



7 TIPS FOR LEADING MANAGERS

*DURING A
DOWNSIZING*



Crafted Career Concepts

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In the current business world, everyone is paid in two coins - cash and experience.”

INTRODUCTION

MANAGERS OFTEN SITE LAYING OFF EMPLOYEES IN A DOWNSIZING AS THE HARDEST THING THEY WILL HAVE TO FACE AS A MANAGER.

It does not come as much surprise after all, nobody likes to be the bearer of bad news. And unless the employee is receiving huge severance or has a golden parachute in place, the manager must undoubtedly be the bearer of bad news.

How a manager conducts him or herself when lettin someone go can be the difference between a gracious, albeit disappointed, employee and one that feels blindsided, victimized, and panicked.

Here are 7 tips to make the process as smooth as possible the next time you find yourself at the helm of the ship and need to manage down the size of your crew.

TO YOUR SUCCESS!



SEVEN TIPS TO EASE THE TASK

1

Compassion, Compassion, Compassion.

Being terminated, whether its due to a layoff during a recession or changing business landscape can be a very traumatic event for an employee, especially a good employee that has provided years of loyal service to the organization. Be mindful that the event will bring a variety of concerns to the forefront from paying the mortgage, affording a tuition payment or putting the food on the table and clothes on their family's back. It's a big deal so approach the situation with care and a sense of empathy.

2

Have a Communication Plan.

Consider all the various stakeholders that should be informed about the employee's departure from the company. That includes immediate team members, employees in other departments, clients, business partners, suppliers and vendors. Consider the content and tone of the message. Who needs to know what? Fellow employees want to know why and what. Why it happened, and specifically why it happened to that employees. Suppliers and vendors need to know "where and when" information. "Where they should go now for support and when the change is effective. Take care in deciding how much information you will share with each type of stakeholder and consider the tone of your message.



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3

Be Direct and Honest.

As hard as the news of a termination is to give, its always harder to receive. Get to the point right away. Don't spend too much time leading into the discussion or detailing the environmental factors that brought us to the present situation. Cut to the chase right away and get to the point. "Bob, I'm sorry to have to deliver this news, but your position is being eliminated as of today. There are some details I would like to review with you and I hope to answer any questions you might have about what is an unfortunate situation". Let the employee know the decision was made and why they are impacted. If there was an objective measure used to arrive at the decisions, be specific and truthful.

4

Get Organized!

Get the basics right - final paycheck, paying out unused vacation time, and providing COBRA paperwork and other benefit information in a timely manner. Have two representatives from the company present for the termination. This can help ease the pressure in what can make for a tense situation. If there is a specific protocol that is supposed to be followed, be sure to put any moving pieces into action at the appropriate time. For example, if there is a requirement for the employee to be escorted out of the building, be sure that the designated escort is aware and ready at the appropriate time. Worse than being escorted out of the building is waiting to be escorted out of the building!



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5

Discuss Next Steps.

Part of delivering tough news is walking the person through their options for 'next steps'. You may be willing and prepared to offer guidance or help the employee navigate the off-boarding process. If your company offers outplacement services, services designed to aid the employee's professional transition, share that option with the employee along with any financial support in the form of severance that the company may provide. While some managers may feel awkward doing so, it is okay to express willingness to share contacts or any potential opportunities (industry peers/competitors, vendors, suppliers, etc.) that may know about or that may come up in the future.

6

Listen!

You've just delivered some big news and your hard work may be done, but don't forget to give your employee a chance to gather their thoughts and express themselves or ask the questions they need to ask during this difficult time. They will no doubt be processing a variety of complex thoughts, feelings and emotions. A good manager knows this and tries to read and react to the needs of their employee.



LAST BUT NOT LEAST...

7

Engage with Partners.

You've just delivered some big news and your hard work may be done, but don't forget to give your employee a chance to gather their thoughts and express themselves or ask the questions they need to ask during this difficult time. They will no doubt be processing a variety of complex thoughts, feelings and emotions. A good manager knows this and tries to read and react to the needs of their employee.



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