

# Best Practices for Downsizing and Terminations



Thinking moves *ahead*





# Focus

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What to Consider, and  
What to Avoid  
when planning employment terminations.....

- ◆ Individual Terminations
- ◆ Larger Scale Downsizing



# Considerations

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- ◆ How an organization handles termination of employment affects their ability to retain current employees and attract new talent for future growth.
- ◆ Impacts more than the employee: family and friends, manager handling termination, colleagues, customers, prospective employees.



## Planning Is Key

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- ◆ A well thought out and implemented plan minimizes risk and ensures a dignified and respectful exit for the employee.



## Involve Key Players

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- ◆ Line Management
- ◆ Human Resources
- ◆ Board Members, if Senior Executive
- ◆ Legal counsel
- ◆ Outplacement/Career Transition
- ◆ Union Representatives



# Design Support Package

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- ◆ Review existing employment contract
- ◆ Notice
- ◆ Severance
- ◆ Benefits
- ◆ Legal Review



# Develop Communication Plan

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- ◆ Internal
  - ◆ Who, how, when?
- ◆ External
  - ◆ Time sensitive to control messaging



## Other Support

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- ◆ Medical

- ◆ Does the individual have serious medical issues that could be aggravated by the stress of dismissal? Should medical support be available on the day of notification?

- ◆ Security

- ◆ Does the person have a track record of violent or abusive behaviour?

- ◆ EAP

- ◆ Continue access
- ◆ If the individual has been accessing EAP, is there someone who needs to be aware of the situation?



## Role of Outplacement Provider

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- ◆ Pre-planning support
- ◆ Coaching of Line Manager
- ◆ On-site Assistance
  - ◆ Emotional support
  - ◆ Practical (e.g. collecting company property)
- ◆ Ongoing Career Transition support
  - ◆ Regain confidence
  - ◆ Launch effective search campaign
  - ◆ Reduce time to secure new work



# Logistics of Termination Meeting

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- ◆ Timing
  - ◆ Early in week
  - ◆ When least amount of activity in workplace
  - ◆ Avoid significant dates
- ◆ Location
  - ◆ Private
  - ◆ Neutral
  - ◆ Off-site required in some situations



# Delivering Message

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- ◆ Purpose:
  - ◆ To advise individual of termination of employment
  - ◆ Explain company's support – financial / benefits / outplacement
  - ◆ Explain next steps



## Delivering Message cont'd...

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- ◆ Clear and concise message
- ◆ Providing letter detailing support package
- ◆ Options for collecting personal effects
- ◆ Input regarding communication of exit, timing of exit
- ◆ Thank individual for past service / contribution
- ◆ Introduce outplacement counsellor



## Pitfalls To Avoid

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- ◆ Taking too long to get to the purpose of the meeting
- ◆ Using the meeting as a forum to justify the company's decision
- ◆ Revisiting performance issues or specifics of "why me?"



# Individual Terminations

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- ◆ Consider the individual's personal situation:
  - ◆ Special considerations for notification?
  - ◆ Who should deliver the message?
  - ◆ How to position the meeting – scheduled vs. impromptu?
  - ◆ Family situation – support at home?
  - ◆ Safe method of transport home?
  - ◆ Gather personal affects immediately or return at a later date?



## Individual Terminations cont'd...

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- ◆ Best laid plans may go awry.....
- ◆ Be prepared, but maintain flexibility
- ◆ Maintain individual dignity
  - ◆ Opportunities for individual choice?



# Group Downsizing Considerations

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- ◆ Legislation regarding group notifications
- ◆ Effective Planning – who to involve in the process?
- ◆ Management Coaching
- ◆ Communication strategy:
  - ◆ Consistency and focus in messaging
  - ◆ Group vs. individual notifications
  - ◆ Internal/External considerations
- ◆ Moving Forward



# Questions?

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Discussion and Questions.....



## Contact Information

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