



HR Newsletter

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Handling layoffs with humanity and care

You might find yourself one day having to make the difficult decision to have a reduction in force.

It's hard to consume any news without being bombarded by news of layoffs, especially in the tech industry. A site that tracks layoffs since the start of the pandemic, Layoffs.fyi, has data that shows that tech companies reduced jobs by 240k in just 2023. That's a significant increase from the 15k in 2021 and the 80k in 2020. It is an unfortunate part of business that you should only consider as a last resort. If you're considering reducing headcount you need to:

Try everything else first

Hopefully, something out of the ordinary has happened and there was no way to anticipate whatever caused this issue. No one should lose their job because of poor leadership planning. You've probably looked at spending, but look again. Dig deep. Ask for help, if you are transparent, your employees might have process improvement and cost savings ideas that you would never think of. Some may even volunteer for unpaid time off or a reduction in pay.

Plan carefully

Take the time to properly plan, and don't underestimate the importance of involving all relevant stakeholders. Make sure that you are using technology wisely and make sure that confidential information remains confidential.

Use objective selection criteria

You have a certain degree of discretion when it comes to selecting which positions to eliminate, but be as objective as possible. You can use the following selection methods:

- Seniority
- Employee status
- Merit-based
- Skills-based
- Multiple criteria



Know the law

There is no room for discrimination in any of the criteria. It's all about making the process transparent and fair, so employees understand why you've made certain decisions. Additionally, don't run afoul of any federal or state notification and final payment laws. When offering severance and outplacement services, make sure that your agreements are up-to-date and legally valid.

Be mindful and be human

When having layoff conversations, set aside enough time to have private, distraction-free conversations. Stick to a script so that you don't open yourself up to any sort of litigation. Most importantly, while this was your decision, the layoff conversation is about THEM, not you. How you feel in that moment doesn't matter, you don't get to cry about it with them.

Always remember

This is a huge, life-changing decision. Don't take this lightly and don't miss out on the chance to be considerate. People deserve private conversations and explanations whenever possible. Provide guidance, support, and severance.

If you need further advice or a helping hand, get in touch.

LATEST NEWS

Can you help employees who are struggling with childcare?

There's a shortage of childcare workers all over, thanks, in part, to the low median salary for these employees. And it's putting working parents under pressure.

Combine that with the cost-of-living crisis we're in, and that pressure turns into a full-on crisis for many parents. 2022 data shows that childcare costs 8% and 19.3% of the median family income per child. Affordable child care is considered to be no more than 7%.

So, what can you do to help?

Start by asking your staff what support they need. Consider a flexible working arrangement that helps parents work around childcare responsibilities. Offer flexible spending for dependent care, educate your employees about possible tax credits, and make sure that your EAP has childcare locator services.

Employee absence is going up and up

Absenteeism is on the rise all over the world. In 2021 the absence rate was 3.2%, last year it went up to 6%. But this isn't because no one wants to work anymore. It is mostly because people are genuinely sick.

Over the last few years, it has become more apparent that going to work sick isn't good for anyone. More and more states are creating sick pay laws that help employees who would normally go to work sick actually stay home and recover.

Another top reason for absenteeism is workplace toxicity. Yep, your company culture could be making your employees just plain sick of being there so they don't come to work. The good news is, this is an illness that you have the cure to. Working with a consultant to improve your company culture can dramatically reduce your absenteeism rates. I can show you how.

How to STOP your best employees from leaving

Retaining your best performers is like holding onto a winning lottery ticket – you don't want to lose it.

But what happens when the glow of engagement starts to dim? Maybe an external opportunity catches their eye, or they start daydreaming about what life might be like in a different role or company. Before you know it, they're discreetly scanning job ads, networking on LinkedIn, and considering their options.

For you, this can be disastrous.

So, how do you stop your best employees from leaving?

Here's a secret: while money is important, it's only one part of your employee engagement and retention strategy.

Here are some other things to think about:**How effective are your leaders?**

Effective leaders set the tone, communicate openly, and foster trust within their teams. Think of them as the influencers of office morale.

Does everyone feel included in your company culture?

When employees find themselves in an inclusive environment that aligns with their values, it encourages a sense of belonging and purpose. It's the secret to employee happiness.

How nice is your physical work environment?

The physical workspace matters more than you'd think. A comfortable, well-organized, and visually appealing office can significantly impact your employees' daily experience.

What are their prospects for career progression?

Providing opportunities for growth - whether through promotions, skill development, or training - keeps your employees motivated to level up.

Do you provide ongoing learning and development?

Encouraging employees to continually improve their skills not only benefits your business but also gives them a sense of personal and professional growth.

Does everyone feel valued, trusted, and appreciated?

Everyone loves a pat on the back. If your employees don't feel appreciated for their hard work and dedication, they might start wondering if the grass is greener on the other side.

Are you providing a healthy work/life balance?

A healthy balance between work and personal life is vital for your employees' well-being. Consider it your secret weapon for keeping them happy and motivated.

Do you provide a sense of purpose?

Employees are most engaged when they believe their work serves a greater purpose. Make sure their goals matter.

Remember, employee retention is an ongoing commitment. By embracing these insights and strategies, you'll not only keep your all-star team intact but also create a workplace that shines even more brightly.

If I can give you a hand getting started, get in touch.

Q&A



My employee accepted a gift card from a client, is this bribery and corruption?

Maybe. If you are not a government agency/contractor then depending on your industry it might be OK. If it's reasonable and proportionate (to say thank you for a project, for example) and of nominal value (under \$25 in one gift) it's ok. However, always consider the intention, value, and timing to decide if the gift could be considered bribery and don't violate the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act .

Do I legally have to provide disabled parking for my employees?

If you provide parking to anyone else, you sure do! Businesses that employ more than 15 individuals are covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and businesses offering parking are required by the Americans with Disabilities Act to ensure availability of a certain number of accessible parking spaces based on the total spaces available in the lot.

Can I make a meeting mandatory on someone's day off.

You sure can! But make sure that you are compensating them appropriately for their time. Follow FLSA guidelines for overtime. It is also a best practice to give as much notice as possible as some people make plans for their days off well in advance.

Also, feed them, it's the least you could do. And not just pizza. Yes, you read that correctly. HR says no to the boring pizza party.

Can we talk for a minute?

Here are three questions for you:

- Do you currently have an HR consultant?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how happy are you with them?
- If the answer isn't "I'm so delighted I could print 1,000 flyers to spread the word about them", let's jump on a call.

You know just how important it is to get proactive, responsive HR support. That's what we do. And we're taking on new clients.

Need a speaker? We do that, too. Look at our most recent feedback [here](#).



YOUR HR EXPERTS



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