Transition Planning Interview Guide

Prepared by

[Name of Office Here]

# What is Transition Planning?

Transition planning is a systematic process that ensures the continuity of the Institute’s mission and scientific direction by developing a plan of action to transition work when a vacancy is anticipated or realized. The Transition Planning Interview allows for 1) honoring and preserving the knowledge, work experiences, and accomplishments of employees that have contributed to [IC Name] mission and scientific advancements, and 2) ensuring continuity of the work when an incumbent departs any [IC Name] position.

# What are the Benefits of Transition Planning?

* Seamless staff transitions
* On-demand access to legacy knowledge
* Identification and development of talent capable of filling openings created by departing employees

# Why it is Important for you to Participate in a Transition Planning Interview? What is the Purpose?

As a valued [IC Name] employee, you have valuable insights regarding:

* What you do (i.e., an overview of your current position)
* What you know (i.e., knowledge, experiences that made you successful)
* How to share (i.e., tips, tactics for passing on what you know to others)

This interview guide prompts you to think about your personal experiences and lessons learned in your position. The information gathered will be imparted to your backup(s) or eventual successor(s) to prepare them for a successful transition into your position. You should reference your completed Staff Transition Plan during the interview as needed.

**Important note:** The information gathered in a Transition Planning Interview differs from information obtained in an Exit Interview. The Transition Planning Interview is used to gather institutional knowledge to set up others for success in this position and organization going forward. Whereas the feedback gathered in an Exit Interview gauges an employee’s engagement and is used to inform and improve management practices and policies. Your supervisor may schedule an Exit Interview with you to gather your feedback and insights on what you feel should be improved, changed, or remain intact, and the culture of the organization. You will also have the opportunity to provide feedback through participation in the NIH Exit Survey.

# How the Interview Can be Conducted?

This interview guide can be completed in one of the following ways depending on your preference:

1. Document your responses in this template (self-service)
2. Interview conducted and documented by 3rd party [IC Workforce Management Office] interviewer\*
3. Interview conducted and recorded (video/audio recording) by 3rd party [IC Workforce Management Office] interviewer for future key position incumbents\*

**\*Interview Support:** Please contact the [IC Workforce Management] at [e-mail address here] should you wish to have [IC Workforce Management Office] schedule and facilitate your interview.

# When should you complete your Transition Planning Interview?

If this is a planned transition, you should complete your transition planning interview as you are preparing to leave your current position. We recommend that you complete your interview within one year prior to leaving your position and request completion no later than one month prior to your last day.

# What Happens After the Interview?

Incumbents should provide their responses to their Manager/Supervisor. If [IC Workforce Management Office] conducts the interview, [IC Workforce Management Office will compile a written interview outcomes transcript and provide it to the incumbent and Manager/Supervisor for continued action. The information gathered during the interview will be handled appropriately and shared only with those who have a need to know.

| Transition Planning Interview Questions*Please note that some questions in the interview guide may not be applicable to your position.* |
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| Introduction to Your Position1. What is the purpose of your position in relation to the [IC Name] mission?
2. How did you come to assume your current position or role? What other positions have you held in the [IC Name]? Outside the [IC Name]?
3. How has your strategic focus changed from when you initially started in this position?
4. For what areas of expertise or experience do others typically come to you?

Your Unit1. What are the major goals and objectives for your organizational unit? How do these goals and objectives relate to the [IC Name] mission?
2. What cultural norms (e.g., taking breaks with coworkers, sharing relevant industry articles) would you want to tell the future incumbent of this position about?

*Facilitator Notes: Norms are based on shared attitudes, beliefs, customs, expressed or implied contracts, and written and unwritten rules that the organization develops over time:** 1. How the organization conducts its business, treats employees, customers, and the wider community
	2. The extent to which autonomy and freedom are allowed in decision making, developing new ideas, and personal expression
	3. How power and information flow through its hierarchy
	4. The strength of employee commitment towards collective objectives
1. What are your organizational unit’s greatest strengths?
2. Are there currently (or are there anticipated) gaps in staffing and/or capabilities in your organizational unit?
3. Where can employees find information on:
	1. The history of your immediate organization and your position?
	2. Policies and Standard Operating Procedures, both Operational (mission-related) and Administrative?
	3. Templates and Tools?
	4. Guidance Books?
	5. Recommended development activities and trainings/courses that are most relevant to success in the position?
4. What trends do you feel will have significant influence on how work is done in your organizational unit? (Internal? External?)
5. What opportunities do you see for your organizational unit (or the Institute) in the next three to five years?
	1. Areas of Focus
	2. Realignment of Capabilities
	3. Partnerships or Collaborations to Carry Out the Work
	4. Other Areas

Looking Forward1. Are there ideas, goals, or projects that you have not yet had the opportunity to pursue in this position?
2. Given the talent that resides within [IC Name], what achievements do you think are possible in the future?
3. If you had the power to implement major/minor changes, what would you suggest changing?
	1. Are there any business priorities that you would change in your position/team?
	2. Are there any resources or responsibilities that you would reallocate or realign?
	3. What about for the Program or the Institute? How?
4. How do you see this position or role changing in the next one to three years?

Advice for Your Successor1. Are there specific products or work tools that you have developed while at [IC Name] that would be useful to share with others?
2. What are some of the most important lessons you have learned in your time in this position?
3. What other advice would you offer to the next incumbent in this position?
4. What are some of the key issues and challenges faced in accomplishing the work? What keeps you up at night?
5. Of the key meetings/committees/working groups you attend, which are most critical for achieving success in your position?
6. Of your customer relationships, which are most critical for achieving success in your position?
7. What questions should we have asked that we did not ask?

Your Legacy and the Institute1. What legacy do you want to leave behind when you depart?
2. What have been your top three contributions/accomplishments (or innovations) in this position?
3. What is your leadership philosophy?
4. If/when you retire, are you planning to remain affiliated with the Institute in some capacity? How?
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