

Supporting Your Team When Layoffs Are Inevitable

Although it appears we are out of the woods with significant layoffs for now, business as we have known it will *not* be the same for a long time, if ever. We will always be in a state of constant change and our staffing skills will be evolving regularly. Although we don't want to think about letting our talent go; it does become necessary at times. We spend a significant amount of time contemplating the decision which can sometimes take months, and making it actually happen once the decision has been reached takes a lot of effort as well. It's excruciating and doesn't get much easier, no matter how often you repeat it. As an Employer of Choice you can exit your employee(s) in a respectful manner to help them move on quickly in a productive manner. Below are 5 tips to help you through this.

Understand Your Talent - Make the Right Cuts

This is one time that having an effective performance management system is critical. Really understanding who does what and how vital each role is, is critical to managing this properly. All too often employees are let go, only for companies to find they didn't know that the employee performed a very special aspect of their business and a significant gap is created. Understanding who does what also allows you to develop a contingency plan prior to having to terminate someone.

Decide If Termination Is the Right Option

Sometimes we think termination is the only option but considering other options such as reducing work weeks, asking for voluntary departures, or entering into government sponsored work share programs can work too. Our teams typically understand tough times within organizations and are willing to sacrifice to keep everyone intact. If considering these options it could impact benefits and other aspects of the working relationship so getting the proper counsel is important before moving forward with this option.

Choose the Right Time

This is a difficult one as there really never is a right time but experience has shown that it's best to terminate someone mid week as it gives the departing employee(s) time to work through their emotions and get the help they need prior to the weekend. End of day is also a good time so the individual can leave right away.

Offer Support

Transition support is one of the best gifts you can give a departing employee, on the day of termination and afterwards to help them get back on their feet. If no one in your organization is able to help them on the day of departure, outside support is an option. The role of outside support (known as on-site support) is to ensure your departing team member(s) leave the work location safely for themselves and the remaining employees and ensures they get home safely. Transition support afterwards is a great option for employees as well as helping them move on quickly to another job. Offering transition services is a supportive way for an employer to demonstrate that you care even with the difficult circumstances. It can be customized to the company request and employee(s) needs.

Next month we will cover how to support remaining employees. If you need more information on transition support, please contact me at lotte@hrcareertransition.com