

Employee perceptions of the factors impacting
employee retention and turnover in
the Irish print industry – an exploratory study.

A Thesis in the Field of Employee Retention
for MBA

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Abstract

This research was conducted to investigate employee perceptions of the factors impacting upon employee retention and turnover in the Irish print industry.

The information was collected from staff members of an Irish multinational print company to ensure that the information was correct and reflective of current experiences. A number of different theories related to turnover and retention were studied in order to devise a series of questions devised around the literature. The main subjects covered in the questions were training opportunities, financial remuneration, regular feedback, progression opportunity and relationship with management.

Research was carried out used semi-structured interviews with 5 interviewees.

The findings showed that the main subjects covered in the interview questions were major factors impacting upon staff retention, however there were also factors discovered, such as interpersonal relationships with co-workers and job flexibility that featured more heavily than had been anticipated based upon the research.

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Dedication

To Linda for all of your love and patience and
to my Mother and Father for all of their encouragement and support.

Acknowledgments

To all of my lecturers for their help and encouragement and in particular to

Dr. Colette Darcy for her tough love and even tougher hugs!

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Chapter I.

Introduction

The print industry worldwide employs 625,000 people in 112,000 print companies (Intergraf, 2019). The industry has experienced massive change and disruption since the beginning of the 21st century. The numbers employed in the industry have been on the decline for two main reasons:

1. The ability of other forms of media i.e. internet, e-books etc. to distribute information at a faster rate and to a wider audience.
2. Advances in technology that have increased productivity and consequently require fewer staff to produce similar levels of production.

Given the nature of the changes which have taken place within the print industry, it provides a unique context in which to examine the factors which impact upon staff retention. This research will therefore focus upon the employees of an Irish printing company and examine the factors that impact upon staff retention from an employee perspective.

The Company

The methodology employed by this study is single phenomenon case study approach. The work environment concerned is a large multinational printing company in Dublin City, Ireland, employing 120 staff at the selected site with 40 manufacturing facilities in

34 countries worldwide. The organisation's stated aim to deliver a competitive and fair employment environment and to provide the opportunity for employees to develop and advance subject to personal performance and business objectives.

In 1993, Indigo launched their digital printing press, the Indigo 1000. The organisation purchased two in 1994, the first to adopt such technology in Ireland. This machinery eliminated the need to use printing inks or aluminium plates and allowed files to be sent to the press for printing electronically. This innovation ushered in the era of "print on demand". To put how advanced this technology was at the time in context, in 1994 it is estimated that there were only 2,738 websites on the internet.

By adopting new technologies, upskilling staff through in-house and external training initiatives and a diversification away from commercial printing into pharmaceutical printing and packaging allowed the company to survive when other large, local competitors struggled or closed down.

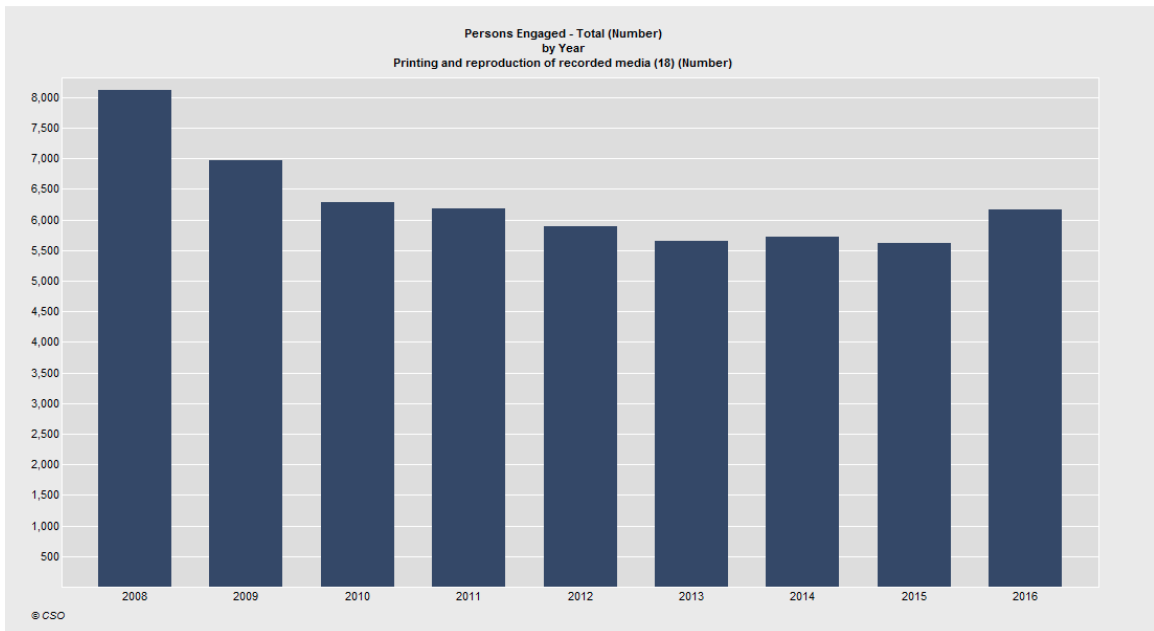
[Background to research](#)

The adoption of new technology has impacted heavily upon the print industry.

The growth of the internet since the 1990's has allowed consumers to access news instantly and also communicate by electronic means i.e. e-mail, social media and so on. Books, newspapers, research material etc. that in the past would only be available in print are now all available online, and often for free. Newspapers and magazines have seen their circulation decrease significantly, with many ceasing to trade. Commercial printers have struggled as customers have found alternatives to traditional printed media –

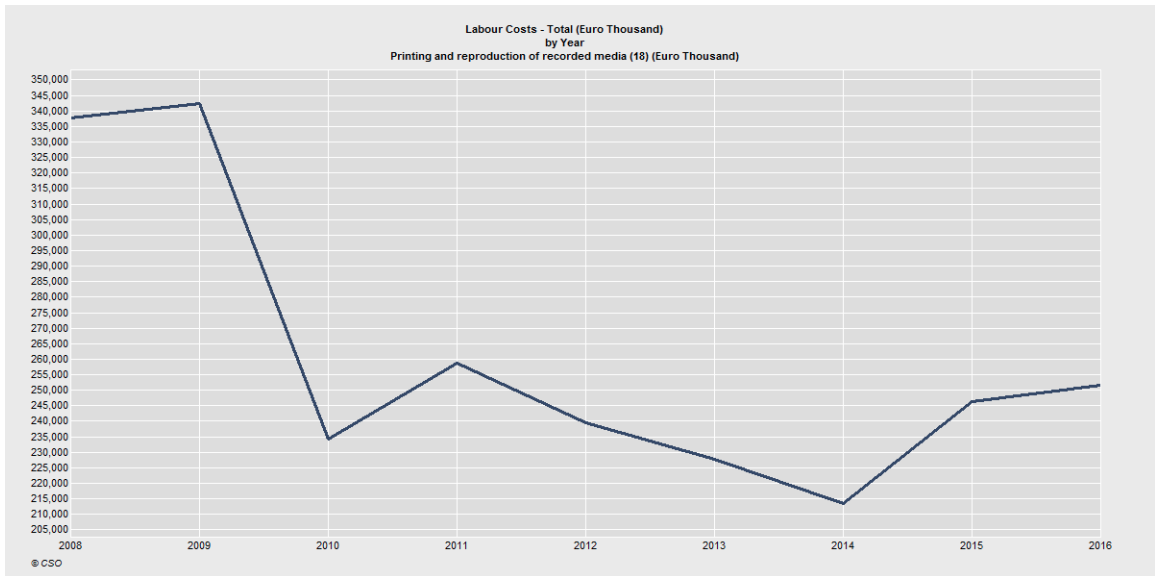
invitations replaced by emails, computer manuals replaced by downloadable PDFs, printed invoices and household bills replaced by online delivery.

The number of people engaged in the Irish print trade fell from 8,112 in 2008 to 6,165 in 2016. (cso.ie, 2019).



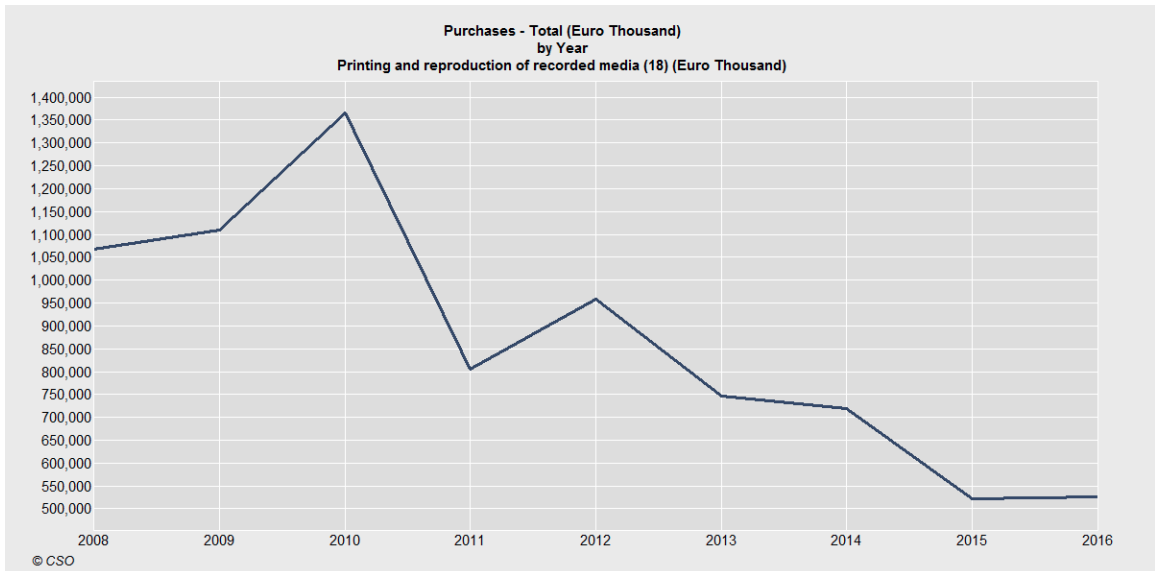
Persons engaged in printing – 2008-2016 (cso.ie, 2019)

Against this decline in those employed in the print industry, labour costs have also declined in the Irish print industry, from €337,837,000 in 2008 to €251,569,000 in 2016.



Labour costs – Print industry 2008-2016 (cso.ie, 2019)

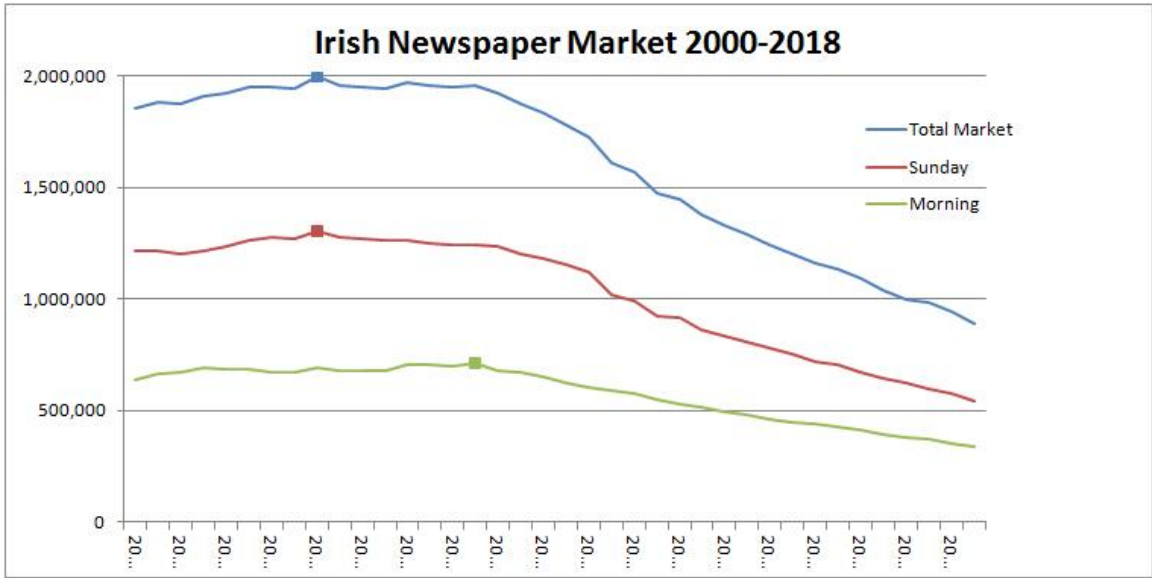
Purchases in the print industry have also declined significantly since 2008



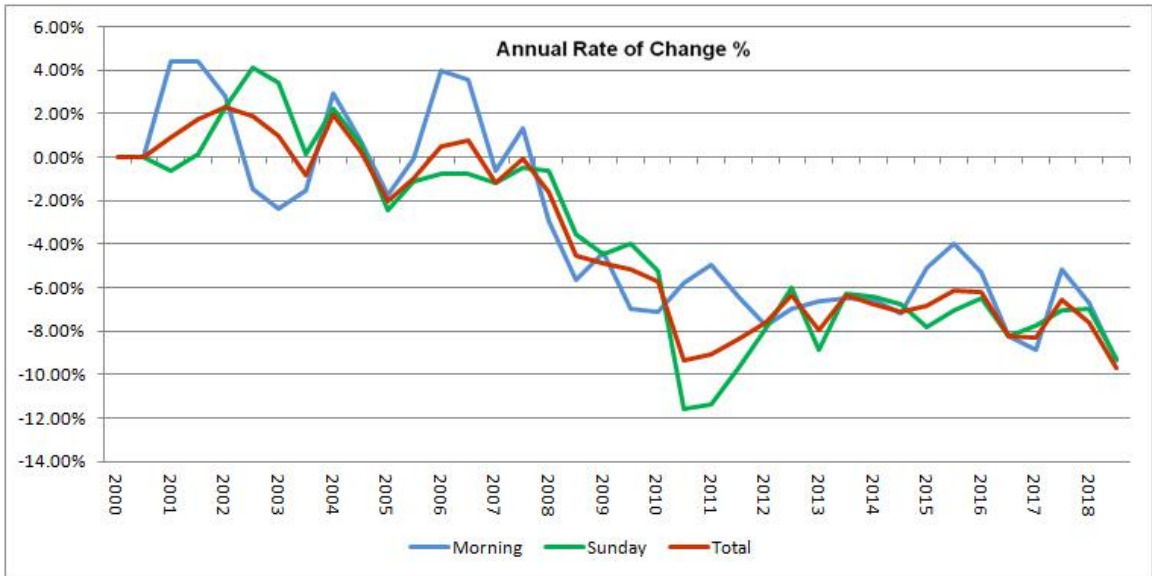
Purchases – Print industry 2008-2016 (cso.ie, 2019)

When set against figures for the Irish newspaper and newspaper sales are equally stark.

Newspaper sales fell by 10% in the year 2018 and the total market has more than halved since 2004.

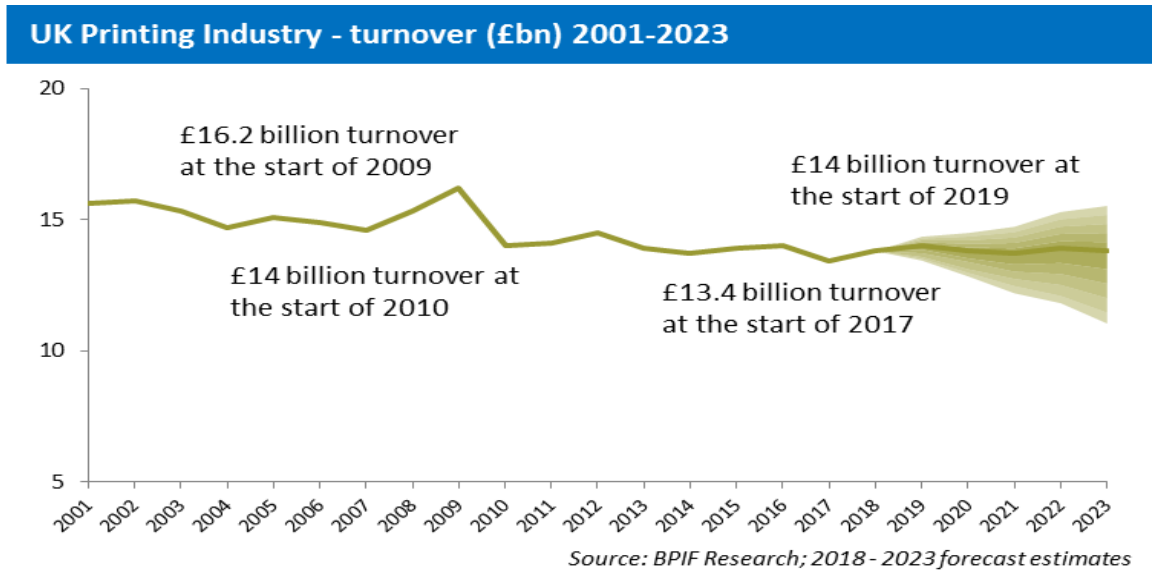


Irish Newspaper Market 2000-2018 (ilevel.ie, 2018)



Annual rate of change % 2000-2018 (ilevel.ie, 2018)

A look at the UK market shows a similar decline, with the printing industry turnover falling from £16.2 billion in 2009 to £14 billion in 2019



Printing industry turnover in the UK 2001-2023

It is against this turbulent, problematic backdrop that the research subject was chosen.

The purpose of the research is to establish if there is a relationship between staff retention and staff satisfaction and to establish what are the factors that can lead to longevity of service. It also looks for a link between longevity of service and employee satisfaction levels.

Although it will look at the topic from the perspective of the employee, it will seek to find solutions and recommendations that will aid staff retention. The research aims to establish what are the main factors that impact upon the employees' willingness and motivations to remain in an organisation.

The research is structured as follows.

Chapter Two is a literature review that explores the previous research upon the subject of staff retention and turnover. It looks at the main reasons that staff stay with a company, the main factors in staff turnover and the most common themes that occur in the literature.

Chapter Three covers the research methodology employed to research the subject and what topics and questions are asked, based upon the literature. It explains the methods used to collect the information, namely semi structured interviews. Having devised a conceptual model, the research used this model to frame the questions that were asked in a number of interviews with people currently employed in the Irish print industry.

Chapter Four examines the interview process, the responses given at the interviews and examines them against the literature and the research to date.

Chapter Five concludes the research with an overview of the findings and Appendix A and B contain the questions asked at interview stage and transcripts of those interviews.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This chapter will look at the research that has been conducted to date on the subject of employee retention and staff turnover. The research is focussed on the Irish print industry and how the employees perceive the factors that impact upon them.

The reasons for the changes and difficulties in the print industry are manifold.

The growth of the internet since the 1990's has allowed consumers to access news instantly and also communicate by electronic means i.e. e-mail, social media and so on.

Books, newspapers, research material etc. that in the past would only be available in print are now all available online, and often for free.

The adoption and accessibility of the internet has impacted negatively upon the printing industry in many ways.

The most valuable asset of a 21st-century institution (whether business or non-business) will be its knowledge workers and their productivity. (Drucker, 1999). Research from 2018 finds it now costs an Irish firm an average of €13,100 to replace a member of staff who leave, and that companies expect an average staff turnover rate of 11% in 2019 (fora.ie). The cost of employee turnover can range from 90% to 200% of the annual salary of the employee (Allen, et al., 2010).

Therefore, it is clear that the replacement cost of recruiting new staff is significant. In an industry such as the print industry, these costs are likely to be significant given the dearth of specialist skills readily available in the marketplace. This chapter will examine the role of X and Y in terms of retention before moving on to an examination of Z.

Turnover can be split into two types, voluntary and involuntary turnover. Voluntary is initiated by the employee and can be somewhat predicted and addressed in HR whereas involuntary turnover is where the employee has no choice in their termination—for example, employer-initiated due to non-performance.

Kayes and Jordan Evans (2014) claim the 13 main reasons for staying in a company are

1. Exciting, challenging, or meaningful work
2. Supportive management/good boss
3. Being recognized, valued, and respected
4. Career growth, learning, and development
5. Flexible work environment
6. Fair pay
7. Job location
8. Job security and stability
9. Pride in the organization, its mission or product
10. Working with great co-workers or clients
11. Fun, enjoyable work environment
12. Good benefits
13. Loyalty and commitment to co-workers or boss.

The three main factors in voluntary turnover are:

- The external business environment (unemployment rates for example)
- The personal element (inter-role conflict for example)
- The job satisfaction element (job satisfaction, job involvement)

(Smith & Macko, 2014)

A stable, settled workforce is also beneficial to both employer and employee as it helps to embed and foster a strong corporate culture whereas increased turnover can have an adverse effect upon staff morale, motivation and work ethic.

The most common recurring themes in the literature researched on the subject of staff retention and employee fall into 5 main topics. Each of these topics will be addressed in turn in the remainder of this chapter.

Training Opportunities

Financial Remuneration

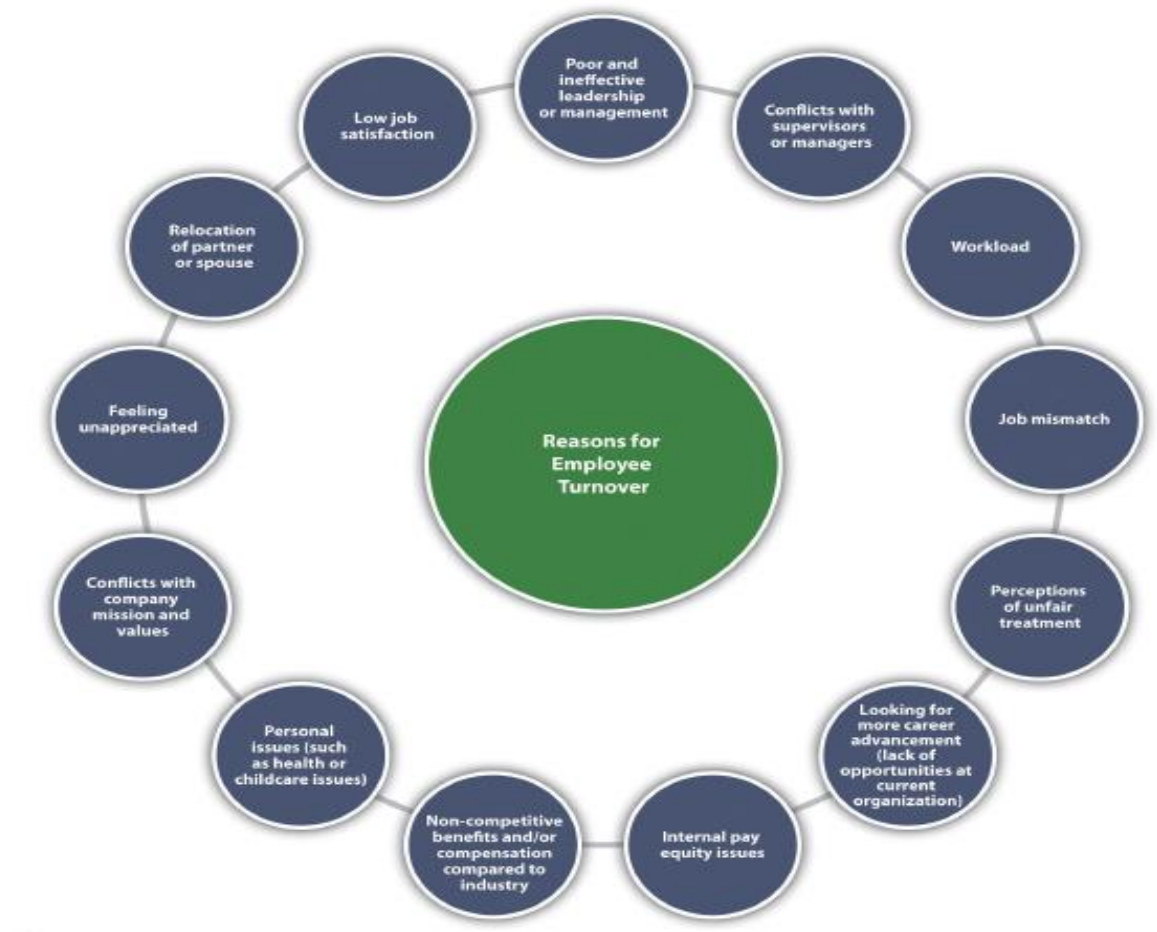
Regular Feedback

Progression Opportunity

Relationship with Management

Another broad topic, that isn't fully covered in this research is the fact that the literature suggests that an employee's decision to leave or stay can be increased or reduced by the level of compatibility between their own work ethic and their company's values and the circumstances that they encounter in their work surroundings. The company's values, policies, procedures and decision-making shape the day to day experience of an employee and the level of variance between the employee's values and that of the company can strengthen or weaken an employee's decision to stay with the company. The company's values derive from societal norms, formal decisions by the board of directors, and the policies and procedures of the managing group. A widening gap between these two vantages weakens inertia; a narrowing gap strengthens it. (Flowers & Hughes, 1973)

This suggests that employees don't turn a blind eye to ethical concerns but instead can be pushed away from an organisation if its values do not coincide with their own.



Common reasons listed for employee turnover (The Open University of Hong Kong, 2017)

While these are all possible reasons for staff turnover, it is only the five previously discussed, training opportunities, financial remuneration, regular feedback, progression opportunity and relationship with management that are under consideration in the research.

Remuneration

Remuneration is payment made to an employee for work or services performed. As well as salary payment it can be in the form of other benefits such as pension payments, health insurance, company cars etc.

Remuneration is a driver of organisational strategy, operational performance, employee commitment, job satisfaction and retention (Bussin & Diez, 2017) and therefore it plays a key role in employee satisfaction, motivation and engagement. Conversely, research also suggests that compensation is often the smallest contributing factor in retaining employees (Allen, et al., (2010)).

Employee salaries are usually based upon a number of factors including how experienced and skilled the employee is at the role, the demands in the job market at the time of hiring and the level at which the employee is entering the company, i.e. the employee's seniority within the company hierarchy. In addition, the location of the company and the cost of living in the locality may be a factor as are the financial circumstances of the company in terms of their overall viability and long-term stability. Urban areas are generally more expensive to rent or buy a house in than rural, so that can be a consideration in wage scales. The presence of a union on site and a unionised membership may also be a factor as they negotiate for pay increases for their membership.

Compensation and remuneration have, according to some literature, an impact upon employee retention and turnover levels however it is also felt that pay level and pay

satisfaction are relatively weak predictors of individual turnover decisions (Griffeth, et al., 2000).

One recurring opinion in the literature is that essentially compensation is a satisfier and not a motivator. This will be explored in greater detail in the interview process.

Training Opportunities

Training can be described as the organized attainment and improvement of attitudes, expertise and knowledge needed by employees to effectively complete an allocated job or task to increase performance (Johennesse & Chou, 2017).

The literature suggests that when there are limited or no opportunities for employees to develop and expand their knowledge & skills, it can lead to lowered morale which can lead in turn to increased staff turnover. If there are insufficient opportunities for employees to be developed and be trained, this may result in low morale, which may lead to resignations. (Johennesse & Chou, 2017)

Increased training is mutually beneficial in the sense that it produces a more skilled and adaptable workforce but also indicates to an employee that they are viewed as a valuable asset that a company are willing to invest in.

However, from the employer's perspective, one major reason given for a reluctance to invest in training is staff turnover, so it is arguably a vicious circle. Under investment in training is both a cause of staff turnover and the reason employers resist it. Employers are apprehensive about investing in training for fear their employees will move to a

competitor when it can be this very lack of investment and opportunity that drives staff away.

Employees benefit from receiving training in their current role but in addition to this, training received that will equip them for potential future roles allows them to transition more easily and also signals to them that there is a defined career progression path mapped out for them which helps to motivate and encourage loyalty. From an organisational perspective it also aids operational continuity.

Regular Feedback

Regular performance appraisals and feedback are valuable to an employee's motivation levels and emotional wellbeing as they can engender a feeling of being respected and wanted. This feedback can come in the form of positive re-enforcement or be used to highlight areas in which the employee needs to improve and how that can be best achieved.

Feedback also affords the employee an opportunity to communicate and difficulties and / or issues that they encounter. Scheduled performance reviews give a voice to the staff member and help to prevent minor issues from festering and developing into major issues through neglect and failure to address them at an early juncture.

This two-way dialogue also helps an employee to view the appraisal process as an outlet for them to raise issues rather than merely as a tool to control, measure and admonish them.

Goal setting and regular progress evaluation is important as it prevents a slip in standards.

Setting goals where employees are involved is important, because

employees feel empowered through inclusion and participation (Johennesse & Chou, 2017).

Progression Opportunity

The opportunity to advance their career and progress within an organisation are factors that impact positively on an employee's decision to stay. Employees need to be rewarded for their achievements and provided an opportunity for advancement (Gering, 2002).

Employees who feel they are denied these opportunities or who perceive that they do not exist are, the literature suggests, more likely to seek employment elsewhere. Surveys of HR executives revealed that the number one cause of employee turnover was limited advancement opportunities (Wallach & Mackenzie, 2012). The researcher will consider the size of the organisation in question when considering this as the flat structures of small businesses typically cannot accommodate the level of career advancement that key employees often desire (Gialuisi & Coetzer, 2013). It will also be considered and discussed whether people *wish* to advance or are they satisfied in their current role and have no desire to change.

Relationship with management

Often times it's not the job that employees quit; it is the boss. (Allen, et al., (2010); Stewart & Brown, 2011). The literature suggests that the relationship that the employee has with their boss can be the most important factor on how they view their job. A positive relationship can lead an employee to overlook other failings in the organisation.

Alternatively, a negative relationship can cause an employee to view other aspects of the company in a negative light. These reasons then build and eventually the employee will depart from the organisation (Wallach & Mackenzie, 2012).

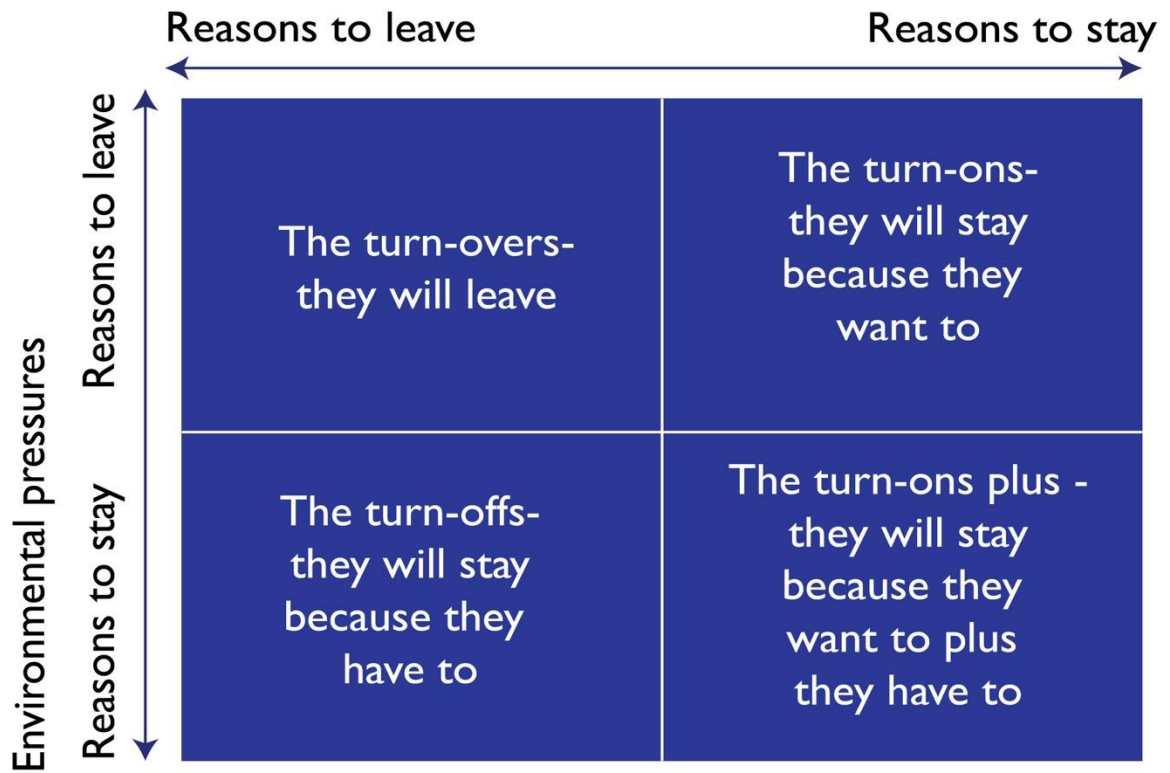
Research by the Gallup Organization found that at least 75 % of the reasons for voluntary turnover can be influenced by managers. This is further expanded on by a report by Watson Wyatt which reported that the relationship with the supervisor/manager was the top-ranked reason employers gave for why employees leave an organization, cited by 31 % of respondents (Kaye & Jordan-Evans, 2014).

The research will seek to establish if there is veracity in these findings in an Irish printing context, and if so, are staff willing to overlook these factors and carry on in spite of them.

Do they *have* to stay, or do they *want* to stay?

It is clear from the literature that employee retention is strongly associated with training opportunities for staff, financial remuneration, regular feedback, progression opportunities and employee relationship with management and that the factors which are most likely to influence them are hygiene factors such as bathrooms, lighting, and being given the appropriate tools for the job. Employers need to utilise positive reinforcement techniques and maintain expected hygiene factors to maximise employee satisfaction and retention. This study will seek to test this theory amongst a sample of printer workers and the following chapter sets out the methodological approach adopted.

Job Satisfaction



Reasons to stay in or leave an organisation (Flowers & Hughes, 1973)

Theories on Employee Satisfaction

When looking at the subject of employee there are many theories that have been forwarded to date.

For the purposes of this study the following key theories were considered to be the most relevant.

Job Withdrawal Theory

Job withdrawal theory, developed by Farrell and Petersen posits that employees develop a number of behaviours including behavioural change, psychological and physical withdrawal to avoid their employment status.

In terms of behavioural change, they first attempt to change the source of their dissatisfaction. Physical withdrawal can entail leaving the company, moving department or increased absenteeism or lateness. An inability to leave the position can lead to the employee becoming increasingly withdrawn and disengaged, which can in turn lead to poor job performance and customer interaction.

The findings are that job commitment and absenteeism are inversely related and that declines in commitment and increases in absenteeism precede organizational turnover. No strong evidence is present supporting an elongated sequential progression, where declining attitudes, i.e., commitment, precede temporary withdrawal (absenteeism) and these episodes foreshadow permanent withdrawal (turnover) (Farrell & Petersen, 1984)

Hawthorne Studies

These were pioneering experiments conducted by Elton Mayo in the 1920's and 30's to determine the effect of workplace conditions on employee motivation in the workplace.

These experiments were carried out in the Western Electric Hawthorne Works in Illinois, United States. These experiments looked at workplace factors and conditions such as break times and lighting to see what effect they would have on staff motivation.

Mayo found that output increased no matter what the nature was of the experiment, leading him to conclude that the workers were boosted by the increased attention in their routine and methods. Initially scheduled to last one year, the experiments were extended to a five-year period.

The implication drawn from the research was that managers should include training and other techniques and activities to make their employees feel valued.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow developed his theory of human motivation in the 1940's. He identified a hierarchy of five needs, and his theory stated that as people satisfy each level of need, it no longer acts as a motivator.

The needs identified were;

- Physiological needs – food, water, shelter.
- Safety needs - protection from elements, freedom from fear
- Social needs - The need for interpersonal relationships and affiliation.
- Esteem needs – self-esteem and respect from others.
- Self-actualisation needs – the wish “to become everything one is capable of becoming”.

Maslow felt that should employees have all of these met then they should be happy in the workplace.

Herzberg Two-Factor Theory

Herzberg's work, "The Motivation to Work" sought to establish what workplace factors determined satisfaction or dissatisfaction by conducting staff interviews. These interviews led him to develop the motivation-hygiene theory. Motivators are things that satisfy staff and hygiene factors dissatisfy. Hygiene factors are assumed but don't motivate – however if they aren't present, they can demotivate.

Herzberg identified the top six motivation factors for people to be advancement, growth, the job itself, responsibility, achievement and recognition.

The top six hygiene factors identified were salary, supervision, relationship with manager, work conditions, company policy and relationship with their peers.

Herzberg stated that as the factors causing satisfaction to differ from those causing dissatisfaction, they can't simply be treated as opposites of each other.

Satisfaction is not the opposite of dissatisfaction. The opposite of satisfaction is no satisfaction and the opposite of dissatisfaction is no dissatisfaction.

The inclusion of salary on the hygiene list indicates that fair pay is an expectation but not a motivation, the real motivators appearing to be recognition and acknowledgement.

.

McGregor's X-Y theory

McGregor's research, in the 1960's, studied the impact of management styles on staff retention. McGregor suggested that there were two different managerial styles, Theory X and Theory Y managers.

Theory X managers are authoritarian and believe that most people do not like work and seek to avoid it where possible. They feel that staff need to be motivated through threat of punishment, need to be told what to do and will invariably seek to avoid responsibility.

Whereas **Theory Y** managers believe that most staff are happy to try their best and will happily accept responsibility that is placed upon them. Theory Y managers believe that employees are willing to problem solve and work under their own initiative.

In practice, theory X managers can experience higher staff turnover rates because of their managerial styles.

Therefore, arising out of a thorough review of the literature a conceptual model is advanced covering the key factors thought to influence staff retention and turnover intentions.

These are:

training opportunities – the chance to increase one’s knowledge and skillset, *progression opportunities* – the chance for career advancement in the organisation, *regular feedback* – receiving commentary and evaluation regularly regarding progress or shortcomings, *relationship with management* – the manner in which staff interact with management and are treated and finally, *remuneration* – the benefits that an employee receives, financial or otherwise.

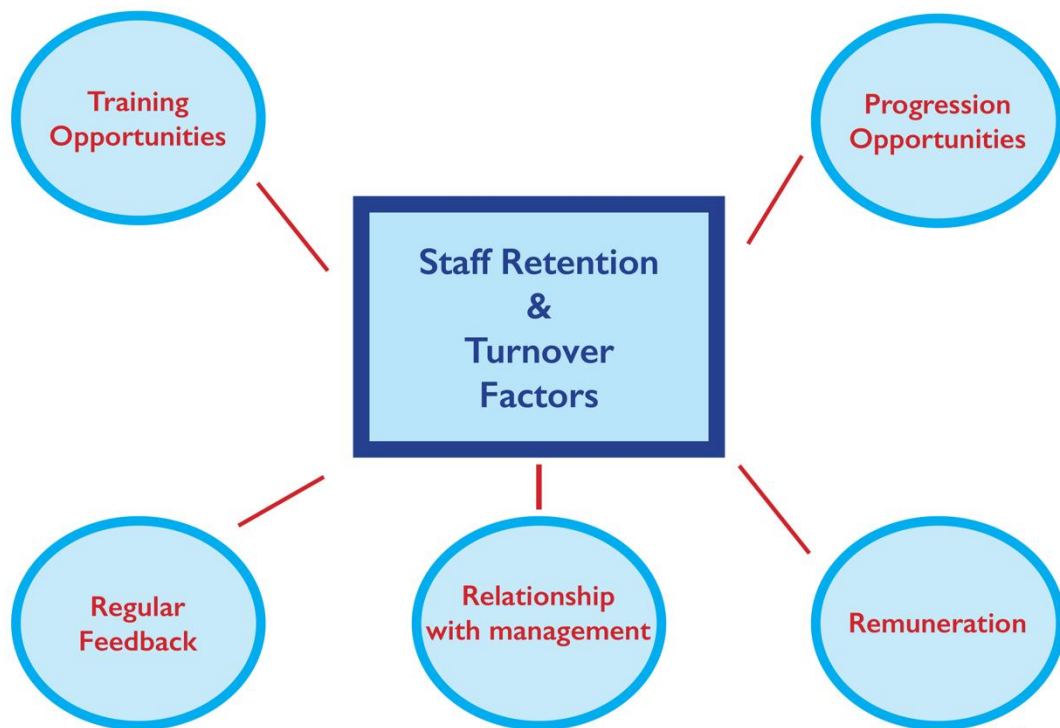


Figure 1

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

Methodology is the theory of how research should be undertaken, including the theoretical and philosophical assumptions upon which research is based and the implications of these for the method or methods adopted (Saunders, et al., 2009).

Having devised a conceptual model, (as shown below) the research used this model to frame the questions that were asked in a number of interviews with people currently employed in the Irish print industry.

The term methodology refers to the overall approaches & perspectives to the research process as a whole and is concerned with the following main issues:

- **Why certain data was collected –**

The questions asked all focussed upon the recurring themes that appeared in the existing literature and research, as outlined in Chapter 2.

- **What data you collected**

The interviewees were asked a series of questions in a semi structured interview to discover their opinions and insights into the topics under discussion.

- **Where and how you collected the data**

The interviews were carried out in the visitor office of the factory in question. This office was chosen as it's quiet, possible to reserve in advance, has a lockable door to ensure that the interview would not be disturbed and is comfortable, spacious and air conditioned.

The interviews were recorded on the researcher’s laptop and phone (as a precautionary backup in case either should fail).

- **How the data was analysed** (Collis & Hussey, 2009)

The interviews were transcribed, and the responses were studied in the context of the existing literature and previous research on the topic to see if the replies aligned.

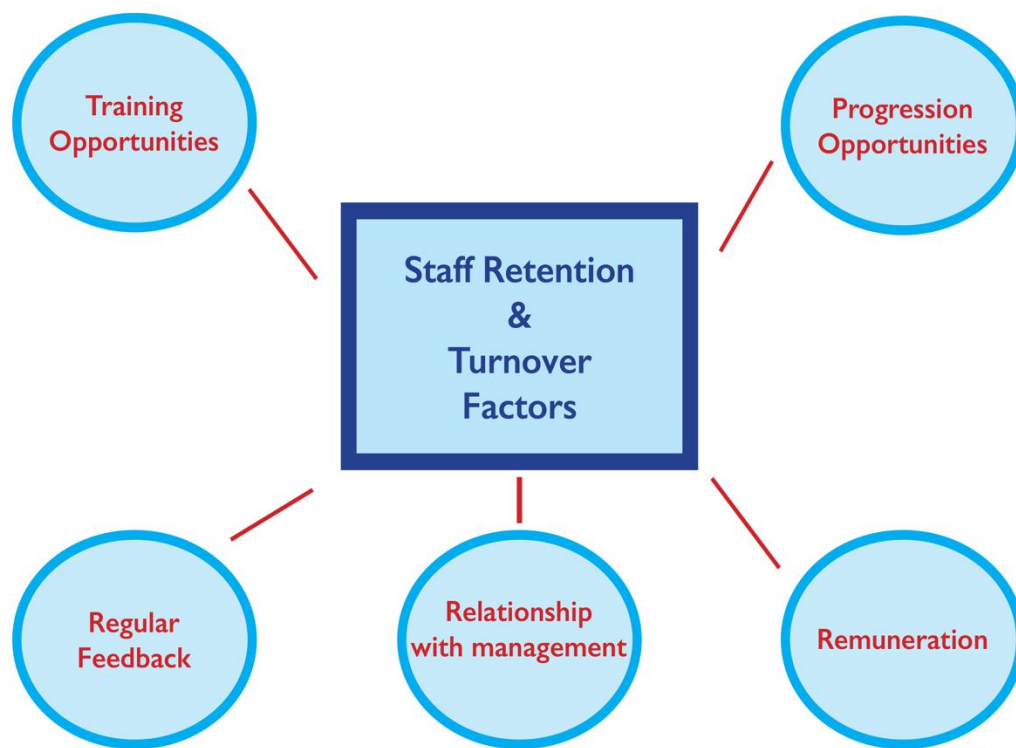


Figure 1

Conceptual model of the key factors influencing staff retention & turnover factors

This conceptual model advances the most common themes discussed in the research to date in this area. Derived from the literature, it is exploratory in nature and as such the researcher feels that it is appropriate to adapt a qualitative approach to the research. Given the nature

of the subject matter, motivation and the previous studies in this area, a qualitative methodology was deemed the most appropriate to address this research question.

Qualitative methods are increasingly accepted in business research as this branch of enquiry differentiates itself from a scientific positivist paradigm. Human behaviour and organisations are difficult to hold still and isolate, since they change constantly and can offer different dimensions of themselves to different audiences. (Greener, 2008)

In general, quantitative research answers the how questions, whereas the why questions are left to qualitative research (Biggam, 2011). Given the purpose of the research is to consider the factors that impact upon staff retention and turnover from the employee's perspective a qualitative approach was deemed most appropriate. In depth, semi structured interviews were carried out in order to allow the interviewer to react to answers and probe further in response to the respondent's initial replies. It was also felt that by asking open ended question the discussion may uncover different viewpoints that had not previously been thought of and that the conversational flow would steer the discussion on to hitherto unconsidered topics. The process of interviewing also allows the interviewee to think out loud on subjects they may not have given much consideration to previously and consequently this can potentially lead to collecting a rich and comprehensive set of information. It is necessary to be mindful of the manner in which questions are asked so that interviewees are not directed to a set line of answers. The semi structured nature of the interviews ensured that a thematic approach, derived from the literature formed the corner stone of the interviews and thereby ensured a consistent approach.

Managers are more likely to agree to be interviewed, rather than complete a questionnaire, particularly when the interview topic is interesting and relevant to their

work. A face to face interview provides them with an opportunity to respond and expand upon their thoughts without the need to submit responses in writing. Participants may be reluctant to complete questionnaires for a number of reasons. They may not feel comfortable providing sensitive and confidential information to someone they haven't met. They may have concerns about the way their responses will be used. They may have difficulties in interpreting or understanding the questions, a problem that can be overcome when asking the questions in person. Personal interviews, therefore, can achieve a higher response rate than using questionnaires. (Saunders, et al., 2009) and again, for this reason qualitative research was deemed most appropriate.

Qualitative research is more suited when the questions to be asked are either complex or open-ended and/or the order and logic of questioning may need to be varied. In this instance the nature of the research is more suited to the semi-structured interview process. When the topics for discussion are complex, unclear, or large in number, the time that would be required to complete a questionnaire may mean that an interview is a better alternative. The aim is to obtain the data necessary to answer all of the research questions, whilst allowing for the right of participants to decline to respond to any question. A semi-structured interview, conducted in the right manner, is more likely to achieve this than the use of a self-administered or interviewer-administered questionnaire (Saunders, et al., 2009).

The five themes as outlined previously were;

- Training Opportunities
- Financial Remuneration

- Regular Feedback
- Progression Opportunity
- Relationship with Management

In conjunction with the conceptual model these themes formed the basis of the interview questions and sought to explore if these are indeed the factors which influence people's decision making when it comes to staying with an organisation, or if there are additional factors that have not yet been covered.

The researcher adopted a thematic approach to the research, seeking to identify and pinpoint key themes within the interview responses and identify patterns accordingly.

The 3 main sampling methods used in qualitative research are quota, purposive and snowball sampling. In qualitative research, a selection or subset of the population is selected to research. Those chosen are determined by the objective of the research and the size and diversity of the population. This research sought to interview X number of participants who were purposively selected based on certain criteria.

The criteria used to select the most suitable and relevant interviewees was as follows:

- Working in the Irish print industry
- Full time employees
- Employed in the print industry for 10 years or more (the reason for this was so that they had been there both pre and post-recession)
- Role or seniority was not a consideration.

The researcher is employed by a multinational Irish print company employing almost 500 staff in 4 different locations nationwide. Care was be taken to ensure when approaching potential candidates that participation was entirely voluntary and in no way obligatory. This was action research as the researcher was an active participant in the organisation under study. The researcher sought to explore and understand the organisation of which he is a part in order to establish a better understanding of the concerns and thoughts of staff.

Data collection: Semi-Structured Interviews

The conceptual model was shown to all interviewees before the interview to illustrate the concepts and introduce the subject. They were advised before the interview that all information collected was confidential and were given the option to opt out of the interview should they wish. They were also advised that they had the right to decline to answer any questions as they saw fit. The interview comprised a series of semi-structured questionnaire containing open-ended questions.

Open-ended questions are so called because the respondent is not confined to a limited number of responses (Biggam, 2011). The researcher's intention was to prepare a number of questions without being overly rigid in the interview approach but rather, in conjunction with the conceptual model, seek to unearth a more detailed description and understanding of the personal experiences of the interviewees and create a foundation for additional research.

Those interviewed were informed that the interviews would be electronically recorded by laptop and phone, transcribed and included in the thesis. Handwritten notes were also

taken during the interview, as an aid to information clarification and retention. With the permission of the participants, the interviews were recorded and face-to-face.

There are several pros and cons to recording interviews. One major advantage of recording an interview is that it allows the interviewer to focus fully on the interview in hand and not be distracted by the task of transcribing and taking notes. This can prove a distraction to both interviewer and interviewee and can lead to a more formal interview and prevent the researcher from responding and reacting adequately to developments in the interview or expanding upon new subjects or topics which may be thrown up by the open-ended question format.

Recorded interviews also afford both participants an opportunity to establish more of a rapport and consequently there is a possibility that they will be less guarded and consequently more open with their answers. Recordings also provide an objective account of an interview and allow an unbiased account of the exchange to be available to people who were present. This can prove useful should there be any queries or concerns regarding the tone, nature or delivery of any of the questions or responses.

One major disadvantage of recording interviews is the time it takes to transcribe the discussion, with studies finding that it can take up to six hours to transcribe one hour of dialogue, however, the interviews will not be transcribed in full but they will be listened back to and the key quotes of note will be extracted for the study.

Written permission was sought and received from each participant before commencing interview. A Participant Information Sheet Consent form was supplied to all participants outlining:

- Contact details for the researcher
- The title of the research
- The manner in which it will be conducted (i.e. recorded interview)
- The intention of the research & an explanation of its aims
- The consent form was signed and dated by both interviewer and interviewee.
- The anonymity and confidentiality of all participants was protected

A time slot of 30 minutes was allocated for each interview. 5 employees from various different departments and of different degrees of organisational seniority were interviewed. There were 33 main questions, including the initial question that allowed the subject to introduce themselves, their role and their length of time in the company. The questions covered the main subjects that were most prevalent in the literature, namely:

- Training Opportunities
- Financial Remuneration
- Regular Feedback
- Progression Opportunity
- Relationship with Management

Purposeful sampling was used. The logic and usefulness of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information rich cases to study in detail.. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research, thus the term purposeful sampling. The purpose of purposeful sampling is to select information-rich cases whose study will illuminate the questions under study. (Patton, 1990).

	GENDER	AGE	ROLE	YEARS OF SERVICE
EMPLOYEE 1	Female	40-50	Accounts	30 Years
EMPLOYEE 2	Female	30-40	Payroll	19 Years
EMPLOYEE 3	Male	50-60	Printer	27 years
EMPLOYEE 4	Male	40-50	Manager	21 years
EMPLOYEE 5	Male	40-50	Supervisor	18 Years

Participants in interview process

The interviews were conducted in a week in a quiet, soundproof office and subsequently transcribed over the following fortnight. The interviews were then studied in the context of the themes that had arisen in the interviews and previous research and existing literature in order to find similarities and / or differences.

The data derived from the individual, semi-structured interview recordings was transcribed in order to analyse the written script in greater detail and search for a development of themes and ideas, both from the literature, for testing in a data-deductive approach and from the data itself (inductive approach).

Storage & destruction of data

Data collected during recordings and interviews, consent forms etc. was stored on a password-protected computer. All study data was anonymised to ensure participants were protected. Any identifiable information about the contributors was stored under a study ID code, with a distinct, encrypted key file that will link the ID code to any information that can identify the participant. Recordings will be deleted once the interviews have been transcribed and are no longer needed for research.

Limitations

One of the limitations of the research is that it was a small sample size, with five participants interviewed for their opinions on the topic. It was a self-report study, i.e. an interview that asks a participant about their feelings and beliefs. One of the criticisms levelled at self-report studies is that interviewees may exaggerate or under-report their problems and can misunderstand the questions asked. The conclusions are also drawn by the author and are subjective, dependent on the perception of the answers given and context, rather than a straight quantitative survey. Although the answers do not allow for generalisation and definitive answers, they do set the foundation for future research.

Chapter 4 that follows takes an in-depth look at the interviews and the responses in the context of previous research and literature.

Chapter 4

Interview Findings and Discussion

Those interviewed were from diverse departments within the organisation, including administrative roles, production and accounts. All staff interviewed had at least 15 years' service in the company. Staff with over ten years' service were chosen to draw upon their knowledge and experience of the company and also to see how their perception has changed both pre and post-recession. The questions asked were based on the following main topics:

- Demographic Questions
- Feedback
- Relationship with management
- Progression Opportunities
- Remuneration
- Training
- Miscellaneous

Some of the key findings were that all employees interviewed had considered leaving the company at different stages, for various different reasons, despite all of those interviewed saying that their areas had very high staff retention rates. Interpersonal relationships play a major part in staff contentment and consequently, staff retention. All staff interviewed felt that they were self-motivated, rather than by the organisation. Feedback is considered important, provided it is backed up with actions. On engagement, employees felt that they

would be more engaged if they were led by example i.e. management being more engaged themselves. The majority of staff interviewed felt that the economic climate played no part in their decisions to leave or stay but instead they focussed upon the conditions they experience in the company on a day to day basis.

Employees leave organizations for a wide variety of reasons such as taking a better paying job, leaving an abusive supervisor, going back to school, following a relocating spouse, or getting fired (Allen, et al., 2010). For these interviews the research focused on what were the reasons for people staying, what made them consider leaving (if they had considered it) and what factors would prompt them to leave in future. It also used the research of Allen, Bryant and Vardaman (2010) regarding the misconceptions regarding staff turnover to formulate the questions.

They listed five main misconceptions and their counter arguments:

1. All turnover is the same, and it is all bad

- There are many types of turnover and some is functional
- The cost of turnover to an organisation varies

2. People quit because of pay

- Dissatisfaction with pay levels is a poor indicator of turnover
- Job satisfaction and commitment to the organization are better indicators of intention

- Relationship with management and co-workers are also strong predictors of turnover

3. *People quit because they are dissatisfied with their jobs*

- Fewer than half of those who leave jobs do so due to job dissatisfaction
- It is also important to consider why people stay

4. *There are little managers can do to directly influence turnover decisions*

- Suitable HR techniques practiced at hiring and onboarding can aid retention
- Appropriate training and rewards from management can also aid retention.

Recruitment practices that provide applicants the most comprehensive picture of the organization, such as realistic job previews and referrals by current employees, reduce the likelihood of subsequent turnover.

5. *A simple one-size-fits-all retention strategy is most effective*

- Staff retention strategies should be tailor made for the organisation
- Staff turnover should be analysed through exit interviews etc.

This research and its findings is one of the works that the author looked to when formulating the interview questions to establish if they were in fact misconceptions.



Reasons for staff disengagement / withdrawal

Demographic questions

Can you describe your role for me?

The respondents included printer, health and safety lead, financial accountant, digital print manager and payroll administrator.

How long have you worked here?

The time worked in the company varied from 18 years up to 30 years.

Have you ever considered leaving? And if so, why?

All interviewees had considered leaving at some stage during their time in the firm. The reasons were varied. Some were for financial reasons.

One was for family reasons, with Employee 1 explaining “*Earlier on when the kids were young, I did think of leaving and maybe just taking a part time job somewhere else.*

Nobody at the time was doing part time ever in the company.... I approached the managing director at the time about that and that I was considering leaving he actually said part time was an option.”

Another employee considered leaving due to overwork and stress. A common theme was a feeling of under appreciation and of not being listened to. Employee 4 stated “*if I've got somebody over my head making the decision, I feel personally it's my responsibility to make sure I give them accurate information. I need to give them accurate information because if they're going to make a decision for the plant, they need an accurate*

assessment in order to truly make a decision, but we just weren't being listened to at all.”.

Finally, the perceived de-skilling in the industry was another factor put forward by Employee 5 - *“over time the demands are getting more and more...demanding. Time scales and stuff like that so it's not really an art anymore. It's more like flying through stuff you know...”.*

Clearly from the responses one of the issues that would drive staff to look for alternate employment is the possibility of increased pay elsewhere. The inability to juggle family commitments was another consideration, with one staff member forced to change her role to a part time role to accommodate family commitments. This indicates that employers need to be prepared to allow for flexible working practices to retain key staff. Work pressures and under appreciation also featured heavily in the responses and are clearly issues for employers to be mindful of. All of the staff interviewed had in excess of 10 years and accordingly had significant work experience and knowledge. Having a high turnover rate of knowledge workers is a potentially significant problem for the organisations that employ them... because their knowledge is highly tacit and one key source of knowledge possessed is social capital, that is, a knowledge of key clients (Wilkinson, et al., 2017).

What do you enjoy most / least about your role and how do these impact on your desire to stay or leave the firm?

A number of those questioned derived most satisfaction from seeing a job through to completion. Employee 3 stating *“Mostly what you would enjoy is seeing the finished product of if you get a new job in, in putting it together....and actually seeing what it looks like.”*. Another major factor in people’s enjoyment of their role was their relationship with work colleagues.

Interpersonal relationships with co-workers featured strongly in responses to what people like about their day to day work experience. Co-workers’ attitudes and behaviours are indeed contagious. Working with people who are not embedded in their jobs and therefore looking for alternative work increases the chance that an employee will quit (Stewart & Brown, 2011).

Employee 5 said *“Well I enjoy the most... my immediate colleagues in the department. We have a very good rapport and they're nice lads, we know each other over time...We have kind of a range in age as well. But we all get on very well you know ...bit of a team”*.

Employee 3 said *“the people that you work with if you work with a good set of guys”*, whilst Employee 4 remarked, *“I love personally to see when I work with some of my own guys to train and progress them and support them*, so interpersonal relationships are clearly a major driver in staff retention. Staff rapport is not something that a firm can engineer, however they can foster it by not chopping and changing shift patterns, creating sub teams, hosting out of work team building and social nights as an aid to staff harmony.

The key elements that staff disliked about their role were firstly, a lack of appreciation or acknowledgement. Employee 3 *“Very important would be you're acknowledged for your job. Simple thing of lads or girls in place working in and somebody to turn around and say, "You're doing a great job today". You know little things that it doesn't take much.*

People aren't asking always for money. It's to be appreciated.” Time pressures and deadlines were another source of discontent for those interviewed. Employee 2 said *“what I least enjoy is the pressure of that from Monday to Wednesday.... trying to get it (payroll) in on time”* and Employee 5 was of a similar mind, saying *“things I don't like I suppose.... just you could have very short turnarounds and it's sometimes you have as much responsibility for a business card as a big pharmaceutical job. And I don't think we're given the right amount of time for certain things.”*

Some research suggests that the employees' position in the company has a major impact on their reasons to stay with a company. Low-skill employees are bound by benefits, family responsibilities, lack of alternative employment opportunities, personal friendships with co-workers, company loyalty, and financial obligations, with moderate-skill employees listing similar reasons while also professing loyalty to the company more frequently.

The reasons cited by managers however differed significantly to the other categories. Their reasons mostly related to the job itself and their bond to the community. Concerns about finding alternative employment, financial responsibility, and company loyalty don't feature as highly in responses from managers (Flowers & Hughes, 1973).

What are retention levels like in your department currently?

Although those interviewed were from various departments of the organization, all of those questioned said that staff retention levels were very high in their area. Employee 2 said *“Everyone is there years. Yeah (X) would be the least there. She's 2-3 years and*

everybody else is there over 10 years,” while Employee 4 said that the newest member of their department had been working there for 20 years.

And what do you think are the reasons for that?

The difficulty in receiving the same wage elsewhere was a concern for some of the employees. *“because we've been in our job so long you do get incremental pay increases over the years and with the deskilling of the trade any competitor businesses would have possibly even half our wages on offer.”* Longevity of service for the employees interviewed has allowed them to accumulate a series of incremental pay rises, either through union negotiations or Government agreement and consequently they have built up to a salary that they may struggle to match elsewhere. This has probably been a factor in their decision to stay. A positive relationship with management and fellow workers also was a significant reason cited for high retention rates. Employee 1 spoke of her relationship with her co-workers and Manager *“I think the atmosphere and I do think the boss that we have the manager ...she's very fair and she's very...I find her approachable. She'd ask you about your personal life as well. She'd actually know if you're under pressure or whatever and you know we all kind of help each other out in the department.”*

A reluctance to change company due to responsibilities was another reason, as Employee 3 explained *“things that would keep us there is...they're married. Mortgages, responsibilities. You know sometimes it's better the devil you know.”.*

Marital status, number of children and responsibilities that come along with having a family, may also have an influence on turnover, as these family responsibilities create a

need for stability (Krau, 1981). However, some research has shown that employees without a partner have a higher turnover probability than people with a partner. This is an expected result, as employees without a partner do not have the responsibility to provide stability for their partner (Singh & Schwab, 2000).

Regular feedback

The questions on feedback concerned feedback from management and whether said feedback increased commitment and loyalty to the company.

Do you receive regular feedback from management?

This question received a mixed response. Although agreeing that they do, there was a scepticism from some as to how sincere it was, or personalized. For example, Employee 5 observed, *“Overall, they've definitely started with feedback, but you could still always get a little bit more like... day to day rather than a gathering... just say the MD maybe popping in to say, "oh things are going well". Feedback on a more personal level rather than a broad one would be good.”*, while Employee 2 noted that they received feedback from the immediate manager but no higher up the Management structure than that.

Do you receive regular recognition and acknowledgment and if so, do you feel that this has increased your commitment and loyalty to the company?

Regular feedback and recognition can help to create greater engagement and “buy-in” from staff. Highly engaged employees are more positive about their jobs and organizations, treat co-workers with more respect, help others improve work efficacy, continually improve work-related skills, are highly active and demonstrate in- and extra-

role performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2009). As with the previous feedback question, this question received a mixed response. The majority of respondents felt that they did not receive genuine acknowledgement, one interviewee claiming that it was effectively lip service as it wasn't backed up by remuneration. Employee 4 stated, *"You don't do the job to get praise I don't do the job to get time out. The biggest recognition for me is when a member staff comes up to me and says... thanks for listening. Thanks for helping"*.

None of those interviewed, however, felt that acknowledgement or feedback increased their loyalty to the company (although some did profess their loyalty to the company, they did not feel acknowledgement added to it).

This shows that if feedback is not delivered in a sincere manner and followed up by action on the issues that need to be addressed it breeds apathy and worse, cynicism amongst staff. In that case, it would be better to give no feedback at all as the feedback given is perceived as a box ticking exercise.

Regular two-way feedback can improve individuals' recognition of their value to the organization. More importantly, supervisor support (i.e. regular meetings, informal mentorship and training programs) has been found to bolster employee engagement.

Employee recognition, such as public acknowledgment, in conjunction with other initiatives such as financial bonuses or even paid time off can also serve to engage key staff (Caesens, et al., 2014).

[Relationship with management](#)

It is management's responsibility to develop, grow, and nurture the boss-employee relationship. It is their rapport, demeanour and attitude toward the employee that can affect that relationship. Employees are looking to feel appreciated and valued by their

bosses (Kranz, 2012). Employees are more likely to be engaged with the company and its aims if they feel that the leaders are also engaged. People are more likely to believe and trust what leaders say if they feel those leaders believe in what they are saying themselves (Smith & Macko, 2014). This series of questions centred around how staff felt that their work experience could be improved and if they felt that their work would improve if they were happier in work.

What should your manager change to improve your daily work experience?

A big issue raised here was that some employees felt that they were severely restricted by their job when it came to taking time off, and this was mostly attributed to a lack of cover and backup for their duties. Employee 1 pointed out *“It's difficult to take a Monday off... And because one I'm number two to somebody so I can't go on holidays when they're on holidays. So, there's a lot of blocks in a month I can't actually take. And in 20 years I haven't taken more than a week's holiday in one spell.”*, similarly Employee 2 was unable to take Monday off due to their role. Another request was increased communication with Employee 3 answering *“Communication....and then keeping you in the loop of things you know.”* as the solution to improve his daily work experience.

The two key issues that were unearthed here is that staff feel constricted by their role and that it is having a detrimental effect on their life outside work as there are times that they are unable to take off even if they have the holiday entitlements. This is something that could be solved by having more back up for staff roles, where possible, thus allowing them to have more independence and autonomy. Communication, and the feeling that they are only been told about things on a need-to-know basis was another bone of

contention for those interviewed and one that is relatively easily rectified through regular staff meetings, newsletters and share points.

Do you think that satisfied staff produce better work, or do you think it makes a difference?

All of those interviewed felt that satisfied staff produce better work, with one exception, Employee 4 who felt that it could be answered either way, depending on the worker's personality traits. *"a satisfied member of staff.... If they have that personality trait can become complacent and they feel in themselves that they can never do on any wrong that everything they did was perfect. You could have an individual who by their personality trait be it their upbringing or just a personality that they will be satisfied, and they will absolutely excel because they're proud of what they do.... You can answer it either way."*

Literature suggests that the boss-employee relationship can be the strongest influence on an employee's feelings about their job. If the relationship is good, then the employee may overlook other areas of their job that they are dissatisfied with. Inversely, a poor relationship with their boss can intensify an employee's intention to leave as it causes them to examine the other causes of dissatisfaction. Some of the major factors listed for a poor employee – boss relationship include staff not getting the feedback they need to know how they are performing and not receiving the recognition that they feel they deserve. Employees not getting adequate training to fulfil their role to the best of their abilities is another source of discord in the boss-employee relationship (Wallach & Mackenzie, 2012).

Do you think that people in your team feel that they are part of the decision-making process?

The consensus was that outside of departmental, relatively minor decisions that they didn't have a say in decision making. Employee 3 felt that he had a knowledge base that was untapped. *"When I started here, I was always told ... was that a customer sent a new job in they'd have somebody actually a printer, they'd have somebody from origination, customer service.... all sitting down to look at the job.... instead of what happens now is there's no brainstorming...No advice looked for"*. The feeling was that problems were reacted to rather than pre-empted.

This is a major opportunity missed by the employer. There is a resource of knowledge and experience untapped, a valuable input that could help to find solutions in addition to the bad feeling created by the situation as the employee is made to feel that their input is undervalued.

Do you feel that you are valued by the company?

Before you answer....be that from your co-workers?

From your supervisor?

from management?

The most common response to this was that the interviewees felt valued by their co-workers and supervisors / middle management but not necessarily by Senior Management. *"The lads that I work with...I do feel appreciated by the lads because if people have a problem, they feel they can ask you about it, work or personal."*, said one,

while Employee 5 said... *“Definitely I would say co-workers and hopefully my supervisor but management I wouldn't really think so. I sometimes feel like we're nearly a nuisance at times to them.”*

Would you say that you are personally motivated, motivated by the organisation or a mixture of both?

In terms of meaningfulness, people with the highest levels of productivity and fulfilment view themselves as inseparable from their work, intrinsically motivated by the work itself and professionally committed to and engaged with the organisation (Chalofsky & Krishna, 2009).

Every respondent said that they were personally motivated, Employee 2's response being typical *“I do think I'm personally motivated yeah.... I don't think I'm motivated that much by the organization”*

Research has shown that employees who are highly motivated are likely to deliver higher levels of workplace performance. They work harder than their peers, have fewer absences from work and deliver higher levels of customer service. They are also shown to be more loyal to the organisation, which results in a reduction in staff turnover.

David McClelland's human motivation theory stated that there are three main motivators for people. The needs for achievement, affiliation, or power.

Achievement- Feeling that you have done a job well and being recognised for it.

Power- Having some control over your own role, and perhaps those of other staff. This can be formal i.e. Manager or supervisor title or informal, by way of minor perks or permissions not afforded to others

Affiliation – This is the feeling of being a part of a team. Social nights outside of work can also help to foster a sense of staff unity.

These were all reflected in the responses of those interviewed however, all claimed to be self-motivated, nevertheless.

Research has shown that to maintain an effective workforce, most firms utilise non-financial retention practices that include developing social bonds through cohesive work groups, emphasising person/ organisation fit during employee selection processes and fulfilling employee affiliation needs (Gialuisi & Coetzer, 2013).

Progression Opportunities

These questions were focussed on the motivation for people to stay with the company, both in the past and in the future and whether the opportunity for promotion played a part in this decision.

Would you say staff stay because they want to or because they don't have a better alternative?

Overall, the feeling was it was a mixture of both with the majority feeling that they didn't necessarily have a better alternative. Employee 1 said *"a year or two ago when I was in a role that I wasn't happy with, yet I didn't actively do anything on it and... I stayed because I didn't really have a better alternative at the time."* and Employee 5 said *"I*

would say in general; I could include myself in this.... we don't have a better alternative at the moment”.

How would you assess your opportunities to progress within the company?

Based on this, has this shaped your decision to leave or stay? Does the possibility of promotion or otherwise play a part in your thinking?

There were varying responses to this series of questions. Some, such as Employee 1, felt that they had many opportunities to progress, *“I've been given loads of opportunities to progress and then some I've taken on more than I can handle, and it hasn't always been a good thing. But definitely the opportunities for me has been there”* whereas others were emphatic that there were no opportunities to progress open to them. Employee 2: *“No, I don't think there's that many opportunities for me.”* Employee 5 made an observation that *“There's very little staff movement in the company so ...short of creating new positions I don't really see it happening you know”*, and Employee 3 simply stated *“No. No. None.”*

Nevertheless, despite the varied responses, all were in agreement that the possibility or otherwise of promotion had no bearing on their decision to leave or stay. Employee 3 stated *“I have family commitments which is something that I just think...I have a bill to pay and I come here, and I can pay it.”*

Do you think the economic environment played a part on your decision to stay or leave?

Does the upturn in the economy play a part in your thinking?

The majority of those interviewed said that the economic environment played no part on their decision to stay or leave. However, Employee 5 made the point *“I think there was even there was a print recession before there was a general one in my opinion in the country. So definitely a better economy does make you start thinking there could be other jobs out there I could go for you know.”* While Employee 4 observed *“Well obviously as any kind of manager has to you've always got to keep one or at least one eye on the big picture. Brexit is looming very large at the moment and because a huge part of our customer base) is in the U.K. you know ... we don't know how that will affect us.”*

Remuneration etc.

Rewards don't necessarily have to be in the wage packet. There are other rewards available such as:

- Additional leave
- Gifts
- Flexible working hours
- Subsidised canteen facilities
- Subsidised gym membership
- Training aimed at personal development rather than work related training

Organizations who have a high commitment to and encourage various types of learning at work, significantly affect important organizational outcomes such as turnover, organizational commitment, job satisfaction and employee engagement. (Huselid, 1995). Benefits like these are popular with employees because they make them feel that they are appreciated, and they add value to the employment contract.

Are pension schemes, health benefits an attraction above weekly remuneration or do you prefer instant results and rewards?

There was a mixed response to this with no clear consensus. Some wanted instant result and reward whereas others such as Employee 5 felt that pension schemes increased a person's engagement with the company "*pension and health care would be better because it's also kind of keeping you in the company with an interest in the company success than rather a one off payment.*". The respondents age didn't appear to have a bearing on the pattern of response.

Would you value increased time off and flexible working hours over increased payment?

Flexible work arrangements may include:

- Part-time work or job share
- Paid parental leave
- Flexible working hours such as varied start / finish times
- The ability to purchase additional annual leave
- Working from home
- Flexible work time where an agreed number of hours are worked up
- Time off in lieu of time for hours worked
- Study leave allowance
- Leave-without-pay
- Subsidised child care arrangements

- Phased retirement option

Flexibility for employees covers arrangements where the employee is able to exercise some degree of control over where, when and how much they work. This can involve reduced hours, remote working or altered starting and finishing times (Wilkinson, et al., 2017).

All of those interviewed said that they would value increased time off and flexible working hours over increased payment with Employee 5 noting *“I know the business we're in its trickier...yet as we're all getting older all of us have families now so I'm sure all of our families would appreciate flexible hours as well”*

A survey by the Department of Trade and Industry found that one in three employees would prefer flexible working hours to a £1000 pay rise. Flexible working hours is valued more highly by workers than any other perk, including a company car (Clutterbuck, 2003).

Do you feel that pay rises and opportunity have declined over your time in the industry?

All respondents felt that pay rises had declined over their time in the industry. Despite there being pay rises in the past few years, the perception was that this was merely a realignment for those which weren't given. Employee 3 *“The last number of years there's been pay rises. But there was also a pay freeze for a long time.”*

Some research states that while employers need to be aware of the compensation they offer for critical positions versus their if it is deemed to be a good place to work in terms

of training, resources, technology, work environment, staffing etc. they may be able to pay less than their competitors do (within an acceptable range) (Gering, 2002).

Do you factor in the overall economic climate when seeking a change in pay and conditions or do you look at your work environment as a separate unit?

None of the interviewees factored in the overall economic climate when seeking a change in pay or conditions, instead looking at the company as an independent entity. Employee 1 remarked, *“if they're doing OK well, we should be, and we should be OK.”*. One employee had never sought a pay rise in twenty-one years. Employee 4 commented, *“The honest answer is.... I've never gone and said I want more money. Never once. My perspective is if I'm working for you, I'll give you whatever you need for eight hours or whatever it is if I can give it to you, I'll give it to you. But sometimes it doesn't work to your benefit you know. And yeah probably should be more aggressive in that respect you know.”*

Does the pension and death in benefit scheme for example influence your thinking?

Most respondents felt that the pension and death in benefit schemes were a “nice to have” but they didn’t have any bearing on their thinking. As Employee 2 said, *“But I do think it's great. I do think it's good to have an offering, but it doesn't influence things... “*

Some literature suggests that supervisors tend to have a stronger non-financial recognition needs and attach less significance to financial rewards, whereas line-level employees focus much more on financial rewards (Lu, et al., 2016).

Training etc.

New knowledge, skills and capabilities are essential to success (Yeung, et al., 1999).

Porter stated that to sustain competitive advantage an organisation must have a commitment to improvement, innovation and change (Gunnigle, et al., 2017). The questions regarding training opportunities focus on what options are available to workers, if they avail of them and if it aids staff retention if they do. Employee training and development is the framework for helping employees develop their personal and organizational skills, knowledge, and abilities. Training can be described as the organized attainment and improvement of attitudes, expertise and knowledge needed by employees to effectively complete an allocated job or task to increase performance (Johennesse & Chou, 2017). Training and increased skills offers the hope of increased competitiveness through increased skill levels and productivity (Wilkinson, et al., 2017). Training also helps to safeguard firms from skill shortages, helping them to fill vacancies from within the organisation and make them less dependent on the external labour market. Training and development also send out a positive signal to staff – organisations that spend money on raising skills are, quite literally, investing in their workers (Wilkinson, et al., 2017).

Do you have access to external training / educational opportunities funded by your employer?

External training is any type of training not performed in-house. It can include sending employees to conferences for teaching and development or paying tuition for a class they want to take.

This question prompted a variety of responses. Some employees felt that there were no training opportunities available to them, however they admitted that they had not sought them out. Employee 5 said “I think we do but to my knowledge it's never really been said to us I know it's been kind of mentioned in negotiations for other things, but I've never seen anything written down to say, "do you want to do something?"”

One concern expressed was about the difficulty of attending an evening class when working double day shit (i.e. 6am-2pm week one, 2pm-10pm week two). Employee 3 - *the awkward part is there are courses I'd love to do but when you do shift work. A lot of courses are on say Tuesday or Thursday. Seven to ten or whatever. And the double day shift you can only do it every second week.*”

Employee 1, however said “*Years ago I did a diploma in print management... to get a promotion at the time two years ago, I was approached to do some more formal training and go back to college and do that which I declined at the time for personal reasons.*” This would suggest to the researcher that the training opportunities are there but not properly advertised or sought out.

If you did would you partake of them?

All questioned said that they would however some sought to attend courses which weren't work related. Employee 3 spoke of learning a language “*. Look I'd love to go and learn a language you know. And I think I know what language would be for my benefit, but I do think if you have customers coming in here Spanish customers, we have French ... wouldn't it be nice if you could actually speak to them?*”

How feasible or attractive to the employer that would be is debatable. A course that has no immediate or apparent benefit to the company that is funded by the company is a hard sell, particularly when a HR department has a finite budget for training.

If so, has that increased your loyalty and commitment to your company or do you see it as an opportunity to hone your skills and seek an alternative employer?

Employee 1 had attended a course 20 years previously and was still in the organisation, Employee 4 has also attended courses funded by the employer and overall all said that a course would increase their loyalty rather than arm them to seek alternative employment. Employee 5, who looked to attend a course which wasn't job related said, *“depending on how they would treat it... if it was something specific to this company....I possibly wouldn't be as interested ...if they said listen whatever you want to do we any sort of interests or hobbies you have we can help you with that then I'd definitely have a bit more loyalty towards the company.”*

Employees who experience an appreciative learning climate in their organisation are more inclined to keep on working in that organisation. Companies should focus on the strengths of their staff and give them the chance to apply and develop those strengths. letting people do more and learn more of what they are good at will encourage them to stay with the organisation (Govaerts, et al., 2011). Another positive aspect of training and development is that it leads to role clarity which in turn helps to reduce job anxiety, which may further aid employee retention (Johennesse & Chou, 2017).

Training and development opportunities tend to reduce the desire to leave an organisation, and linking these opportunities to tenure (e.g., requiring tuition

reimbursement to be repaid if the employee leaves within a certain time frame) helps the organization retain the competencies acquired (Allen, et al., 2010)

Miscellaneous

This final series of questions were used to build upon those already asked and were more concerned with the emotional aspects of their experience in print.

Do you regret choosing to work in the print industry if you measure yourself against your friends?

Overall, there were mostly positive responses to the question. Employee 1 had mixed emotions, *“Yes and no... I've been very lucky, and I've been you know 30 years' service as I have it here and it's fine, but the no side of that you do get institutionalized”*.

Employee 2 had no regrets but equally did not feel a part of the printing industry - *No, I don't really. It's not something I picked originally in any way and I don't feel... I feel that when you work in accounts you could be working anywhere, and I don't feel directly involved with the print industry you know”*.

Employee 4 however, looked at the question from an overall perspective rather than just in a workplace context, *“do I hold myself of less value because I'm a supervisor when say one of my mates is a pilot? Not at all. He's got an important job. Well I've got an important job. OK. We all have important jobs. We're more than just the title of our job. We're made up of our entire lives not just our job title.”*

What are the factors that you feel would most impact upon your decision to stay or leave the company?

Relationship with co-workers featured highly in the responses, as did length of commute. Employee 2 said, *“For me I think location. And I think that's the same for all the girls in the office like we literally are 10 minutes away from where we work. If the job was to up and leave and go somewhere else. I would consider leaving.”*

Research states that one influence on employee inertia is the location of a company. For example, a company that locates a new factory, offices, or laboratories in towns that are not highly attractive or requires the relocation of many employees has weakened inertia; thus, employees are more likely to leave when they become dissatisfied with their work. Whereas, corporations which locate plants in small towns, and draw primarily from the people who were born and reared in those communities, are building in inertia that tends to increase retention and decrease turnover (Flowers & Hughes, 1973).

Relationship with management was another factor, with Employee 4 remarking *“I suppose if the environment became so hostile that I just couldn't work anymore would be a huge one...And again if I got to this level of frustration where you're trying to make change....”*.

Do you think the older you get the less likely you are to leave?

Age allied with length of service and a potential redundancy payment were cited as reasons to stay with the company. Employee 1 remarked, *“a lot of people in the printing would genuinely have long service....and like that that comes into the whole you have*

your service, so you are afraid of printing is going so you're hanging in there maybe for that. Yeah but if you're happy in your job as well it's hanging in for two different reasons saying because you like it and maybe that might be a ...something at the end of it, a package.” Similarly, Employee 3 said, *“if you are here in the company for 15 years People are saying OK I'm maybe 10 years into the mortgage or the kids are in school... And you want to be able to stay once you have a job and that's what it is. Service. People think that way.”* Employee 5 observed that age is perhaps considered the obstacle that it once was, *“I've seen a lot of people going back say even repeating their Leaving Cert and guess trying again. If the economy is to keep improving there will be more jobs in all areas, you know so yes sometimes you can take a chance.”* However, Employee 4 looked at the question from a different perspective, commenting that the choice to move on may not be in the hands of the older employee *“I suppose the older we are probably the less likely we are to be taken on as an employee...Unless you can bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to a ... it's probably quite a good reason for people to stay. certain individuals we have ...they've come in, they literally came in from school to do this job. They know nothing else and they're usually the ones who do nothing but give out about the place. There's an awful lot worse out there but they've never experienced it”*.

Older workers, described by Withnall (2016) as the “third age”, are adults above the age of 55. This period of work life has been associated with choice, personal fulfilment, and liberation. At this age, older workers take the opportunity to deliberate on their workplace conditions. Work becomes a search for continued meaning and contribution as well as to satisfy a financial need. The extent to which older workers will elect to remain or return to the workplace is related to an understanding of how organizations manage social,

economic, political, and technological trends regarding the employment and productivity of older workers (Rocco, et al., 2003).

Chapter 5

Conclusions

Despite the fact that the Irish print industry has experienced a difficult period that resulted in the closure of many companies, a contraction in production output and reduction in those employed, all of those interviewed were employed by the company in excess of 18 years. All had considered leaving at some stage, but all stayed.

Remuneration was a consideration for some and yet there was an acknowledgement that there would be a struggle to receive the same financial package elsewhere.

The length of service for staff is effectively “golden handcuffs”, the appeal of going elsewhere is dampened down by the possibility of a redundancy payment and the pay increases that they have accrued over the years. Job flexibility was considered of greater importance however, particularly for those interviewed that were parents.

A major factor that was prevalent in interviews that had not featured in the literature was the pressure that people felt to fulfil their duties by a set time and the inherent pressure placed upon them as they had no back up for their role. This was a major gripe, with employees disgruntled that they were extremely limited in when they could holiday.

Training opportunities are considered to be a major factor to aid staff retention according to the literature however the interviews contradicted that somewhat. People were keen on the notion of training opportunities but not all had enquired into them or pursued them.

Regular feedback and communication were, as the research had suggested major factors as the literature had suggested however, notably, employees were keen to emphasise that the feedback had to be sincere and actioned upon as promises for change that weren't delivered ultimately caused ill-feeling.

Relationship with management was a major factor although it was not as big a factor as the relationship that staff have with their co-workers with most of the interviewees stating that this was the key issue for them.

Progression opportunities were also not as important a factor with the group interviewed as had been expected. Many were happy with their roles and keen to fulfil it to the best of their abilities.

The research uncovered some issues that are perhaps worthy of further research and circulation, notably that employees in this instance were keener on flexibility than financial reward and that the relationship with co-workers was of greater importance to them than their relationship with management.

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Appendix A

Interview Questions

Demographic Questions

Q So can you describe your role for me? You can start with your job title.

Q How long have you worked here?

Q Have you ever considered leaving?

Q If yes – why?

What were the reasons?

If no, why not?

Q What do you enjoy most / least about your role and how do these impact on your desire to stay or leave the firm?

Q What things are most important to you about your job?

Q What are retention levels like in your department currently?

Q And what do you think are the reasons for that?

Regular feedback

Q Do you receive regular feedback from management?

Q Do you receive regular recognition and acknowledgment and if so, do you feel that this has increased your commitment and loyalty to the company?

Relationship with management

Q What should your manager change to improve your daily work experience?

Q Do you think that satisfied staff produce better work, or do you think it makes a difference

Q Do you think that people in your team feel that they are part of the decision-making process?

Q Do you feel that you are valued by the company?

Before you answer....

be that from your co-workers?

From your supervisor?

from management?

or from a sense of satisfaction about your job?

Q Would you say you are personally motivated, motivated by the organisation or a mixture of both?

Progression Opportunities

Q Would you say staff stay because they want to or because they don't have a better alternative?

Q How would you assess your opportunities to progress within the company?

Q Based on this, has this shaped your decision to leave or stay? Does the possibility of promotion or otherwise play a part in your thinking?

Q Do you think the economic environment played a part on your decision to stay or leave?

Q Does the upturn in the economy play a part in your thinking?

Remuneration etc.

Q Are pension schemes, health benefits an attraction above weekly remuneration or do you prefer instant results and rewards?

Q Would you value increased time off and flexible working hours over increased payment?

Q Do you feel that pay rises and opportunity have declined over your time in the industry?

Q Do you factor in the overall economic climate when seeking a change in pay and conditions or do you look at your work environment as a separate unit?

Q Does the pension and death in benefit scheme for example influence your thinking?

Training etc.

Q Do you have access to external training / educational opportunities funded by your employer?

Q If you did would you partake of them?

Q If so, has that increased your loyalty and commitment to your company or do you see it as an opportunity to hone your skills and seek an alternative employer?

Miscellaneous

Q Do you regret choosing to work in the print industry if you measure yourself against your friends?

Q What are the factors that you feel would most impact upon your decision to stay or leave the company?

Q Do you think that the age of staff has anything to do with it?

Q Do you think the older you get the less likely you are to leave?

Q Do you have any further comments?

Appendix B

Interview Transcripts

Employee 1 Interview

- Researcher

OK thanks for agreeing to do this today. I appreciate you giving up your time. So, I'll just start off with a couple of demographic questions. So, can you describe your role for me - you can start with a job title.

- Employee 1

OK. My job title is assistant financial accountant. And my role is an assistant to the financial controller on the site. And that would involve doing all the supplier payments. Yeah I'm actually in charge I'm head of the AP departments and I have a girl working for me the AP and I look after all the payments she does when they are processing the invoices I oversee that and the financials I help with the intercompany and I do all the banking.

- Researcher

Yep....

- Employee 1

And I do all the journals and then at the end of the month and I do all the posting and the uploading on the system database for the financial controller.

- Researcher

Perfect. OK. How long have you worked here?

- Employee 1

I've worked here for 30 years.

- Researcher

A considerable length of time! Have you ever considered leaving over that time?

- Employee 1

I have yeah, a few times, for different reasons. Earlier on when the kids were young, I did think of leaving and maybe just taking a part time job somewhere else.

- Researcher

For family commitments?

- Employee 1

Yeah, yeah. And because nobody at the time was doing part time ever in the company.

So, when I approached the managing director at the time about that and that I was considering leaving he actually said part time was an option. And I went part time from then. So, I'm about 18 years doing part time now.

- Researcher

OK very good.

- Employee 1

And I built that up over that. First, it was a 20-hour week from a 40 and now I'd be on a 30-hour week. So, I've added back on time as the years went on.

- Researcher

So, you've been able to adapt...

- Employee 1

Yeah. Yeah, absolutely.

- Researcher

You have the flexibility that allows for your family background.

- Employee 1

Absolutely. Yeah.

- Researcher

OK so what do you enjoy most and the least about your role and how do these impact on you desire to stay or leave the firm?

- Employee 1

What I enjoy most about it most eh... it's repetitive work which I like I like kind of having, you know a lot of people wouldn't like that, I actually do like it. Yeah.

I do like the repetitive end; in other words, you know for accounts it's like one month falls into the other, so we'd like you to start your day you have so much to do and you have to have it finished. I need to start again. So now there's certain kind of other things I don't try. The year that you can just do it your own time with there is a time scale to it. So that is... demanding but I actually like that

- Researcher

You like the pressure?

- Employee 1

I do like that and that part of it. I like the ...in the accounts part, the accuracy of it like you know to get ... numbers have to match and kind of stuff like that and invoices have to match the P.O.s. I like all that stuff and obviously attention to detail and that is good. So, I'm kind of, I'm good at that kind of stuff.

- Researcher

OK.

- Employee 1

And that's what I like. Again, on the flip side of that I don't like obviously the the time scale aspect that can impact on your personal life. With accounts you are limited to when you can take annual leave you know and stuff like that. So even though I do enjoy the kind of work that it is, and you know that comes with that.... the deadlines. It does have an impact.

- Researcher

It has its own constraints?

- Employee 1

Yes.

- Researcher

OK. Perfect. And so, what things are most important to you about your job?

- Employee 1

Feeling happy and content....in the environment that I'm working as well as the job I am actually doing. I do take it very seriously; I take my job very personally like and if I'm not finished something it's me, I feel I'm not finished it. You know some people think oh it's only the company walk away. No, I like to finish something I'm given and that's just I've always been like that.

- Researcher

Yep....

- Employee 1

No matter what kind of task I'm given I do take it kind of personally if I haven't finished it yet. What else? What was the other...?

- Researcher

Well what was what things are most important to you about your job but I'm actually going to kind of come back to that because I think... like I got the impression that the environment that you work in as well....

- Employee 1

Yeah.

- Researcher

And the people that you work with...

- Employee 1

Yeah, I like coming into work and the people I work with...

- Researcher

It certainly has an impact. So as part of that then what are the retention levels like in your department currently?

- Employee 1

Yeah very good like I'm there 30 years the other girls in the office I think there's one there 18 years, another 14 and there's another lady so there's a lot.

There is a new girl there about two or three years. And she was taken on when I started taking more of the financial role from just I was just doing AP and then when I was taking more financial role we do have a girl in there that it did take us maybe two or three

attempts of other people doing that role and she's there about three years and she likes it.

- Researcher

Yeah. So obviously there's high retention in the department, there's very little turnover What do you think is the reason?

- Employee 1

I think the atmosphere and I do think the boss that we have the manager we do have ...she's very ... she's very agreeable, she's very flexible, she's very fair and she's very...I find her approachable maybe some other people wouldn't but I actually find her very approachable.

- Researcher

OK.

- Employee 1

She keeps you kind of informed with what's going on the company. She'd ask you about your personal life as well. She'd actually know if you're under pressure or whatever and you know we all kind of help each other out in the department.

- Researcher

Yeah, brilliant. Well that kind of feeds then into the next question that I have there just in terms of regular feedback from management.

- Employee 1

Yeah

- Researcher

So outside of even just appraisals and so on....

- Employee 1

Yeah. There would be first of all the company in general would have town halls every so often kind of maybe once every.... maybe three or four times a year but our manager about once a month would come in and have a general chat with us.

- Researcher

Yeah.

- Employee 1

And any issues and you know put it up on the STEP board that we have or whatever and she would she would look into it she's very into kind of all of that kind of you know what affects us and all that kind of stuff. But even outside of that I do know if there was anything outside you could just, she is approachable you could just go in....

- Researcher

That's good to hear....and do you feel, not to put words into your mouth but do you feel like this is increasing your commitment and loyalty to the company?

- Employee 1

No.... I would have always had that with any of the bosses that I've worked for. I would have that loyalty to kind of the company and the commitment to my job that I'm doing at the time so I would have that. It does obviously make it a much easier job And I've been lucky that you know the people I worked for have always been very supportive of me and my role.

- Researcher

Excellent, ok, so just in terms of your relationship with management then what do you think what should your manager change to improve your daily work experience?

- Employee 1

I don't know....

- Researcher

I'll give you an example. This is something that's has come up through accounts as well it's that...and it's part of the role I probably I think is to do it when you're in accounts you are beholden to.... It's difficult to take a Monday off....

- Employee 1

Absolutely, yeah.

- Researcher

So, you know that there are constraints on it?

- Employee 1

And very much so from my role because one I'm number two to somebody so I can't go on holidays when they're on holidays. Secondly, I'm back up kind of for the payroll and banking part of it.

- Researcher

Yeah.

- Employee 1

Thirdly I do salaries. They're all different like first of all the end of the month is beginning of the following month so I can't go on holiday for that week. Then there are my payments, I do all my creditors payments by the 10th of the month so you can't go on holidays then and then I do salaries on the 18th of the month. So, there's a lot of blocks in a month I can't actually take.

- Researcher

So, a lot of it is down to cover?

- Employee 1

Yeah...And in 20 years I haven't taken more than a week's holiday in one spell...you know where I used to take two weeks on end. Yeah. That's both personal.... But it's basically work that it's not worth it coming back and having the backlog. So, I do take a lot of Fridays or Mondays and stuff like that and kind of catch up my work in between that.

- Researcher

Well I suppose what they could really do is increase the cover to give you more flexibility and give you more scope to be able to....

- Employee 1

Yeah but in accounts is.... you know cover I'd like even ...who'd do the cover? I don't know whether anyone is even able to do it in the department that we have. You know we all kind of just cover for each other and just unfortunately my role they can't be covered by.

- Researcher

You can't just transfer the information?

- Employee 1

Yeah

It does mean working kind of at home or maybe taking reports home...

- Researcher

So, this is purely opinion based. There's no right or wrong answer to this it is purely....

Do you think that satisfied staff produce better work? Or do you take it makes a difference?

- Employee 1

Yeah, I definitely think they do you're happy in your job and your company and you're in good form you will do better. Like some days if your heart isn't in it, you're slower doing things like, you're later applying to emails.

- Researcher

Sure.

- Employee 1

You know you're not fully focused...you just kind of get the job done. But you'll do that little bit more if you're happy and you're, you're being rewarded. I mean I don't mean financial I just mean appreciated, not rewarded.

- Researcher

OK do you think that people in your team feel that they are part of the decision-making process.

- Employee 1

No, no not really. No, I wouldn't. If there was a big decision to be made. No, I wouldn't think that we'd be asked our opinion maybe...

- Researcher

OK. So just to move on then. Do you feel valued by the company? And before you answer that would you say is that from your co-workers or your supervisor from

management or just from your own sense of satisfaction about your job you know what you think is the best driver?

- Employee 1

Me personally yeah, I would be I think valued by management, I have a good relationship with them I'd be close to them you know.

So, I do personally think I am I don't know whether that's the case for everybody. And I do always feel appreciated and like that if I've done an end of month and I've stayed on late or I've done something really fast or come in on one of my days off I totally get acknowledged I get a thank you or I get a day off for it or something. So, I definitely feel appreciated.

- Researcher

So just on that. Would you say you are personally motivated, motivated by the organization or is it a mixture of both?

- Employee 1

Me personally motivated yeah just that's just me.

- Researcher

OK. So, like the five key drivers on staff retention on staff turnover and so on are to do with. Progression opportunities, remuneration, feedback from management and so on

the relationship with management and training so that's why I'm curious...so just moving on to the next one then will be progression opportunities.

- Employee 1

Yeah.

- Researcher

So, would you say that staff stay because they want to or because they don't have a better alternative?

- Employee 1

In general, they stay because they want to and `yeah, I'd say certainly in our department all the girls are happy there.

Yeah probably if they were approached maybe and they're given extra money or something like that, but I don't think they'd actually just be that unhappy to go looking for something somewhere else. For me personally I would have been maybe a year or two ago when I was in a role that I wasn't happy with, yet I didn't actively do anything on it and like that I stayed because I didn't really have a better alternative at the time...

- Researcher

Sure yeah.

- Employee 1

And that's been sorted now.

- Researcher

Yeah brilliant okay. And how would you assess your opportunities to progress within the company?

- Employee 1

Me personally I've tried loads of different roles from production to paper management into payroll and accounts payable and now into finance. So, I've been given loads of opportunities to progress and then some I've taken on more than I can handle, and it hasn't always been a good thing. But definitely the opportunities for me has been there.

- Researcher

You're glad you done it. OK so based on this would you say that's shaped your decision to leave or stay like does the possibility of promotion or otherwise play a part in your thinking?

- Employee 1

Yeah originally I wouldn't I've looking for the promotion I got it I did it for a while I wasn't happy with it and that could swayed me to actually leave but then that's settled down and you know with that then I became happy again and I stayed.

- Researcher

Yeah OK well this next question is kind of linked then into remuneration and reward. So, do you think the economic environment played a part in your decision to stay or

leave...now that's the overall economic environment as opposed to your own personal economic environment.

- Employee 1

Right. No, not at all.

- Researcher

OK thank you. OK. So, are pension schemes, health benefits an attraction above weekly remuneration or do you prefer instant results and rewards?

- Employee 1

We have a pension the company matches. So yeah that's good everyone likes more rewards on top of that. And.... yeah, no the pension is fine. We have our wages which come in every month, so it is nice to have a pension that's something else is going to be down the road.

- Researcher

Sure. And would you value increased time off and flexible working hours over increased payments?

- Employee 1

I have flexible working hours already, so would I value that more over more money?

- Researcher

I suppose the proof in the pudding is probably you're probably kind of answered that in the sense that you've chosen the increased time off and flexibility over working a 40-hour week....

- Employee 1

Yeah, yeah, yeah true.

- Researcher

So, I suppose in that respect you've kind of answered.... Yeah. And do you feel that pay rises and opportunities have declined over your time in the industry?

- Employee 1

yeah, they have... in the last year or two they picked up again. But there was a lull of there about six or seven years that nobody got an increase. So yeah.

- Researcher

OK do you factor in the overall economic climate when you're seeking a change in pay and conditions. Or do you look at your work environment as a separate unit?

- Employee 1

I wouldn't really be thinking of this wider picture.

- Researcher

You just look on how is how is the company doing?

- Employee 1

Yeah and if they're doing OK well, we should be, and we should be OK.

- Researcher

OK. Just on to training then. Do you have access to external training or educational opportunities funded by your employer?

- Employee 1

Yes, we do yeah.

- Researcher

Have you availed of them?

- Employee 1

Years ago, I did, I did a diploma in print management... god... over 20 years ago. And like that was to get a promotion at the time to be the purchasing manager. So, for that I was advised to go for it to have some sort of qualification.

So I did, and then it's to be honest the rest is justbeing a bookkeeper and that is just being trained and by being shown or whatever so there was when I did pick up the new role there two years ago I was approached to do some more formal training and go back to college and do that which I declined at the time for personal reasons.

- Researcher

My next question is if so, has that increased our loyalty and commitment to the company? Or do you see it as an opportunity to hone your skills and seek an alternative

employer. I suppose the fact that you did the course 20 years ago and you're still here is probably answering that question as well, you didn't use it to go somewhere else. Yeah OK brilliant.

- Researcher

Just wrapping up the miscellaneous questions.... Do you regret choosing to walk into that industry if you measure yourself against your school friends or so on and what the path that they chose and where they went?

- Employee 1

Yes and no... I've been very lucky and I've been you know 30 years' service as I have it here and it's fine, but the no side of that you do get institutionalized like when you do come into something like this and yeah you know and maybe with the options of being moving around that kind of keeps you kind of here rather than spreading your wings and maybe just trying to trying something different.

- Researcher

Yeah OK. So, what are the factors that you feel would most impact upon your decision to stay or leave the company?

- Employee 1

Well certainly if I got a nice redundancy package for 30 years' service, I might definitely consider it....so yeah...but I do have good flexible hours, and which would you know I wouldn't get probably another company. I am probably on an ok hourly rate that I

probably wouldn't get in another company. Going in without having the qualifications - just having the experience. For me that does make you a bit institutionalized. Yeah.

- Researcher

I suppose another factor that I don't know whether this impacts on you that people have mentioned is the commute as well....

- Employee 1

Absolutely. The company has moved on three different occasions since I've started and I had a 40-minute journey, I had an M50 hour long journey and now I can get in and out of work in 10 minutes. Yeah, it's a big factor.

- Researcher

OK. And just in relation to the fact there's... do you think the age of the staff have anything to do with it in the sense that do you think the older you get the less likely you are to jump ship?

- Employee 1

Yeah. Yeah. And especially with it maybe the production workers and stuff like that like the older did they would get as well because they'd have a long service like a lot of people in the printing would genuinely have long service. Probably not as much the office staff except me.

- Researcher

Yeah so service is a big factor...

- Employee 1

Yeah, I do and like that that comes into the whole you have your service, so you are afraid of leaving now. Everyone's always talking, printing is going so you're hanging in there maybe for that. Yeah but if you're happy in your job as well it's hanging in for two different reasons saying because you like it and maybe that might be a ...something at the end of it, a package.

- Researcher

Fantastic, that's everything. Unless you have something to add? Okay thanks very much.

- Employee 1

No problem, thank you.

Employee 2 Interview

- Researcher

Thanks for agreeing to do this today.

I appreciate you giving up your time. So, I've just got a couple of demographic questions first to kick off.

- Employee 2

That's OK.

- Researcher

So, can you describe your role for me...you can start with your job title if you like.

- Employee 2

So, I am accounts receivable and payroll admin for Ireland.

- Researcher

And how long have you worked here?

- Employee 2

19 years. In January.

- Researcher

Have you ever considered leaving?

- Employee 2

Yes, I have considered it, when I've gone for a mortgage and stuff... For money reasons.

- Researcher

OK. So, what were the reasons? Mainly financial?

- Employee 2

Mainly financial. Yeah.

- Researcher

And what do you enjoy most or least about your role and how do these impact on your desire to stay or leave the firm?

- Employee 2

About my role.... I enjoy the job satisfaction when the payroll is gone through each week and it's come to Wednesday and gone to the bank and it's done. And what I least enjoy is the pressure of that from Monday to Wednesday trying to get it in on time.

- Researcher

Getting it over the line....

- Employee 2

Get it over the line. Yeah. So that's what I guess that's like what I get the satisfaction from...

- Researcher

I mean your role has changed then. And evolved.

- Employee 2

Yeah. And it will be outsourced eventually completely but at the moment I do parallel runs. So, there is a company running the actual payroll. I'm feeding her the information, so I get all the information.

- Researcher

So, you still have to be involved....

- Researcher

Okay so what things are most important to you about your job?

- Employee 2

Well... What do you mean about my role or about...?

- Researcher

Well both. I would say about your specific role and then just.... As part of the organization as well.

- Employee 2

Well I think the most important thing about my role is the payroll side of it getting everything correct and making sure everything's right. And you know like I'm also like making sure everything is data checked and everything. When you're dealing with payroll.

You know GDPR. Yeah just making sure everything is private & confidential.... that's a huge part of my job. When you deal with people's rights and stuff.

- Researcher

Of course, yeah, privacy. Okay. And what are retention levels like in your department currently?

- Employee 2

Very good. Everyone is there years. Yeah. Yeah (X) would be the least there. She's 2-3 years and everybody else is there over 10 years.

- Researcher

Yeah. OK. And why do you think that is?

- Employee 2

It's a nice environment in our office. I think we all get along. I think we're lucky with the group that we have in there. Yeah everyone's happy in the office. I think the environment is nice.

- Researcher

The group dynamic is good?

- Employee 2

Yeah...

- Researcher

OK. Just moving on to ...Regular feedback. Do you receive regular feedback from management?

Employee 2:

Yeah.

- Researcher

And is that through appraisals and so on or...?

- Employee 2

We do appraisals but also like I would say I would receive feedback from (X) a lot. From no-one higher than (X) now... laughs

- Researcher

So (X) is who you answer directly to? Or is that their boss.

- Employee 2

No. That's who. Yeah directly.

- Researcher

Cool. So, do you receive regular recognition and acknowledgement? And if so, would you feel this has increased your commitment and loyalty to the company? So basically, what I'm asking there is...going back on your previous thing that you do get regular feedback

and you think this is, yet recognition and acknowledgement and you think this increases your commitment and loyalty to the company?

- Employee 2

Honestly, not really because you don't get rewarded for it. Yeah, I do feel like I get recognition but.... that it could be lip service effectively.

- Researcher

So, it's not backed up by remuneration.

- Employee 2

Yeah exactly. Yeah.

- Researcher

Yeah, I get you. So just moving on to relationship with management...What should your manager change to improve your daily work experience or what do you think they could change that's within their power to change?

- Employee 2

For me I need more cover for payroll. I feel like.

- Researcher

An exposure there?

Employee 2:

Yeah definitely big time. I know they are working on that at the moment but even for me taking holidays or anything like that moment is really hard. There's no-one to cover payroll.

- Researcher

Okay.

- Employee 2

So, I think management need me to work harder to get me cover.

- Researcher

And that kind of then puts an insidious kind of stress on you because you can't take holidays as and when you want to because....

- Employee 2

You can't take Mondays off you know...

- Researcher

Oh yeah. You're beholden... you're limited

- Employee 2

That's I think they should you know arrange that better. Cover.

- Researcher

Yes. OK. And do you think that's that satisfied staff produce better work or do you think ultimately it makes a difference?

- Employee 2

Yeah, I do think it makes a difference. Yeah.

- Researcher

OK do you think that people in your team that's your immediate team around you feel that they're part of the decision-making process?

- Employee 2

Only for decisions within the office. No further.

- Researcher

Perfect. Do you feel that you are valued by the company? And before you answer would you say that's from your co-workers, from your supervisor, from management or from a sense of satisfaction about your job in general?

- Employee 2

Well, I think I'm valued by my co-workers. Definitely. Yeah. And my supervisor (X). Yeah. I do.

- Researcher

Yes. Very good. Would you say that you're personally motivated, motivated by the organization or a mixture of both? Do you think that ultimately, it's you that drives yourself that you're kind of a self-starter, a self-motivator?

- Employee 2

I do think I'm personally motivated yeah...Yeah. I don't think I'm motivated that much by the organization.

- Researcher

That makes perfect sense. OK. So just in terms of progression opportunities and again this is going back to.... what we were talking about just in terms of....

Did you ever want to leave and what were the reasons why you wanted to leave? Would you say that overall the staff stay here because they want to because they might not necessarily have a better alternative?

Employee 2:

I think in my office in my immediate area I think it's a mixture of both. I think there's no better alternatives not that there's no better alternatives.... I think that they're content, so they don't go looking for alternatives you know.

- Researcher

Yes.

Employee 2:

It's definitely a mixture of both...

- Researcher

There's no right or wrong answer to this. This is more just you know it's purely subjective and it's an opinion. So how would you assess your opportunities to progress within the company?

- Employee 2

No, I don't think there's that many opportunities for me.

- Researcher

You think you've kind of hit a glass ceiling?

- Employee 2

Yeah, yeah...

- Researcher

OK so based on this has this shaped your decision to stay or leave? Does the possibility to promotion or otherwise play a part in your thinking?

- Employee 2

No.

- Researcher

So ultimately, it's a means to an end?

- Employee 2

Yeah for me. Yeah for working.

- Researcher

Yeah. OK.

- Researcher

Do you think the economic environment played a part in your decision to stay or leave?

Does the upturn in the economy play a part in your thinking?

- Employee 2

No, I see why it would.... for somebody that was going looking you know but for me personally, no.

- Researcher

No. Great. OK. So, onto remuneration.

- Employee 2

Yes.

- Researcher

Are pension schemes, health benefits et cetera an attraction above weekly remuneration or do you prefer instant results and rewards?

- Researcher

OK. And would you value increased time off and flexible working hours over increased payments or again is it more money?

- Employee 2

Yes.

- Researcher

OK. And do you feel that pay rises and opportunity have declined over your time in the industry?

- Employee 2

Yes definitely.

- Researcher

OK. And...is that even now under the current organization or.... Do you think just that it's been a slow ...?

- Employee 2

I think it's declined yes.

- Researcher

So not even just the current organization?

- Employee 2

Yeah. Even before that yeah.

- Researcher

Do you factor in the overall economic climate when you're seeking a change in pay and conditions or do you look at your work environment as a separate unit?

- Employee 2

Oh, I think it should be a separate unit. Yeah.

- Researcher

So, you don't benchmark it as... If the company's doing well so be it. Yeah.

And does the pension or death in benefits scheme for example influence your thinking?

- Employee 2

It doesn't. But I do think it's great. I do think it's good to have an offering, but it doesn't influence things...

- Researcher

For you personally. Okay. So just in terms of training then as well because these are kind of the five factors that influence people's decisions to stay or leave in an organization like

so in terms of training. Do you have access to external training or educational opportunities funded by your employer?

- Employee 2

No.

- Researcher

OK. And if you did would you partake of them?

- Employee 2

Yeah possibly.

- Researcher

And have you ever sought them out?

- Employee 2

No. There was talk of it a while ago, you could get a cert for payroll and stuff and then what happened at the time was we were told the payroll would be outsourced and then that went, that opportunity... even though I'm still doing the payroll now. It was taken off the table.

- Researcher

That was closed to you...

- Employee 2

By the time I would have taken it up.

- Researcher

So, if so, has this increased your loyalty and commitment to the company or do you see it as an opportunity to hone your skills and seek an alternative employment. Well it hasn't been offered so....

- Employee 2

Yeah.

- Researcher

And just on... just wrapping up with miscellaneous things.

Do you regret choosing to work in the print industry if you were to measure yourself against your friends and peers and so on.

- Employee 2

No, I don't really. It's not something I picked originally in any way and I don't feel... I feel that when you work in accounts you could be working anywhere, and I don't feel directly involved with the print industry you know.

- Researcher

Yeah. Well yeah that's true. You are in the corner of a factory that could be really making anything.

- Employee 2

But no, I definitely don't regret it.

- Researcher What are the factors that you feel most impact upon your decision to stay or leave the company?

- Employee 2

For me I think location. And I think that's the same for all the girls in the office like we literally are 10 minutes away from where we work. If the job is to up and leave and go somewhere else. I would consider leaving.

- Researcher

Yeah it makes perfect sense. Do you think that the age of staff has anything to do with this decision making?

- Employee 2

No.

- Researcher

So, you don't think the older you are the less likely you are to leave?

Employee 2:

The older the less more likely you are to stay. Yeah. I'm just twisting it aren't I? (laughs)

- Researcher

That's brilliant. I really appreciate that. Thanks for your time.

- Employee 2

No problem, thanks.

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Employee 3 Interview

- Researcher

First of all, thanks for agreeing to do this, I appreciate you giving up the time. So just a quick overview in terms of staff retention and turnover and so on the main topics that are.... that people classed as being the reasons why they would move or stay in an organization are to do with regular feedback, relationship with management, progression opportunities, remuneration i.e. wages and so on and then training opportunities they are the main drivers....

So that's what the questions are focused on. So, I hope that helps explain then the reason why I'll ask you what I'm asking you know.

So just to start off with a couple of demographic questions. Can you describe your role for me? And you can start with your job title.

- Employee 3

OK. My job title is printer.

- Researcher

OK.

- Employee 3

I also do union rep in the company as well.

- Researcher

OK. And how long have you worked here?

- Employee 3

Twenty-seven years.

- Researcher

Have you ever considered leaving?

- Employee 3

Yes.

- Researcher

OK. Why? What were the main reasons?

- Employee 3

Two reasons. I felt underappreciated and acknowledged for it and money.

- Researcher

OK. Seems to be a common theme!

So, what do you enjoy most or least about your role and how do these impact any desire to stay or leave?

- Employee 3

Mostly what you would enjoy is seeing the finished product of if you get a new job in, in putting it together....and actually seeing what it looks like.

- Researcher

Yeah. So that's job satisfaction....

- Employee 3

And then looking at a job and say OK you need this anilox and that anilox and knowing...You have the knowledge to have been able to do it and then put it together and then say that's... I'm very happy it matches the spec the customer sent in and then that is a good quality that I'd be very happy with.

- Researcher

Excellent. OK so what things would you say are most important about the job?

- Employee 3

Well there would be a few for me. Very important would be you're acknowledged for your job. Simple thing of lads or girls in place working in and somebody to turn around and say, "You're doing a great job today". You know little things that it doesn't. People aren't asking always for money. It's to be appreciated. And obviously the people that you work with if you work with a good set of guys most of the staff here that work on the floor would be here a good few years.

- Researcher

So yeah that kind of leads on to the next question and what would you say the retention levels are like in your department currently?

- Employee 3

100 hundred percent.... because the lads that are on the printing machines are a good few years here.

- Researcher

What would be that that the newest recruit?

- Employee 3

20 years maybe.

- Researcher

Wow.

- Employee 3

I can only really talk about the printing department...

- Researcher

Yeah that's fine. And what do you think the reasons for that are in terms of... Do you think it's because there aren't opportunities in other printing companies, or do you think that they're happy with...?

- Employee 3

I think sometimes what it was is that years ago when some of the lads would have started in the game when I would have been here say 27 years ago there were some lads that started on the floor and eventually graduate on to a printing press...that would have been something then lads like myself and even the same lads over the years have gone to the things that would keep us there is...they're married. Mortgages, responsibilities. You know sometimes it's better the devil you know.

- Researcher

Yeah, fear of the unknown?

- Employee 3

Yeah exactly. I think a lot of it is that when you do get settled and you have a mortgage and you have so much coming in x amount of money coming in you say yourself I have a responsibility it's not like before I got married I did my apprenticeship in a printing house I moved to another printing house you know.

And then I came here just before I got married and my thought was, I'm going to be here for about two or three years. That was the thought. And I'd move off to another printing house but then when you get your mortgage and the kids come along and I think it changes and that's what I believe.

In fairness we were kind of lucky in ways that we worked in the pharmaceutical industry because when the industry had gone very bad and the whole of Ireland went into

recession because you were in the printing industry and we were lucky because of the pharmaceutical part that we weren't made redundant. OK. There are a few things that did happen. But...general part we were able to ride the recession and people didn't lose their houses.

- Researcher

The pharma was still a growth industry....

- Employee 3

I know plenty of people that worked in other print houses and they all went bang but because we were in pharma it saved us here.

- Researcher

OK fantastic. So just moving on to regular feedback...would you say did you receive regular feedback from management here?

- Employee 3

No, to be honest. Now it has improved over the last year that we have changed management in our department. (X) would inform you of things you know I mean.... but still not that's regular feedback. I don't think.

Now it has improved a hell of a lot because it would be "we don't need to tell them anything". A need to know basis.

If it went to like senior end, HR no... it has improved. But that may be because I'm a union rep. Tell him listen; feedback is very important. Yep. Shit hit the fan on a few things, and we had to turn around and say listen if you had notified me of X Y and Z it would have went better with staff. And I think certain people are starting to learn that. And it is getting better communication is a very important thing. It can't be a one-way street.

- Researcher

OK. So aside from feedback be a positive or negative would you say you receive regular recognition and acknowledgement. And if so, do you feel this has increased your commitment and loyalty to the company?

- Employee 3

No. No. I'm not going to bull and just say.... Absolutely not. Acknowledgement. You know like you could do a lot of things like move from one machine to another machine and they had a crowd that came in there was no training given and I was able to pull the machine together. The engineers ...there's a fault on the machine and they couldn't find it. I found it.... I didn't get one of the senior managers turn around and say thanks very much for finding it. There was no acknowledgement.

It was kind of "sure that's his job". If I'd been inside and I'd been wearing a shirt and tie.... Well people think you're intelligent, you work in an office. Yet because you are actually somebody on the floor in a pair of overalls it's not acknowledged that you have intelligence.

- Researcher

Yeah right. OK so I'll just move on the relationship with management. If you were to suggest changes that your manager could change that improve your daily work experience what would you suggest ... if anything?

- Employee 3

Communication....and then keeping you in the loop of things you know.

- Researcher

OK so do you think that satisfies staff produce better work or do you think that it makes a difference really?

- Employee 3

Satisfied staff are one hundred percent better because if you have staff that are happy you know... and as a union rep... if people are happy coming in. And little things like we had started like the focus group is here and.... little simple things like I can go back in years when it was (X)....when it came to the summer time... the weekend of August....We'd have a barbecue in the grounds and I used to think Jesus this is great.... but what it was is just staff getting to mix and get to have a bit of a laugh and things have happened here now with focus group things. I do think they still should do little things like that.

- Researcher

OK. Do you think that people in your team. By that I mean the print department.... Feel that they are a part of the decision-making process?

- Employee 3

Of the department? I'd say about 50 percent yes because of the change of manager structure that we have

- Researcher

OK you have a bit more input now?

- Employee 3

In things that would be needed you can actually see the thing but if it's a new job... When I started here, I was always told which never came true was that a customer sent a new job in they'd have somebody actually a printer, they'd have somebody from origination, customer service.... all sitting down to look at the job.... instead of what happens now is there's no brainstorming...No advice looked for.

- Researcher

So, you're kind of reacting to problems afterwards?

- Employee 3

Yeah. Pre-empting we should be pre-emptive.

- Researcher

OK well following on from that do you feel you are valuable to the company That's like from your co-workers. your supervisor, from management or from a sense of satisfaction about your job itself. Would you say that you're personally motivated, you motivated by the organization or would it be a mixture of both?

- Employee 3

Do I feel valued by the company? I do in ways to be honest. You know the senior management has changed over the last year and you can actually see the it's like the new broom and they value the knowledge that lads have....

- Employee 3

The lads that I work with...I do feel appreciated by the lads because if people have a problem, they feel they can ask you about it, work or personal.

- Researcher

People see you as a resource?

- Employee 3

And even if it's now work related, they can talk to you because you're a decent enough chap....Do I feel valued on the wage end? Absolutely not. I went to HR a year and a half ago about my wage for going from one machine to another. I was told it would be sorted and nothing has happened... but if I worked in an office...

- Researcher

Them and us?

- Employee 3

It's not an intelligent job it's not intelligent you're after learning. Instead of saying that that's a new skill your man has but it doesn't be acknowledged.

- Researcher

Do you think that your skill set is undervalued and underappreciated?

- Employee 3

Yeah it is actually the fact I have versatility.... That's disheartening. But I still have a job to do well, so you do it regardless.

- Researcher

So that would that would imply that you're personally motivated?

- Employee 3

Because I like what I do. Yeah. I enjoy what I do. And you know a bit of acknowledgement wouldn't go amiss.

- Researcher

Fantastic. OK. Now just moving on to the next subject and it's progression opportunities....so would you say the staff stay in the organization because they want to or because they don't necessarily have a better alternative elsewhere

- Employee 3

To be totally honest with you it would be a bit of both.

- Researcher

That seems to be a common theme all right. So how would you assess your own opportunities to progress within the company.

- Employee 3

No. No. None.

- Researcher

OK. So, based on this has this shaped your decision to leave or stay like does the possibility of promotion or otherwise play a part in your thinking.

- Employee 3

No no. I have family commitments which is something that I just think...I have a bill to pay and I come here, and I can pay it.

- Researcher

OK. So, do you think the economic environment played a part in your decision to stay or leave and does the upturn in the economy now play a part in your thinking as in now that we've turned a corner in an economic sense and we've moved out of worst of the recession. Does that change your thinking? Have you moved from being kind of grateful to have a job to thinking now will I look elsewhere? or does that play any part?

- Employee 3

No economic end in this wouldn't have really because I was here already and it didn't make a difference I had a salary coming in we had only slightly changed ...When you're in a place a certain amount of years you kind of say I've a salary now ... that pays the bills.

- Researcher

So on to money and remuneration so on ... would you say that pension schemes, health benefits...Are they an attraction above your weekly wage or do you prefer instant results and rewards?

- Employee 3

No. They are an attraction on your wage, but you do want some instant award as well. Yeah but like the health benefits there is no health benefits here. You know there is a health benefit here... bar you work in the office you won't get paid. It used to be at manager's discretion so long as you didn't abuse it. OK. Over a three-day period, the person would be looked after.

- Researcher

You know I suppose that's one of the pros of working for a large multinational organization ...You know what the rules are. No discretion. And then one of the cons is that there's no discretion you know to make and so I suppose it's a double-edged sword.

- Employee 3

Yes. Exactly

- Researcher

So would you value increased time off and flexible working hours over increased payments.

- Employee 3

Yes.

- Researcher

You would?

- Researcher

Ok. do you feel that pay rises and opportunities have declined over your time in the print industry?

- Employee 3

A bit of both. The last number of years there's been pay rises. But there was also a pay freeze for a long time. Now over the last few years there has been percentage here and percentage there that is negotiated with the company ...

- Researcher

OK. And just in terms of ...if you are seeking a change in pay or conditions. Do you look at the overall economic climate of the country or the global economy or do you just look at the company itself and see how the company is doing and just think whether they're making money....

- Employee 3

I think you do look at where you're working, and you do look and say you know we are doing a lot better to have the profits over so many millions. whatever.

And we haven't had a rise or acknowledgement for so many years...yeah, I would say yeah, I'd look more on here, but I do know as you said look overall the world that things have improved. Generally, you do look at just where you are and your own environment.

- Researcher

Ok so on to training then. Do you have access to external training or educational opportunities funded by our employer the likes of night courses or...?

- Employee 3

There's nothing said about it the awkward part is there are courses I'd love to do but when you do shift work. A lot of courses are on say Tuesday or Thursday. Seven to ten or whatever. And the double day shift you can only do it every second week. Look I'd love to go and learn a language you know. And I think I know what language would be for my benefit, but I do think if you have customers coming in here Spanish customers, we have French ... wouldn't it be nice if you could actually speak to them

- Researcher

So, if you could, you would avail of them?

- Employee 3

I would yes.

- Researcher

Do you think long term you'd use that to increase your commitment to the company or would you see it as an opportunity to seek to improve your skills and seek an alternative employer?

- Employee 3

I would look at doing what I'm doing here. I'm very happy where I am generally.

- Researcher

OK good. So just coming to the end now here just a couple of miscellaneous questions...

- Researcher

Do you regret at all choosing to work in the print industry if you measure yourself against your friends or your school friends or colleagues on the path that they chose?

- Employee 3

One part I do because if I'd gone into a government body job, I would've had a guaranteed x amount pension at this point.

- Researcher

A defined benefit...

- Employee 3

Even if you pay into a pension fund there's no guarantee of extra money a week yet that way, I do but otherwise.... I don't because I look at it and say I was on a good salary that I had an opportunity to buy a house and things that I had friends and that I had a better lifestyle than they would have had.

- Researcher

So overall the trade has been good?

- Employee 3

Yes, the trade has been...on balance... It's only the pension...

- Researcher

And what are the factors that you feel would impact upon your decision to stay or leave the company?

- Employee 3

Staff.

- Researcher

So that would be your relationship or management and so on?

- Employee 3

No not even...the work colleagues really.

- Researcher

And just in terms of staff retention and turnover. Do you think the age of staff has anything to do with if they wanted to stay or go?

- Employee 3

Yes.

- Researcher

So, you think that the older you get the less likely you are to leave?

- Employee 3

Yeah. Because people are ...say... if you are here in the company for 15 years for example. People are saying OK I'm maybe 10 years into the mortgage or the kids are in school... And you want to be able to stay once you have a job and that's what it is. Service. People think that way.

- Researcher

Yeah. OK that's brilliant (X) thanks very much.

- Employee 3

Happy to help.

Employee 4 Interview

- Researcher

OK so first of all thanks for agreeing to do this with me today. I appreciate you giving up your time. So, ... Can you describe your role for me? You can start with your job title...

- Employee 4

OK. (X) production supervisor. And health safety and environmental lead.

- Researcher

That's a big business card!

- Employee 4

A3! I suppose in my role. OK let's be honest. ...it's mind management, it's machine management, it's process management, it's component management, it's agony aunt.... you name it I run the actual floor itself. Obviously to a lesser degree now because my hands are tied with a lot of the health and safety...

- Researcher

Changing role?

- Employee 4

And we're obviously trying to get to a stage where we've got very very good and efficient health and safety management systems and that's a huge build. And one of the biggest

tasks there is going to be to change the culture and that's where the talking comes in handy.... there's a huge task but...You name it really. Much like yourself.

- Researcher

Yeah. Brilliant. So how long have you been here?

- Employee 4

I think this is year 21 or 20 something like that.

- Researcher

OK. And have you ever considered leaving?

- Employee 4

Yes.

- Researcher

OK. Why? What were the main reasons would you say?

- Employee 4

Overwork was one, and stress was another. And purely because...it's like every business that there's just an inequality in this as in many others there are people in positions who shouldn't have them in my opinion and do very little. And sometimes I'd just be one for going all in and you know sometimes when you do that. Yeah. What's it they say a willing donkey.

And sometimes it gets a bit like that whereas I would much rather a better collaborative environment and sometimes some of the hostility and animosity I suppose I come from a business that originally in the hotel business where we did very difficult work and it was very hard. And the one thing that struck me when I came to this business was the hostility within departments because we were on basically one big family. We looked after we supported each other. We had everybody... rowed in in there was no them and us. I mean I think when I was a hotel manager if we needed a hand to clean the toilets... there was no them and us. We were all the same.

- Researcher

And was not non-union?

- Employee 4

No, it was union.

- Researcher

So that was the main...over work? Would you say under appreciation?

- Employee 4

I think there was there was a lot of factors. Certain times where you did an awful lot of stuff. Yeah. And I think the strongest factor was its effect on me was pure frustration.

Where you were trying to be a positive force for change and you worked really hard to do it and then you were constantly knocked back...constantly knocked back even though it was obvious that this needed to be done and a lot of that was purse strings as well which

I can understand. But when you've been beaten up because a product isn't what it should be but yet you know why it is and you've told them what it is, but they won't do anything about it.

- Employee 4

They keep forgetting the fact that it's not actually you but they kind of make you feel incompetent.... it's not the fact that we haven't invested it's you it's your team you know.

- Researcher

Although you've pointed out what resources are needed?

- Employee 4

There was a period there where...We weren't at all being listened to. No, you know I don't expect I'm not running the plant...But if I've got somebody over my head making the decision, I feel personally it's my responsibility to make sure I give them accurate information. I don't need to tell them what they want to hear. I need to give them accurate information because if they're going to make a decision for the plant, they need an accurate assessment in order to truly make a decision, but we just weren't being listened to at all. Now I'm feeling that's changing. Somewhat.

- Researcher

What would you say you enjoy most and least about your role and how does it impact on your desire to stay or leave the firm?

- Employee 4

My desire to stay was pure stubbornness. I'm loyal to a fault unfortunately. We've got some really good people here. You know I am very proud of a lot of the guys we have here. I'm very glad to work with them. And I'm very proud of the products that we have. I mean we're not at the level that I would like to be at the level indeed where we used to be. I would love to get back there you know. Every company has good and bad elements, I try and focus on the good.

- Researcher

And what would you say is most important to you about your job?

- Employee 4

That's a difficult one.

- Researcher

Yeah it is. Without putting words into your mouth. I'll give you a flavour of some of the responses to date have been... just in relation to satisfaction on a job well done, seeing a job through from beginning to end and so on like that seemed to be a common trend.

- Employee 4

Yeah, from a production perspective, it's nice to have a customer come to you with a problem to be able to offer them a solution that works...That's really good. Yeah as one of the parts of my job I've always loved in fact is when the audit teams come in because

somewhat sad in that respect in that I'm very proud of what we do. And I'm very proud of the equipment we have and the level of training that we all have.

- Employee 4

I love showing us off effectively to these people coming in and show them you know it's not just a booklet label. It's very complex. This is all the work. And this explains why there are bigger tolerances required. And it's nice to see their faces sometimes because they understand that then you see that penny drop. I love personally to see when I work with some of my own guys to train and progress them and support them. One of the proudest things for me at the moment is to see that cultural shift starting to change. We still have our battles. We're on the road but when I have guys coming to me with concerns about health & safety, you know that the message is sinking in.

- Researcher

So just moving on to retention levels then... what are retention levels like in your department currently?

- Employee 4

Very good actually. Most of our guys... we've taken on the two new boys fairly recently as you know but prior to that...we haven't taken anybody on in probably seven or eight years.

- Researcher

And have there been people let go in that time?

- Employee 4

When we had the reorganisation yes, when the reorganisation happened, we lost a very good guy who at the time just got fed up, really good guy. Which was a shame and he was a loss in fairness ... Yeah... but me, even at twenty years, I'm still a relative blow-in.

- Researcher

And what do you think are the reasons for those levels?

- Employee 4

Well I think pretty much in line with what I said about why I'm here and this is just I'm talking as well knowing the guys myself.... They in themselves are quite proud of what they do.

Yeah that's why they get fairly defensive if people slate them.... they understand there's a huge amount of skill required in what they do. Obviously, nobody would be here without pay. but...I think a huge part of that is a little bit of pride in your work. You have decent working conditions which we do have ...we're only as a management team we're working always to try and improve....and they are the key factors. let's be honest it's all about interpersonal relationships it's a big driver you know. Course it is. You know if you would managers say who were pigs, you'd be gone tomorrow.

- Researcher

Which is a nice segue that leads me on then to the next section which is regular feedback ...do you receive regular feedback from management?

- Employee 4

Yeah, he tells me I'm dead to him every day.

- Researcher

So, the flip side of that is do you receive regular recognition and acknowledgement and if so, do you feel that this has increased your commitment and loyalty to the company?

- Employee 4

Probably not. And the main reason for that I think is because as I've said to senior management is that I'm a bit like butter at the moment spread so thin you kind of feel ineffective in either role. So, I'm not doing either role it's proper service. Because I'm... I'm not a perfectionist but I'm a realist. But I have perfectionist leanings and I want to do the job well I want to do properly.

- Researcher

But...you are also pragmatic and realize that there's constraints within....

- Employee 4

Yeah that's right. There are certain managers here. They would in fairness come up and say, "Cheers X" It means nothing, but it means something. You don't do the job to get praise I don't do the job to get time out...I do the job because as I want to do my best. And you know what's funny is I had a chat with the missus last night... when I'm dealing with the customers who were there yesterday morning for me, I'm representing US. The biggest recognition for me is when a member staff comes up to me and says...That's

great. Thanks a million thanks for listening. Thanks for helping. I suppose if a manager came to me every so often and said nice work, that was great. How could you not be lifted off the feet a couple of inches by that?

- Researcher

OK so just in terms of your own manager.... what could your manager change to improve your daily work experience.

- Employee 4

Laughs

- Researcher

Well of course it's... what's within their remit as well.

- Employee 4

Yeah. You know I suppose the truth of it is that all of us have our strengths and weaknesses. And the beauty of the team is that we work to each other's strengths play to the strengths and cover for each other's weaknesses

- Researcher

Do you think that satisfied staff produce better work? Or do you think it makes a difference?

- Employee 4

I think that that can potentially be a double-edged sword in that it depends on the individual.... a satisfied member of staff. If that personality trait can become complacent and I've seen it in this industry probably more than any other I've ever worked in and that they feel in themselves that they can never do on any wrong that everything they did was perfect and no matter what you do you won't change that. I think we've also seen a lot of people leave here who thought they were irreplaceable. Absolutely. And the place goes on regardless. None of us is indispensable. None of us is.

You could have an individual who by their personality trait be it their upbringing or just a personality that they will be satisfied, and they will absolutely excel because they're proud of what they do. They're delighted to do it, they're quite confident that they can produce a good product. But again, that's hugely dependent on their background their personality. So that's why I'm yeah, I'm hedging it a little bit. You can answer it either way...

- Researcher

So, do you think that people in your team feel that they're part of the decision-making process?

- Employee 4

I would like to think so. And the main reason I would like to think so is because I always consult. I'm not one of those individuals who says no that'll be fine. I'm very conscious. Yes. I know the equipment very well I would be many times if we have any doubts whatsoever. It always will bounce off the lads and ask because again it's a team effort....

they may very well see something that I don't know. That said sometimes you get an individual who would give you unrealistic demands or expectations. And because you despite the fact you explained that that's not feasible....

- Researcher

So, do you feel that you are valued by the company and before you answer.... Would that be from your co-workers or your supervisor, from your management or would it be from your own sense of satisfaction?

- Employee 4

Yeah, I think again that's a complex one in terms of me personally am I satisfied no I'm not but that's the perfectionist because I'm very aware of what I'm not being able to do. And it's not for the want of trying. It's not for the effort it's purely the time resource.

And in respect to my co-workers. Yes, I do. There are some co-workers I'd especially feel appreciated by which is always great because it's nice to feel as if you're making a positive change there are others who would feel probably totally the opposite. But no matter what I did with those that's going to be the case. You know so I've just got to wash over that, and you know that is what it is and just try and be a force for positive change.

- Researcher

So, would you say you're personally motivated, motivated by the organization or is it mixture of both?

- Employee 4

Personally

- Researcher

Just to move on to progression opportunities. So just in general would you say the staff stay here because they want to or because they don't have a better alternative?

- Employee 4

If I'm being honest, I would say in the past there have been times that they didn't have a better alternative. And I think there are still some people in... who have been here a very long time. You have a mind-set which we know we discussed already. Still are in that kind of boat. But I like to think for the most part a lot of the guys here are here because they want to.

- Researcher

So just in terms of progression then how would you assess your opportunities to progress within the company? That's a kind of question that I'm asking everybody. And I know your situation where you have progressed you know of late and so on.

- Employee 4

I don't know whether that is or not to be honest. But we we'll have to see when it does....

- Researcher

Well... in that ...based on this... has this shaped this decision to leave or stay as in did a possibility of a promotion or otherwise play a part in your thinking? So, I suppose like had you stayed doing what you were doing would that have swayed it.

- Employee 4

Well obviously,, I'm still in two roles...

I did hit a point where it was like what am I doing with life you know and having the same rows every day. I felt senior management stopped listening. The management team stopped listening...all of our experience skills meant for nothing. In fairness within the company I'd probably be the only person qualified to answer a question that you know of people that was there in that company I mean as well as the company as a whole. And as soon as I start to answer this, they're talking over me... that was a really low point for me. Yeah. That was a case where I was going...do I just go.

- Researcher

Yeah okay. To follow on from that then do you think the economic environment played a part in your decision to stay or leave?

- Employee 4

Oh absolutely. Yeah. Oh, I think that applies to all of us. Without question you know. I mean you think when the crash happened. And they start putting us under pressure and stuff like that. I guarantee you there's not a soul in this place. If they had a better option wouldn't have jumped ship. Absolutely guarantee and I think with the pay cuts and so on.

Yeah but you know what. It wasn't for me. It wasn't even about pay cuts. It was more about attitude.

It was more about... it was so cutthroat... it was just completely reckless completely without empathy. It was just ...Cold.

- Researcher

And so now that there has been an upturn in the economy would that play a part in your thinking or.... Do you just look at the way in which the company itself is operating rather than the global economy?

- Employee 4

Well obviously, as any kind of manager has to you've always got to keep one or at least one eye on the big picture. I'll always have to you know because what's happening in the world affects us every single day. You know Brexit is looming very large at the moment and we don't know what the hell way because a huge part of our customer base particularly (X) is in the U.K. you know and in reality, we don't know how that will affect us. And I suppose yet there's a lot of opportunities out there. I really do want to make a go of this.... you know I love this place. I love most of the people...we've a really good team I feel and I'm not ready to give up just yet.

- Researcher

Excellent. So, moving on to the next section - remuneration. So are pension schemes, health benefits and so on an attraction above weekly remuneration i.e. do you prefer instant results and awards over long term benefits?

- Employee 4

No, not particularly. To be honest...The whole idea of remuneration was never really a factor in the role because I never got it.

- Researcher

OK.

- Employee 4

No. And it was never anything like that. Only until we went into the clocking system. Look it wasn't a driver for me. Money is important. Of course, we all have bills, mortgages, families, responsibilities and that. To be honest with you I would cast myself as one sad individual if that was my main motivating force. when the likes of the Occupational Health come in for me it's a huge bonus because it helps keep a track not only for myself but on all of the guys. It's very important for me. And I hope to extend that hopefully next few years for you know help.... psychological help for you know people who want to talk and make different services available. You know so hopefully we'll elaborate on that but certainly I mean when you can add in then the likes of the pension contributions how can you not be appreciative at least of that. And I think they would certainly now be a considering factor whereas previously they wouldn't have been

- Researcher

Is that because of your age?

- Employee 4

No, I don't think so. No, I don't think so.

- Researcher

So, would you value increased time off or flexible working hours over increased payment.

- Employee 4

Oh God yeah. Oh, absolutely yeah.

- Researcher

And do you feel that pay rises and opportunities have declined in your time in the print industry?

- Employee 4

Yes definitely.

- Researcher

Do you factor in the overall economic climate when you're seeking a change in pay or conditions or do you look at your own work environment as a separate unit?

- Employee 4

The honest answer is I've never done it. I've never gone and said I want more money.

- Researcher

Really?

- Employee 4

Never. Never once.

- Researcher

Wow

- Employee 4

My perspective is if I'm working for you, I'll give you whatever you need for eight hours or 10 hours or whatever it is if I can give you, I'll give it to you. Yeah. But sometimes it doesn't work to your benefit you know. And yeah probably should be more aggressive in that respect you know. But I suppose from my perspective and it kind of relates back to your last question about time off and a bit of flexibility I've taken on this additional role which obviously has grown to be huge. I didn't get any remuneration for that whatsoever despite the huge increased workload but my benefit as far as I saw for that one was that. And it's no small thing of course that I now work days. So, I get to put my little girl to bed every evening.

- Researcher

So that ties it all back to the original one about time off?

- Employee 4

Yeah it kind of links those two those two but that for me is worth it. Yeah. Probably sounds sad ...

- Researcher

Far from it. So just training is the last major section so ...do you have access to external training or educational opportunities from your employer?

- Employee 4

Hopefully we'll see... I have done some in the past.

- Researcher

So has this increased your loyalty and commitment to your company or do you see it as an opportunity to hone your skills and seek an alternative employer.

- Employee 4

Oh no way. I would definitely stick with the company. Oh yeah. I mean loyalty is a two-way street though.

- Researcher

OK. So just wrapping up then. Do you ever regret choosing to work in the print industry if you measure yourself against your school friends or you know people of a similar age?

- Employee 4

You mean in terms of what level they at or whatever?

- Researcher

Yeah well just in terms of you know different choices that you could have made because people tend to fall into the print industry is my experience....

- Employee 4

I suppose for me I had experience of two main industries and yeah you know what if I was still the hotels, I might be a general manager and probably a director of...Yeah, I can have regrets. Don't get me wrong but it's a wasted emotion. It's a waste of time. You made the decisions you made at the time and at that time they were the right decisions for you. Yeah and you were where you were. What do I hold myself of less value because I'm a supervisor when say one of my mates is a pilot? Not at all. He's got an important job. Well I've got an important job. OK. We all have important jobs. We're more than just the title of our job. We're made up of our entire lives not just our job title.

- Researcher

And what are the factors that you feel would most impact upon your decision to stay or leave the company?

- Employee 4

I suppose if the environment became so hostile that I just couldn't work anymore would be a huge one...And again if I got to this level of frustration where you're trying to make change and you look... you see me getting frustrated with the health safety you know to me it's logic to me it makes perfect sense. I just need people to go ahead and do it. it is

frustrating you feel like you bang your head off a wall. Well yeah you know but you know I'm stubborn

- Researcher

It's funny because one of the major things that people have said is the commute ... but you've got a big commute...?

- Employee 4

I'll tell you why it's not. We made a conscious decision when we moved. We lived in Navan originally because we couldn't afford it and we lived in Navan for 10 years and we absolutely loved it. But over the years people moved out or the people moving in and essentially became a horrible place to live. So long story short we decided we're going to move. So, I said we'll move into a place on its own. I love where I live so to me the commute is what it is.

Does it eat into my day? Of course. But all I ask myself I suppose when I get home and I pull in that drive and see the landscape... If I ask myself honestly is it worth it. Yes, it is. And as long as I can say that...

- Researcher

Yes, that's the balance.

- Employee 4

You know as long as I can say that I'll do that commute.

- Researcher

Just the last question is...Do you think the older you get the less likely you are to leave?

- Employee 4

You know I'm not so sure. I've never given it much thought to be honest. I suppose if I'm looking at it logically the older, we are probably the less likely we are to be taken on as an employee. Unless you can bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to a role which is obviously you know which is what we have you know. But yeah on foot of that that I would say yes, it's probably quite a good reason for people to stay. Because if you look at certain individuals we have on the floor and I've always slagged them about it because they've come in, they literally came in from school to do this job. They know nothing else and they're usually the ones who do nothing but give out about the place. There's an awful lot worse out there but they've never experienced it. If they had done, they might appreciate it a little bit more. But yes...If I think about it logically. Yes, that would that would seem to be accurate.

- Researcher

Okay brilliant, that's everything, thanks a million for your help.

- Employee 4

You're welcome.

Employee 5 Interview

- Researcher

Thanks very much and thanks for agreeing to do this today.

I appreciate you giving up your time. So, first of all can you describe your role for me?

You can start with a job title....

- Employee 5

I'm digital pre-press and digital print supervisor.

- Researcher

And how long have you worked here?

- Employee 5

I originally started in 1998, twenty-one years ago but I did leave and come back so it's now 18 years since I've returned.

- Researcher

OK, thanks. Have you ever considered leaving?

- Employee 5

Yes.

- Researcher

And what were the reasons?

- Employee 5

Well I find there is very little.... I suppose progression here.... it's probably the norm in the print industry as it's one of the last types of job where it is going to skilled people of my own age group in the 40s. So as a result, not many people leave. So, there aren't many opportunities in the job. I do find as well over time the demands are getting more and more...demanding. Time scales and stuff like that so it's not really an art anymore. It's more like flying through stuff you know...

- Researcher

Okay. And what do you enjoy the most or least about your role and how did his impact on your desire to stay or leave the firm?

- Employee 5

Well I enjoy the most... my immediate colleagues in the department. We have a very good rapport and they're nice lads, we know each other over time ...We have kind of a range in age as well. But we all get on very well you know ...bit of a team I suppose. And things I don't like I suppose I touched on there in the earlier question is again just you could have very short turnarounds and it's sometimes you have as much responsibility for a business card as a big pharmaceutical job. And I don't think we're given the right amount of time for certain things. The importance isn't emphasized on different types of jobs you know.

- Researcher

Yes absolutely. OK. And what things would you say are most important to you about your job?

- Employee 5

Well I suppose it's a wage really to be honest with you. it's a means to an end. And I suppose there was a little bit at job satisfaction I suppose in the past when it was more of an art I suppose. They were the things that I kind of enjoyed. You know, it was a challenge.

- Researcher

Yeah. Now you feel it's de-skilled? It's more of a conveyor belt of work in front of you to process?

- Employee 5

Exactly yeah.

- Researcher

OK thanks. And what are the retention levels like in your department currently?

- Employee 5

Well we don't really have much of a change in the staff since I don't think many people have left since I've come, apart from say as restructuring in the business. But people haven't generally gone out of choice as far as I know.

- Researcher

OK. And what do you think are the reasons for that?

- Employee 5

I think...again because we've been in our job so long you do get incremental pay increases over the years and with the deskilling of the trade any competitor businesses would have possibly even half our wages on offer. So, you have to hang on or try and re-educate yourself and get more qualifications...

- Researcher

Just moving now onto regular feedback... do you receive regular feedback from management?

- Employee 5

Overall, they've definitely started with feedback, but you could still always get a little bit more like... day to day rather than a gathering... just say the MD maybe popping in to say, "oh things are going well". Feedback on a more personal level rather than a broad one would be good.

- Researcher

OK. Do you receive regular recognition and acknowledgement? And if so, do you feel that this has increased your commitment and loyalty to the company?

- Employee 5

The kind of recognition would come from my manager.... whereas overall the company... I don't feel like we tend to get recognition for anything - our time or effort I suppose and so more an immediate level from people you know that deal with you. I don't think from the company itself.

- Researcher

OK. Just moving on to relationship with management and what would you say a manager could change or should change to improve your daily work experience?

- Employee 5

It's probably tricky because to know myself because I think so much is changing at the moment. And even specifically my manager's role is changing as well. So, we seem to be kind of doing a catch up. So, it's kind of out of our hands. But if we had more control on maybe procedures or scheduling work that may help us you know whereas merely being told what we're doing rather than from higher up or other departments if we had a bit control in pacing stuff through it may help us.

- Researcher

And do you think that satisfied staff produce better work, or do you think it makes a difference?

- Employee 5

Definitely I'd agree about satisfied staff.

- Researcher

OK great. And do you think that people in your team feel that they are part of the decision-making process?

- Employee 5

I wouldn't really think so. No. On a smaller scale between each other in the department. Yes. I don't think we have much say or input overall.

- Researcher

Sure. OK. Do you feel that you are valued by the company... as part of that is be it from your co-workers, from your supervisor, from management or just from a sense of satisfaction about your own job?

- Employee 5

Definitely I would say co-workers and hopefully my supervisor but management I wouldn't really think so. I sometimes feel like we're nearly a nuisance at times to them...laughs.

- Researcher

Okay. And would you say you're personally motivated, motivated by the organization or is it a mixture of both?

- Employee 5

Definitely personally motivated.

- Researcher

So, on to progression opportunities. And would you say staff stay because they want to or because they don't have a better alternative?

- Employee 5

I would say in general; I could include myself in this.... we don't have a better alternative at the moment you know.

- Researcher

OK. And how would you assess your own opportunities to progress within the company?

- Employee 5

Probably touched on this a little bit earlier as well. There's very little staff movement in the company so ...short of creating new positions I don't really see it happening you know.

- Researcher

OK. Has this shaped your decision to leave or stay? Does the possibility of promotion or otherwise play a part in your thinking?

- Employee 5

Promotion wouldn't really influence me at all. Once I can do my day's work.... Because I think as a group were quite good where we are and that we can try and figure things out

a bit of problem solving.... a decision to leave or stay? No, progression wouldn't affect me one way or another.

- Researcher

And do you think the economic environment played a part in your decision to stay or leave. Does the upturn in the economy play a part in your thinking as in now what we've kind of turned a corner in Ireland's economy would that make you look around more than you would have in the past? Does that shape your thinking at all?

- Employee 5

Well definitely but I would say it'd be if I was looking around it would be to an alternative kind of business rather than print. Because again there's a de-skilling thing there. I think there was even there was a print recession before there was a general one in my opinion in the country. So definitely a better economy does make you start thinking there could be other jobs out there I could go for you know.

- Researcher

Change career altogether?

- Researcher

OK so on to remuneration.

Are pension schemes & health benefits an attraction above weekly remuneration? Or would you just prefer instant results and rewards?

- Employee 5

I think...pension and health care would be better because it's also kind of keeping you in the company with an interest in the company success than rather a one-off payment.

- Researcher

And would you value increased time off or flexible working hours above increased payment?

- Employee 5

I'd love it if I could have both! *laughs*...but definitely if you had flexible hours I know the business we're in it's trickier but and yet as we're all getting older all of us have families now so I'm sure all of our families would appreciate flexible hours as well you know.

- Researcher

And do you feel that pay rises and opportunities have declined over your time in the industry?

- Employee 5

I think so. Well in certain areas I should say. I do think so. There doesn't seem to be an idea if I for example do so much or to be some sort of recognition. You know I'd find nearly the opposite.

- Researcher

Do you factor in the overall economic climate when seeking a change in pay or conditions or do you look at your work environment as a separate unit?

- Employee 5

Probably have to look at as a separate unit. Again, as I say the print industry seems to have differently timed recessions over time. I think if the economy is doing better, we just have more demands on our print - we're not getting more for it.

- Researcher

OK so I'm moving on to training now.

Do you have access to external training educational opportunities funded by your employer?

- Employee 5

I think we do but to my knowledge it's never really been said to us I know it's been kind of mentioned in negotiations for other things, but I've never seen anything written down to say, "do you want to do something?"

- Researcher

And if you did would you partake of them?

- Employee 5

I'd definitely be interested in seeing what's available you know.

- Researcher

OK. If you were to avail of them would that increase your loyalty and commitment to the company, or would you see it as an opportunity to hone your skills and seek an alternative employment?

- Employee 5

That kind of works both ways I suppose depending on how they would treat it... if it was something specific to this company. I possibly wouldn't be as interested if they said listen whatever you want to do, have you got any sort of interests or hobbies you have we can help you with that then I'd definitely have a bit more loyalty towards the company.

- Researcher

OK so just on to the miscellaneous questions now.

Do you regret choosing to work in the print industry if you measure against your friends, school friends?

- Employee 5

I think...again, years ago it was great. Definitely brilliant people in it. You know but they're kind of fading out now and it's changing, I think in the long term I would have been smarter going somewhere else you know.

- Researcher

OK. And what are the factors that you feel would most impact upon your decision to stay or leave the company?

- Employee 5

Well at the moment I'm attempting to reskill, so I suppose I'm getting old as well. Kind of it's tricky. And the fact is if this company I'm sure could change I know they're trying to change as well but sometimes they do so many broad changes they don't focus on the little details that are important as well you know. If you felt a bit more valued as a person, I suppose it'd make it more interested in staying.

- Researcher

And do you think that the age of staff has anything to do with.... Do you think the older you get the less likely you are to leave?

- Employee 5

I think up to about maybe five years ago.... Yes, but now I've seen a lot of people going back say even repeating their Leaving Cert and guess trying again. If the economy is to keep improving there will be more jobs in all areas, you know so yes sometimes you can take a chance. Go for it you know.

- Researcher

Yes. Excellent. OK. That's great. Thanks again.

- Employee 5

No problem, thanks

