interviews also provided insights concerning the behavioural options of exit and voice. The knowledge and perceptions of both the human resource personnel and terminating employees' formed the basis of the study.

Field notes were taken as the researcher participated in the human resource department and followed the activities of the two human resource personnel. Field notes were also taken during the interviews, recording interactions as they occurred. As there was only one observer/interviewer, care was taken to record information verbatim in as much detail as circumstances allowed to insure reference to original data during the results and interpretation phase of the study. What's more, face-to-face discussions allowed for analysis of non-verbal body language. The open-ended nature of the observations, field notes, and interviews also allowed emerging data to be clarified and broadened.

The observations were as unobtrusive as possible, although the taking of field notes during the actual face-to-face exit interviews was an obvious distraction at times to both the terminating employee and the human resource personnel. While there are various disadvantages to using participant observation over other methods of data collection such as those identified by Iacono, Brown and Holtham (2009), the advantages of participant observation have been shown (DeWalt and DeWalt 2010) to outweigh the limitations.

All interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. Upon completion of the face-to-face data collection, the transcripts were analysed using the constant comparative method. This method was used by the researchers to develop concepts and meaning from the data by coding and analysing information at the same time (Kolb 2012) rather than grouping responses according to pre-defined categories.

Prior to the exit interviews being undertaken each participant was asked to give their informed consent to participate in the research and have observations recorded. With this consent, confidentiality was guaranteed, and the participants were told they may cease the face-to-face interview or request the researcher to leave the actual exit interview at any time if they felt uncomfortable. All participants were advised of the purpose of the study.

Respondents were invited to participate in the second phase of the research via a telephone interview two weeks after their departure from the case organisation. Prior to the commencement of the telephone interviews, participants were again advised that the conversation was being recorded, and that participants would not be identified, with their individual comments remaining confidential. Participants were instructed that all information collected would be used in aggregate form only in order to compile and document the research findings.

A standard list of questions were used to complete the follow-up telephone interviews, each of which lasted between 20 and 40 minutes. Upon completion of the telephone interviews the data was used to confirm perceptual evidence provided during the face-to-face interviews. The follow-up telephone interviews allowed the researchers to recheck the validity of their initial findings and enabled the participants to add comments they may have inadvertently omitted during the initial face-to-face interview or choose not to disclose.

OVERVIEW OF THE EXIT INTERVIEW PROCESS AT THE CASE ORGANISATION

Upon being made aware of an employees' notice to terminate employment, an exit interview meeting is arranged by human resources. This meeting is generally scheduled for one hour in the final days of employment in a private meeting room. Prior to the exit interview the human resource representative conducting the meeting reviews historical documents contained on the employees file such as performance appraisals, memos etc. At the interview a combination of predetermined open- and closed-ended questions are asked allowing the employee to respond based upon his or her knowledge and experiences. As points of interest are raised the human resource representative digs deeper to get more specific details and to make sure she understands exactly what the employee is saying. The human resource representative attempts to listen and gather facts by asking them to share both positive and negative experiences. Meetings are almost always finished on a positive and uplifting note, and are always carried out by a member of the human resources department.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Through immersion and participation in the case organisation the lead researcher was able to build rapport and observe a range of experiences and conversations associated with the exit interview process. Additional knowledge of the exit interview process was also garnered through the semi-structured face-to-face interviews. Through this initial phase of the research it was established that the HR personnel were primarily focused on gathering baseline information about why the employee was departing for corporate reporting purposes. The exit interview process appeared to concentrate on identifying the reasons why an employee was choosing to leave the case organisation, what may encourage the departing employee to stay, and in some cases what could be done to entice the employee to stay.

Three themes emerged as being influential in understanding employees' motivation for choosing to voluntarily leave the case organisation. These themes embraced, communication, promotion and pay. In almost every exit interview that was observed, the departing employee raised the issue of communication in some form. Many of the departing employees felt that the communication flow was lacking between departments and that they were often kept in the dark over issues that would affect the way they do their work.

Despite having a policy of advertising every vacant position internally prior to advertising externally, and having a formal performance appraisal process that sought to identify work goals which supported the career aspirations of employees. Many departing employee's felt that if they were seeking to advance their career it was necessary to go elsewhere. The general consensus was that the case organisation did not provide sufficient opportunities for employees to develop their career. Furthermore remuneration was maintained at a level that was considered necessary to attract people into the organisation but it was not considered enough by departing employees to retain people long term. The case organisation paid wages that were comparable with local competitors in the same market area, if not slightly below.

Telephone interviews in the latter stage of the study with the employees post their departure tended to confirm previous research indicating that employees are reluctant to reveal their real reasons for leaving (Goodale 1982; Zarandona and Camuso 1985). All of the employees interviewed post employment revealed they essentially followed the general principle of making sure that they didn't burn any bridges behind them. One interviewee commented on how he was hoping for his manger to act as his referee and was therefore not about to make any comments that could put this in jeopardy. Another employee indicated that she may want to return to the organisation in the future so she was very cautious in what feedback she gave.

Many of the interviewees also expressed concern with the possibility of their comments impacting on their remaining co-workers. All employees' interviewed appeared to have forged strong co-worker relationships during their employment. The value of these relationships seemed to far outweigh the value of providing the organisation with information that may be used to as one female employee put it to ‘exact retribution’.

Although many of the terminating employees were worried about disclosing information that could be used against their remaining co-workers or themselves, seven out of the ten employees' did consider the exit interview process to be an effective means to voice complaints and offer constructive criticism. The general sentiments were that they (the terminating employee) were able be reveal a lot about the programs and policies that existed, and about the working environment than a remaining employee as they could speak more candidly.

The human resource practitioners also shared this viewpoint, as they too commented on how the exit interview process allowed them to explore not only the employees' level of satisfaction with the job but also their level of satisfaction with policies and procedures. The general consensus was that the exit interview process provided human resources with a valuable opportunity to not only discuss and clarify an employee's overall level of satisfaction but to also find out the real reasons behind their decision to terminate.

There was however a difference of opinion held by two male employees. These employees' did not believe that the exit interview process was an effective means to voice complaints or to offer constructive criticism. What's more they regarded the exit interview process as just another ‘useless’ formality. One male employee who had been working with the organisation for just over four years and had during that time held a supervisory role was convinced that there was no real value in providing his opinion as he believed that human resources would just disregard his input anyway. He claimed he had never seen or heard of any of the exit interview information being put to use. He also commented that human resources just wanted to be seen as being proactive and caring, but it was just a facade.

Interestingly, the only element of the exit interview data that was being put to any use by the human resources department before being placed onto the employee's file was the primary and secondary reasons given by the employee for their termination. This data formed part of a monthly corporate report to the parent company in the U.S. When the human resource personnel were questioned at interview about the significance of the exit interview process, the general consensus was that the exit interview process helped identify problem areas in which they needed to concentrate their efforts.

Despite the perceived benefit of the information being collected, actual changes in organisational policies and/or work procedures as a direct result of the information obtained, was negligible. The reality was that a large amount of time and effort was being put into the administration of the exit interview process rather than analysing the data. The underutilisation of the available data appeared to be largely due to a lack of understanding on how to best analyse, interpret, and present the available data to senior decision makers.

In summary the above qualitative observations provide moderate support for the effectiveness of exit interview process. Two factors primarily affected the achievement of a higher level of effectiveness, one, that there were response distortions due to the perceived acts of retribution, and two, the underutilisation of data gathered by human resources. Although there was some divergence in the perceptions of usefulness of the exit interview process, there was a general convergence among both the employees' and the human resource personnel as to the perceived effectiveness.

DISCUSSION

Two major findings relating to the literature were developed during this study; response distortions due to the perceived act of retribution, and the underutilisation of data gathered by human resources. The manner by which each of the findings (response distortions and underutilisation of information) impact upon the effectiveness of the exit interview process and their relation to the Exit and Voice components of the EVLN framework are discussed below.

Response distortions

It can be the case that an employee will distort information regarding their departure if they fear retribution (Zarandona and Camuso 1985). The present study found that not only did distortion occur but it was connected to a number of factors including; the passing on of negative comments to a new employer, the opportunity for reemployment, and the protection of remaining co-workers.

While the notion of the EVLN framework dictates that departing employees have chosen Exit as the main response to their dissatisfaction, Voice still plays an active role in the process. An exiting employee can choose to utilise voice behaviours to assist friends and colleagues left behind (Feldman and Klass 1999). Several researchers have found that departing employees often fear that by voicing their dissatisfaction it will negatively impact the work environment of the remaining co-workers (Giacalone and Duhon 1991; Giacalone and Knouse 1989). In the case of the present study, all departing employees confirmed this issue as a major impediment to honest disclosure in exit interviews given the perceived cost of exhibiting voice behaviours was deemed too great, leading to response distortions in order to protect others in the future.

Similarly terminating employees may fear personal retribution if they choose to voice negative comments about the organisation. This is most prevalent when an employee requires the organisation to provide a reference for future employment. As outlined by Rusbult et al (1988) employees may be less willing to engage in voice activities if the perceived costs of retaliation outweighs the potential for organisational change. This is supported by Giacalone and Duhon’s (1991) research that employees may refrain from providing truthful information in an exit interview in order to create a positive image from the both the perspective of the interviewer and the organisation.

Another way in which employees may choose not to utilise voice mechanisms effectively or at all can be found with employees who anticipate returning to the organisation in the future. Where employees envisaged that the cost of providing truthful responses could potentially prevent them from returning to the organisation they subsequently falsified information to create a positive image.

On the other hand employees may choose not to provide honest feedback during the exit interview process, even if they perceive the cost of voicing dissatisfaction is low, because they believe that their co-workers should utilise voice mechanisms instead (Withey and Cooper 1989). The belief that someone else should be responsible could lead to the omission of information during the exit process.

The distortion of responses that occurs throughout the exit interview process demonstrates that as a mechanism for employee voice, the process is flawed at best. Terminating employees may feel that in exhibiting voice behaviours upon exiting their organisation will adversely impact either themselves or their remaining co-workers. Thus the effectiveness of the exit interview process to bring about organisational change and subsequently reduce employee turnover can be questioned (Feinberg and Jeppesen 2000).

Underutilisation of information

In order for exit interviews to be effective as an instrument of organisational change the information that is obtained should be analysed, interpreted and actioned. The case organisation used in the current study had a well-designed exit interview process, in which reporting associated with reasons for termination was well documented. However beyond this base level of information, there was virtually no further analysis or interpretation undertaken. Ultimately information that could be used to identify and rectify problems within the case organisation that may have prevented further employee exits simply ended up in the employees personnel file with no further action taken.

This lack of action on the part of the human resources and ultimately the organisation could also be linked to the reluctance of employees to voice their dissatisfaction during the exit interview process. As outlined by several researchers such as McClean, Burris and Detert (2013) Allen and Tuselman (2009), both voice and turnover are contingent on the perceived power of voice mechanisms and on management’s ability and motivation to address issues raised. If employees are aware that information obtained via the exit interview process is going to be nothing more than a file filler they are less likely to voice their dissatisfaction truthfully when leaving the company. Garretson and Teel (1982) support findings that for numerous organisations exit interviews are largely a symbolic gesture with little use made of the information obtained. If the exit interview process is to be effective in creating organisation change, it is imperative that information obtained is analysed, interpreted, actioned and communicated appropriately so that all employees are aware of the power of their voice behaviours.

Limitations

Most research has some limitations. The main constraint to this study was that the sample size was relatively small. While Sandelowski (1995) claims no precise computations can be used to determine the appropriate number of sampling units required for qualitative research, it is generally agreed that an ideal sample size occurs when no new information or insights are provided by the respondents, which is also known as data saturation (Anderson 2013). With only ten employees and two human resource personnel at a single organisation being examined data saturation was not achieved and therefore the generalisability of these findings to the wider population cannot be assured. Completing wider cross sectional research with a larger sample would improve the credibility of the findings.

Implications for practice

There are a number of practical implications that arise out of this study. Firstly while it has been demonstrated that the exit interview process is flawed, this research is not suggesting that exit interviews should be eliminated altogether. Interactions arising out of voluntary resignation can still provide a valuable opportunity for organisations to gather important information and knowledge from exiting employees. Rather efforts should be focussed on improving the process. This could be achieved by incorporating the exit interview process into a wider strategic human resource management (SHRM) approach. SHRM requires that an organisation’s HRM systems should be chosen, aligned and integrated so its human capital resources most effectively contribute to its overall strategic business objectives (Casio 2015). Although the case organisation recorded primary and secondary reasons for leaving, the data from the exit interview process was largely divorced from any other HRM strategic processes. While there has been much debate concerning HRM and its impacts on performance there is general agreement that there is a relationship to improved organisational performance (Boselie 2010). It is therefore essential that the exit interview process and the data that it produces moves beyond a singular and insular interaction to one that is aligned and integrated to overall business objectives.

Another crucial issue for organisations to consider related to the exit interview process is employer brand and reputation. It has been shown that exiting employees may mask their unhappiness for a number of reasons concerning their own careers and for those employees that remain in the organisation. This does not prevent employees from privately negating an organisation after they have left. Furthermore as the time period after exiting an organisation increases unhappy employees may be more willing to openly voice their dissatisfaction about their previous employer. This may have a range of negative consequences from an organisational branding perspective.

It has been shown that brand and company reputation are key factors in attracting and retaining talent and that related concepts such as a strong Employee Value Proposition (EVP) can impact on employee engagement (Heger 2007). As the views of past employees are also relevant in building brand images and reputations (Martin et al 2004), it is vital that strong internal identification with the organisation is maintained throughout employment and during the exit interview process. According to Martin et al (2004) building positive psychological contracts based on high trust and encouraging internal brand identification through engagement strategies are key to establishing a solid corporate reputation. Giving employees the opportunity to honestly voice grievances throughout their employment to ensure that the perceived costs of exhibiting voice behaviours do not outweigh the potential for organisational change (Rusbult et al 1988) may well aid in perpetuating a positive internal brand image.

There are also practical implications for both the exiting and remaining employees. As previously demonstrated the exit interview process provides an invaluable opportunity to gather knowledge on perceived organisational processes and culture with the aim to improve the organisation. However for both exiting employees and those that remain in the organisation it is vital that employees perceive they will be heard and that demonstrable change occur as a result of information provided (Allen and Tuselman 2009; McClean, Burris and Detert 2013). As stated above employers need to ensure that the exit interview process is aligned to overall business strategy which includes planning and communicating processes for discussing and implementing change initiatives as a result of employee feedback. Organisation wide communication strategies will help foster positive perceptions from employees regarding organisational change which could potentially lead to greater accuracy in responses during the exit interview process.

Finally as employees tend to distort their initial responses in exit interviews, it is worthwhile for HR practitioners to consider obtaining exit interview information at multiple time points post exit. This is based on the premise that there is more likely to be greater accuracy in the responses provided by exiting employees the longer the period of time that has passed after leaving the organisation, particularly if the employee is well established in another organisation.

Future research

This study has provided a number of significant findings associated with the exit interview process in relation to the concepts of employee voice and exit as outlined within the EVLN model (Grima and Glaymann 2012). There is however scope to complete further research to broaden the breadth of enquiry in this area.

Adopting a mixed methods approach would provide a number of advantages in further examining exit interviews including the opportunity for triangulation of the research data which adds greater credibility to the discussion and conclusions (Anderson 2013). Completing a larger comparative case study analysis would allow for the interpretation of variables and the extent of the relationship between each of the variables could be examined across a wider population through a quantitative survey (Anderson 2013). Conducting larger mixed methods research across multiple organisations including departing employees, their managers and human resources professionals would not only add to the body of academic literature but would also inform practice concerning improvements to the process which could ultimately increase organisational performance.

CONCLUSION

In order for the exit interview process to be an effective management tool for reducing employee turnover, it is vital that accurate and reliable information is gathered from departing employees. In analysing the qualitative evidence from the present study, applying the EVLN framework, it has been found that as a mechanism for employee voice behaviours, the exit interview process is largely ineffective. Employees often distorted their responses as a result of perceptions of the high costs of voicing their dissatisfaction compared to leaving the organisation on a positive, yet inaccurate note. In addition there was evidence of the underutilisation of information obtained through the process, which can be directly linked to employee perceptions of the efficacy of their voice activities during the exit process. Any organisational attempts to positively impact employee turnover based on potentially inaccurate information provided during the exit interview process will likely be in vain, thereby suggesting that it is time to look for alternative approaches to ensuring employees are utilising voice behaviours more effectively.

The exit interview process at the case organisation therefore affirms research that suggests that the exit interview process is not as effective in practice as we have been lead to believe (Black 1982; Feinberg and Jeppeson 2000; Giacalone et al 1997; Zarandona and Camuso 1985), and contradicts the research from other studies that claim the exit interview is an effective means to reduce employee turnover (Giacalone and Knouse 1989; Grensing-Pophal 1993; Zima 1983).

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