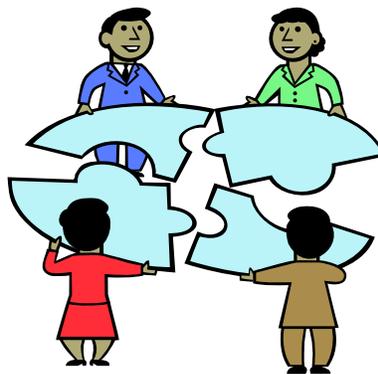


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SESSION OBJECTIVES

This workshop is designed to help you:

- Recognize common responses to organizational changes, such as reductions in force, including your own and those of your team members.
- Leverage the knowledge, skills and abilities of different team members, including those who demonstrate “change-adeptness.”
- Consider methods for engaging and enabling your team.
- Enhance communication with your team.

This workshop will provide you with an opportunity to reflect on your thoughts and feelings about current organizational changes, to recognize and understand common feelings and reactions among your team members, and to explore tips and strategies for maintaining employee morale and engagement during the transition.

The workshop will help you recognize your ability to help diffuse the negative effects of layoffs by exercising sensitivity toward the feelings of others, facing squarely the problems arising from the changes and clearly outlining future directions.

So, why am I here? What do I hope to take away from this workshop?

MANAGING THE TRANSITION: AN OVERVIEW

■ **Communicate!**

- ✓ Provide factual information
- ✓ Quell rumors and gossip
- ✓ Help staff remain focused and productive
- ✓ Reassure staff that their colleagues were treated with respect
- ✓ Set the tone for moving forward through the change process.

■ **Anticipate remaining employees' reactions**

- ✓ Those who remain will be experiencing a variety of feelings. This includes you!
- ✓ It is critical that you acknowledge and respond to these feelings in order to help the team move forward.

■ **Communicate!**

■ **Manage the transition of work**

- ✓ Plan for the transition of work.
- ✓ Be visible
- ✓ Redesign processes and tasks
- ✓ Ask for input
- ✓ Assign roles and responsibilities
- ✓ Monitor progress
- ✓ Plan for and handle setbacks.



■ **Communicate!**

10 KEYS TO MANAGING & MOTIVATING SURVIVORS

1. ***Be visible:*** Survivors will definitely want to talk to you, ask you questions and watch how you handle the change. Your tasks are to show compassion, model a “can-do” attitude, to be available to listen to their sentiments and demonstrate concern and interest in their welfare.
2. ***Understand and respect how people experience and respond to change, especially during layoffs.*** Those who remain on the job are experiencing the effects of change and have a variety of feelings, including anger, guilt, loss, fear and exhaustion, some of which they may show and others which they will not. It will be critical for you to acknowledge and respond to those feelings in order to help the group move forward.
3. ***Over-communicate:*** Some news is always better than no news, even if it is the same old news. If people don’t hear anything, they fear the worst or fill the vacuum with their own fears, creating misinformation and fueling the “rumor mill.” The best way to correct negative beliefs, resulting from a downsizing, is to provide employees with frequent, truthful, and direct communication. Ensure that employee questions are being answered. Be transparent: employees need to believe that decisions that are made are rational, logical and equitable. Encourage group discussions where everyone can express their feelings and offer suggestions. Consider weekly meetings.
4. ***Reemphasize mission, values and goals:*** Develop a vision of the future that draws people toward doing the right things. Spend time with individuals and small groups of people talking about the culture and work environment you want to create moving forward. Define what you need to do as a group to move in that direction, and help your team members see their connection to the goal and what’s in it for them. Make sure everyone understands the vision and feels they are a valuable asset in the new reorganization.
5. ***Clarify roles:*** After layoffs, remaining employees are uneasy because they're not sure what they're supposed to be doing, to whom they should be accountable, or if they're doing a good job. Use the performance management system and sit down with each employee to help clarify his or her new role, any changed expectations and priorities. Most employees find great comfort in knowing exactly what they're working toward and exactly what's expected of them.

6. **Focus on employee development and building self-esteem:** Some survivors are worried that they don't have the knowledge and skills necessary to do their new or expanded jobs. Identify additional training resources and support they feel they need and provide it if possible; help each individual feel as if the skills they have or are obtaining will make them highly marketable. The goal is to help them feel confident that they have the capacity to contribute, to grow and develop and to master the changed work environment.
7. **Reengineer your processes and make it clear what remaining work is priority.** Remember that you can't do the same volume and quality of work with fewer people. Look for ways to streamline current work. Ask employees to help you identify work processes that add the least value to the customers, and eliminate those. Studies indicate that grieving coworkers were reassured when they were allowed to participate in the restructuring process. They were more committed to the organization's moving forward to new success.
8. **Demonstrate that you value those who remain:** talk to each of them individually and reassure them of their value to you and the organization, what you feel they contribute to your effective, continuously improving work environment. Minimize criticism and fault finding. Celebrate every success, no matter how minor. Build teamwork by acknowledging that everyone's contribution is essential and their input is valued.
9. **Rebuild trust and be sensitive to on-going emotions:** Remember that trust has been damaged and people are experiencing a loss. Allow them the time and space to deal with anger, guilt, loss and denial. Cut them some slack. Pay attention to signs of burnout and stress, remind people to take breaks, encourage them to let you know if they are feeling overwhelmed. Remind them that EAP counseling services are available to them and their families. Get consulting help for yourself from HR.
10. **Be honest about realities and future expectations:** Don't say "the layoffs are over" if there is any uncertainty about the future. If people begin to relax their guard only to get more shocking news, they will be much slower to trust any statements in the future.

Survivors need emotional support, extensive communication from management, clear-cut job descriptions and career development assistance in the transition following a layoff.

**UNDERSTANDING CHANGE: WHAT'S AT STAKE?
INDIVIDUAL LOSS ANALYSIS**



Change occurs when something ends & something new or different starts. The period between these two points is **transition**. This is where we, as people, struggle with letting go of the old (familiar), which is essential if we are to embrace the new (unknown).

Even when change is positive or one we have initiated ourselves, the psychological process affects us & it is not uncommon to experience a sense of loss, often subconsciously. Understandably, we often resist that loss.

Directions: Think about the changes your team is going through right now. Which of the concerns (types of loss) do you think members of your team are experiencing the most? Which are the most significant for them? What about for **you**? Give each a numerical ranking in terms of significance (1-5, with 1 being the most significant).

Type of Loss	Description	Significance for Me/My team
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I no longer feel secure or know what the future holds. • I am not sure where I would fit into this organization. • Will I be able to make a valuable contribution? • Will I still have the job six months from now? 	/
Competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am afraid that I will no longer feel like I know what to do or how to manage the work. • Will I be able to use the skills I have been using and am good at? • Will I have to learn new ways of doing things? • It will be hard for me to admit I don't know how to do something. 	/
Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who will I be working with now? Will I like them? Will I be able to work with them? • Will I have to take direction from someone new? • Will I feel like I belong to a team anymore? • Will I be able to maintain contact with my former teammates? 	/
Sense of Direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where is this job leading me now? I'm uncertain what direction am I going in. Do I have a future career here? • My sense of my goals and my work unit's vision and mission have become unclear. • What if I don't like what our new focus is? What if it's no longer what I signed up for? 	/
Control/Turf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will I still be in control of my life and my work? • What if everything is undefined & chaotic? • I feel unstructured; as if I am spinning. • I am unsure of my role & responsibilities. • Will I have to share workspace, take direction from others, follow their lead? 	/
Any Others?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	

UNDERSTANDING CHANGE: THE TRANSITION PROCESS

Those who remain on the job are experiencing the effects of change and have a variety of feelings. It will be critical for you to acknowledge and respond to those feelings in order to help the group move forward.

Some survivors experience an emotional shock that prevents them from suddenly changing direction. They freeze like a "deer in the headlights." The familiar pattern is broken and the momentum that comes from routine and repetition will take time to recover. Not knowing what to do, people will wait and see what happens. They are waiting for leadership, someone to tell them what to do next.

Even more than the loss of familiarity and momentum is the sense of personal loss that many people feel at seeing their friends leaving or their positions eliminated. It feels very much like a death in the family and needs the compassion and time for mourning that we expect whenever a loved one is lost.

They are now left with a work environment that looks different than it did before and may feel unsure that their jobs are secure. They may experience fatigue from picking up a greater workload. They maybe feeling a multitude of reactions, some of which they may show and others which they will not.

A good manager will have compassion for the shock and fear that people feel, a sense of optimism, and a clear direction and mission that will help them through the often painful transition from what was to what is to be. There are actually 3 steps that will need to be accomplished before the new organization is back on its feet:

Endings - People need to understand and come to accept that the changes are real and not reversible. The old organization, the old ways are gone and won't be restored. Something has ended...forever. It is reasonable and proper to mourn for the loss, but eventually it is necessary to move on.

Transitions - There is an in-between time when you are letting go of the old and getting familiar with the new. It is a time of uncertainty and often confusion, discomfort and high stress. People may even feel incompetent until they master new tools, new skills and new roles. This is the wilderness through which managers must guide their teams if the new organization is to take hold and prosper.

New Beginnings - As people come to accept and master their new roles, the structure of the organization begins to gel and once again a routine and sense of "normalcy" begin to become apparent. The old ways fade into memory and the new ways become the expectation. People feel competent and confident again. Productivity increases as people focus on the job at hand rather than dwelling on personal anxieties.

**To help employees adapt to the changing realities of the workplace,
you must acknowledge their emotional upheaval.**

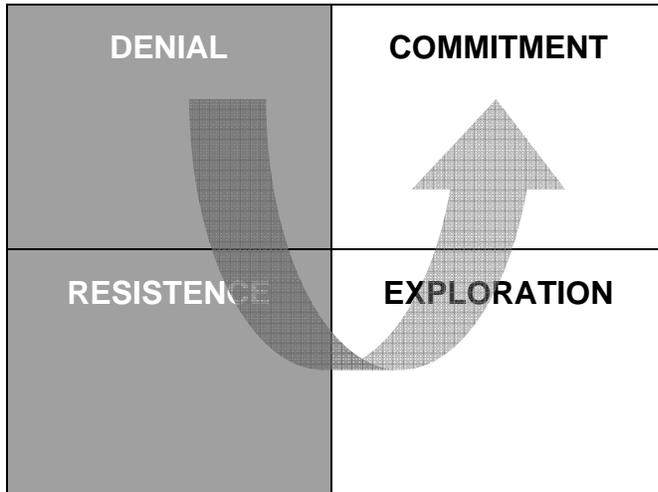
COMMON REACTIONS TO CHANGE

<p>DENIAL</p> <p>Shock Disbelief Cling to the past Refuse to accept Numbness Everything as usual attitude Refuse to hear/process new information</p>	<p>COMMITMENT</p> <p>Vision Focus on a new direction Acceptance Integration to the new direction Teamwork Cooperation Feel balanced Growth & adaptation</p>
<p>RESISTENCE</p> <p>Defensive Retreat Anger Loss/Hurt Stubbornness Blame others Complain Experience physical, mental, emotional symptoms Doubt own ability</p>	<p>EXPLORATION</p> <p>Start to see possibilities Shift into more positive mind-set Clarify goals Build energy/momentum Explore alternatives/resources Learn new skills Become motivated to move into action ← WATCH FOR THE BACK SWING!</p>

Where am I in relation to the current organizational changes?

Where are the members of my team?

NEGATIVE REACTIONS TO CHANGE

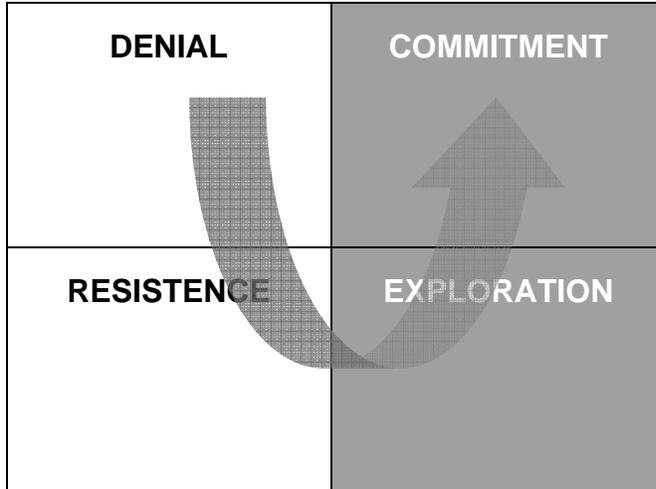


- Shock/disbelief
- Anger/Hostility
- Guilt
- Confusion
- Fear/Anxiety
- Regret
- Lack of Confidence
- Depression/Sadness
- Insecurity
- Worry/Anger over increased workload

Strategies for Managing Negative Reactions to Change

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-
-
-
-
-

POSITIVE REACTIONS TO CHANGE



- Looking for opportunities
- Supportive
- Questioning
- Gaining confidence
- Adapting
- Comfortable
- Applying new methods
- Producing results
- Suggesting alternatives & solutions
- Vulnerable to backslides

Strategies for Managing Positive Reactions to Change

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-
-
-
-
-

THE CHANGE-ADEPT PROFILE

By Carol Kinsey-Goman, PhD.

There are six qualities common to those who thrive on change. The following is a profile of a person with these qualities and some suggestions for developing them.

QUALITY #1: CONFIDENCE

The personality trait most responsible for the ability to deal well with change is self-confidence.

Profile:

- Has self-confidence in their ability to deal with whatever happens.
- Is self-motivated and steps up to new challenges.
- Has high self-esteem: believes in the value of their contribution.
- Speaks up with concerns, questions and ideas
- Takes risks: is willing to let themselves try something new and learn from whatever happens.

→ Personal Strategy: Play to your strengths and learn from failure.

- Stop focusing on improving your weaknesses. Instead, identify and build on those competencies and accomplishments that make you special.
- Develop the practice of continually learning and unlearning. Recognize failures or mistakes as opportunities to improve how we do things.

→ Leadership Strategy-Play to People's Strengths

- Don't assume people know how good they are. It is only when people are *aware* of their competence that they become confident.
- Notice when employees do something very well, and acknowledge it immediately.
- Encourage employees to recognize their own achievements and then "go public" with them.
- Help employees identify strengths and then find ways to capitalize on them. Talents overlooked may atrophy.
- Set "stretch" goals that pull employees beyond previous levels of achievement.
- Create small victories.
- Give all employees the opportunity to discover their abilities.
- Spend less time on what needs to be improved.
- Spend more time on developing potential.

→ Leadership Strategy-Reward Failure

- New knowledge comes as much from failure as it does from success. Learn from failure.
- Encourage risk-taking.

→ Leadership Strategy-Build an "Unlearning Organization"

- Value employees less for what they know and more for how quickly they can learn.

- Help them unlearn by empathizing with feelings of awkwardness when leaving the comfort zone.
- Recognize efforts as they are made.

→ Leadership Strategy-Build Employees' Work Security

- Help employees build their career resilience by helping them assess their own strengths and weaknesses, trends, etc. so they can take care of themselves.

→ Leadership Strategy-Give Employees "Exit Power"

- Help them develop a plan of action for what to do if they were separated. Let them come to the Transition training.

QUALITY #2: CHALLENGE

In fast-moving, high-stress business environments, a positive, upbeat, "can-do" attitude is vital for success.

Profile:

- Views crisis as both danger and opportunity.
- Assimilates and has a higher self-image after the wave.
- Understands the choice of attitude is theirs.
- Controls their response: makes a deliberate choice about behavior.

→ Personal Strategy: Accentuate the positive!

- While it is important to acknowledge the stress, uncertainty and disruption that change brings, it is also crucial to emphasize the opportunities for growth, challenge and reward that accompany the change.

→ Leadership Strategy-Accentuate the Positive

- Encourage optimism. Praise and thank them for a job well done.
- Remember that criticism is rarely constructive and praise is almost always energizing and motivating. If criticism is called for, do it privately and with compassion.

→ Leadership Strategy-Give Good People the Bad news

- Level with employees about the current challenges and problems.
- A lack of full disclosure encourages the rumor mill to fill in the missing communication, often by inventing or distorting information in ways that increase apprehension.

QUALITY #3: COPING

Change-adept employees are able to cope with and adapt to a complex, fast-paced reality.

Profile:

- Embraces the new fact of life: stability is GONE!
- Accepts responsibility for their part in the change.
- Takes control over what they can.
- Loosens up and rolls with it!

→ Personal Strategy: Lighten up!

- Rather than bracing for the inevitable pressure, remember to bring a sense of humor and spirit of fun to your work and your life to cushion your efforts to “roll with the punches.”
- Keep things in perspective: consider the impact of this change in relation to other things that can happen or have happened in your life.

→ Leadership Strategy-Help People Control Stress

- Help employees acquire the ability to manipulate daily stress levels.
- Up to a point, stress increases motivation and productivity (eustress).
- When stress rises above that level it becomes distress and negative consequences take effect.

→ Leadership Strategy-Don't Make Everything a Crisis

- Problem solvers work most constructively when confronted with serious, but not critical issues. At moderate levels people weigh alternatives, solicit points of view, and invite constructive controversy.
- In crisis mode, people go for quick-fixes or take the path of least resistance.
- People dealing problems they perceive as minor do not put forth their best efforts. The temptation is to ignore the problem or apply pat solutions.

→ Leadership Strategy-Lighten Up

- Encourage people to have fun.

QUALITY #4: COUNTERBALANCE

People with interests beyond their professions and organizations are more resilient under stress and more effective on the job.

Profile:

- Has activities in other parts of their life.
- Enjoys external stability that provides a foundation for events at work.

→ Personal Strategy: Get a life!

- Work as if life matters.
- Compensate for the demands and pressure of work by developing counterbalancing activities in other areas of your life (i.e., left/right brain balance).

→ Leadership Strategy-Encourage Employees to Work as if Life Mattered

- Understand and support the idea of balancing work and life.

→ Leadership Strategy-Encourage Counterbalance of the Brain

- Encourage employees to develop talents which have nothing to do with their jobs.

QUALITY #5: CREATIVITY

Creative people embrace changing business conditions that expose them to new knowledge, new people, and new experiences.

Profile:

- Has curiosity: interested in exploring new ideas, experiences and approaches.
- Demonstrates creativity.
- Is innovative: thinks outside of the box.

➔ **Personal Strategy:** Honor your "inner genius". Remember that everyone (including you!) was born with a creative capacity that needs to be nurtured and respected.

- Understand and use the creative process.
- Look for multiple right answers.
- Respect intuition.
- Entertain outrageous Ideas.

➔ **Leadership Strategy-Harness the Collective Genius**

- Creativity is a set of skills that can be developed and applied daily at all levels of the organization.
- Make creativity a part of everyone's job. Studies show the biggest stumbling block to employee creativity at work is the perception that management discourages it.
- Gather employee suggestions in "idea campaigns." Make the program short-term (1-2 months), focus on a single issue, and make it fun.
- Send them to courses on creative problem-solving. A study showed that employees who have been trained in creative thinking techniques generate twice as many suggestions than untrained employees.
- Encourage cross-pollination of ideas. Share brainstorming and innovations across boundaries.
- Stimulate ideas by taking a field trip.
- Give employees the freedom to be creative.
- Reward innovations with private and public recognition.

➔ **Leadership Strategy-Understand the Creative Process**

- Graham Wallace in *The Art of Thought* proposes a four-step process you should teach to everyone you expect to creatively contribute:
 1. Preparation-have a clear understanding of the situation, gather all the data, find out what has been tried before.
 2. Incubation-divert attention and release the problem from conscious thought. This allows the subconscious to synthesize and make connections.
 3. Illumination-the stage when the subconscious alerts the conscious through the "ah-hah" experience.
 4. Verification-the "reality check." Is the idea practical, cost effective, etc.? Can you explain it convincingly? Can you answer objections?

→ Leadership Strategy-Look for Multiple Right Answers

- We are dealing with complex challenges that defy overly simple or one-right-answer solutions. Today there are multiple right answers-something that works in one department might not in another.
- Help employees generate lots of ideas by asking:
 1. How would we do it now if we had never done it before?
 2. What are various perspectives about this situation? (through the eyes of our customers, the BCC, people in other departments)
 3. Which organizational rules are best broken?
 4. That's one right answer. What's another?

→ Leadership Strategy-Respect Intuition

- We have been schooled to be logical, rely on numbers and data-collection to solve problems.
- In times of rapid change, analysis is often too slow for decision-making.
- Intuition is what you add to the information you collect. Help people go beyond a purely logical approach by acknowledging the validity of emotion, imagination and intuition.

→ Leadership Strategy-Entertain Outrageous Ideas

- It is possible to find practical potential in the most outrageous possibilities, but that won't happen unless you are willing to entertain wild ideas in the first place.

→ Leadership Strategy-Encourage Diversity of Opinion

- Invite various points of view and utilize the ideas and suggestions of others.

→ Leadership Strategy-Nurture Suggestions and Ideas

- Ideas are elusive and fragile. If you judge an idea too soon you won't see its full potential.
- Develop a safe haven for ideas by being willing to let ideas emerge freely and being receptive to them.
- Build a relaxed, informal work environment, where employees are encouraged to mix and people feel safe sharing their inspirations with others.

QUALITY #6: COLLABORATION

A new reality is that none of us can succeed alone. In fact, interacting with and relying on others, even those who may think differently than we do is extremely important in times of change.

Profile:

- Recognizes and accepts that none of us can succeed alone.

→ Personal Strategy: Build your collaboration skills.

- Collaborate with those who don't think like you.
- Acquire the three skills of successful collaboration.
 1. Invest in "social capital."
 2. Influence without authority.
 3. Build trust.

→ Leadership Strategy-Calculate the High Cost of Lost Knowledge

- Build an environment of trust and mutual respect where creative contribution is nurtured and where employees at all levels understand that being successful requires collaboration and knowledge-sharing.

→ Leadership Strategy-Understand Why People Don't Readily Share Knowledge

- The top five reasons why people don't share what they know:
 1. People believe knowledge is power.
 2. People are insecure about the value of their knowledge.
 3. People don't trust each other.
 4. Employees are afraid of negative consequences.
 5. People work for other people who don't tell what they know.

→ Leadership Strategy-Create a Climate for Collaboration

- Find ways to reinforce and reward collaboration. Recognize people who learn, teach, and share and penalize those who do not.
- Understand that there are more powerful motivators than money.
- Give people access to information and enough practical background to utilize it.

→ Leadership Strategy-Optimize the Power of "Mini-Cultures"

- Nurture a climate for collaboration in your own department, division or work unit. Take the time to make people feel safe and valued.
- Emphasize people's strengths and encourage sharing of mistakes and lessons learned.
- Set clear expectations for outcomes and clarify individual roles.
- Model openness, vulnerability and honesty.
- Encourage and respect everyone's contribution by creating an environment where it is safe, enjoyable, and beneficial to do so.

→ Leadership Strategy-Build Trust

- Give people time to develop relationships, to evaluate each other's trustworthiness and to learn each other's strengths and weaknesses.
- Remember that when trust is pervasive it becomes the force that energizes teammates, releases creative contribution and makes working together productive and a joy.

DOWNSIZING SURVIVORS: MOTIVATING THE EMPLOYEES WHO REMAIN AFTER LAYOFFS***Value, Self-Esteem, and Career Development During Layoffs***

Susan M. Heathfield

No matter your circumstances, you all have something in common during and after downsizing - layoff survivors, those "could be," "should be," lucky employees who made the cut during the layoffs and downsizing.

Most organizations invest their efforts in helping the downsized employees move on. This is ethical, reasonable and positive. Plus, your survivors are watching.

To truly benefit from the layoffs and downsizing you experienced, however, you need to invest even more energy in the people who remain after downsizing and layoffs. You will aid recovery; fuel productivity; boost morale, despite the loss; and minimize the damage to workplace trust.

You can help managers effectively address the needs of the people who remain after layoffs. To reap the real benefits of downsizing, you must address these issues in your organization. In this article, I'll discuss the issues that are closest to the people during and after a layoff. Then, I'll talk about the needs of the organization in downsizing.

Demonstrate That You Value the Layoff Survivors After a Downsizing

If you are a manager, it is most important to reassure the people who report to you of their value to you and the organization. You need to talk with each of them individually to let them know why and how they are valued; tell them what you feel they contribute to your effective, continuously improving work environment.

No matter how reassuring you or your executive leadership have been, believe me, on some level, after layoffs, trust has been injured. Employees need reassurance about their security. They need reassurance about why the people who were let go in the downsizing were chosen. They need reassurance about their future.

You don't want your layoff survivors feeling as if they are the victims. Because in many ways, they may feel like victims. They may have more work to do; they may have different jobs to learn; you may ask them to step up and take on higher level and broader responsibilities.

For some, this is exciting and career expanding. For others, depending on their life circumstances, this may prove difficult. In a client university human resource department, one person is now working at a staff assistance counter that was staffed by five just a couple of years ago. You can bet she is feeling overworked and under-appreciated.

Look for ways to streamline current work. With fewer people, after layoffs, work with your customer to identify the work processes that add the least value to the customer experience. Eliminate them.

Re-look at the goals and resolutions you set this year. Make certain your daily tasks are focused, like a laser beam, on tasks that support the accomplishment of the most important goals.

Just when you need people to step up, help out, improve work processes, and provide astonishing customer service, your layoff survivors are feeling most battered. Anything you can do to help them feel and see their value is a plus for you, as the employer, and a plus for them, as valued contributors.

Focus on Career Development and Building Self-Esteem for Layoff Survivors in a Downsizing

The people who report to you are worried for various reasons. Some layoff survivors are worried that they don't have the knowledge and skills necessary to do their new or expanded jobs. In one of my client companies, the warehouse manager expressed to me her fear that she did not have the knowledge she needed to manage the new automated equipment. More of a concern to me, was her belief that she did not have the ability to learn the new skills.

Some people are worried about having the time and energy to step up to the larger challenge. Some are concerned that there is just so much to do.

This is an excellent time for a career development discussion with each of the people who report to you. Identify the additional training, resources and support they feel they need, and provide it if possible. Some people will feel passed over during the downsizing; they must be assured of their value.

Help each individual feel as if the skills they have or are obtaining will make them highly marketable so they experience self-security and high self-esteem. In both the value discussion and the career development discussion, your goal is to help people feel confident that they have the capacity to contribute, to grow and develop, and to master the changed work environment.

Don't Forget Trust and Emotions After Downsizing

You will need to work to restore trust. It is damaged. Whether it is the larger picture from the company or losing a valued colleague during the layoffs, regardless of the relationship, trust is injured. First, recognize that people are experiencing a loss. People will grieve even if they recognize the changes are good for them and the organization for the long term.

When people have worked together, regardless of the relationship or perceived contribution, they will experience the loss of their coworkers. You must allow them time and space to deal with anger, loss and denial. You will even have some people who feel guilty that they were chosen to remain after the layoffs. Recognize the gamut of emotions people, including yourself, will experience. Cut yourself and the people you support some slack as you all say good-bye to the past, and commit to the future.

During times of change and uncertainty, you can anticipate some predictable issues, problems, and opportunities. Sometimes people are unaware that they are experiencing these. Downsizing and layoffs introduce many different changes in an organization including change in how comfortable and secure each individual feels within the organization.

For instance, during any change, members of an organization have:

- Different ways of regarding change. Some people have difficulty accepting and adjusting to change; others will relish the changes and view them as great opportunities. Some people initiate change; others prefer the status quo.
- Different amounts of experience and practice in change management. (What is devastating to one individual may excite another or only mildly irritate a third person.) Theoretically, people become better at managing change with experience. In this era of constant change, I do believe this is true. People develop an immunity with their frequent experience of change. Despite this, don't downplay the potential reaction to and experience of change, for various individuals.

- Different ways of reacting to change. Some people need to "talk it out". Others suffer silently. Some find relief in complaining. Some talk and talk and talk, but are really supportive of the change. Others find ways to sabotage changes and undermine efforts to move forward. (Think about colleagues who have experienced divorce. Some talk about it constantly; others are silent and withdrawn.)
- Different amounts of change occurring in other areas of their lives. While massive change may provide experience, an individual who is experiencing vast amounts of change in other aspects of his life, has less time, energy, and commitment available to deal with work changes.
- Different amounts of impact from the current changes and stress producing situations. A person who finds her job completely changed will experience more distress than an individual who is asked to write an extra feature article each week.
- Different amounts and types of support from their spouse, significant other, children, friends, supervisor, and coworkers. Each of us has a support system; when change is in process, we test the effectiveness of that system. Any forewarning people receive of downsizing should include information on how to build a support system at work and home.

All of these and other issues impact the ability of each individual to manage work place change, to continue to function productively at work. It is important to recognize that people may not be capable of performing exactly as they have in the past during times of intense change.

How People Experience Change

People experience personal distress during changes such as downsizing. This distress can include illness, defensiveness, low energy, lack of motivation, difficulty concentrating, accidents, and interpersonal conflict. Often individuals blame themselves for being weak or for their inability "to handle it."

Sometimes organizations label people as "resisters" when, in reality, people move through the stages of change at different rates. How an organization introduces change has a profound impact as well. "People don't mind change; they mind being changed," is a statement organizations need to take to heart. In a downsizing, people experience "being changed." Thus, ownership of the changes is more difficult to create.

People form deep attachments to their coworkers, their work groups, their companies, their organizational structures and systems, their personal responsibilities, and their ways of accomplishing work. (If you find this difficult to believe, try changing an individual's work hours by even fifteen minutes, or establish a dress code for a work environment that encourages casual dress.)

When anything that is important or close to people is disturbed, whether by personal choice or through a larger organizational process over which they have no control, a transition period occurs. During this transition, people can expect to experience a period of letting go of the old ways as they begin moving toward and integrating the new.

As the Human Resources professional, manager, supervisor, leader, change agent or sponsor, you need to understand these issues around change and resistance to change. You must support the people in your organization through the downsizing experience. You need to understand the normal progression of change; during layoffs and a downsizing you cannot expect an immediate return to total productivity. Give your survivors a break.

MANAGING AFTER DOWNSIZING***A Manager's Guide to Coping With Layoffs***

By: John Shepler

Your organization has just experienced one of the most unsettling events in modern corporate life and now YOU are expected to make things work under the new rules. But what are the new rules? How will you re-engage the traumatized workforce and get the business back on track?

As bad as it seems...

You are not the first to go through this and you won't be the last. Once viewed as extreme measures, downsizing, delayering, restructuring, and other dramatic changes in the workplace are now "normal" business practice. Change management has become an important leadership skill for all managers.

People and organizations DO survive and adjust to the new reality. Not only does life go on, but many people actually prosper and grow as a result of having change thrust upon them. It is often true that "when one door closes another is opened."

There is help available from those who have gone through this experience before you. The insights and suggestions that I offer you on this site come directly from my own experiences in numerous workforce reductions and organizational upheavals. There are websites, books, courses and consultants who can all help you get through and lead others through the ensuing chaos that results from downsizing.

What you are dealing with...

Downsizing is a very personal and emotional experience for people caught up in the events. Some managers believe that those who are not dismissed will feel relieved, even grateful that they survived to keep their jobs. This might be true in some cases, where the cuts are few and widely felt to be justified. However, in the large scale cutbacks that result in a decimated organization where long term working relationships are severed and people are expected to take on new roles, something quite different occurs. People go into shock.

Strange as it seems at first, those who survive the downsizing process may suffer as much as those who don't!

The survivors experience an emotional shock that prevents them from suddenly changing direction. They freeze like a "deer in the headlights." The familiar pattern is broken and the momentum that comes from routine and repetition will take time to recover. Not knowing what to do, people will wait and see what happens. They are waiting for leadership, someone to tell them what to do next.

Even more than the loss of familiarity and momentum is the sense of personal loss that many people feel at seeing their friends leaving or their positions eliminated. It feels very much like a death in the family and needs the compassion and time for mourning that we expect whenever a loved one is lost.

A good manager will have the compassion for the human need to cope with the shock and fear that people feel, combined with a sense of optimism, direction and mission that will help them through the often painful transition from what was to what is to be. There are actually 3 steps that will need to be accomplished before the new organization is back on its feet.

Endings - People need to understand and come to accept that the changes are real and not reversible. The old organization, the old ways are gone and won't be restored. Something has ended...forever. It is reasonable and proper to mourn for the loss, but eventually it is necessary to move on.

Transitions - There is an in-between time when you are letting go of the old and getting familiar with the new. It is a time of uncertainty and often confusion, discomfort and high stress. People may even feel incompetent until they master new tools, new skills and new roles. This is the wilderness through which managers have such a critical role of leadership if the new organization is to take hold and prosper.

New Beginnings - As people come to accept and master their new roles, the structure of the organization begins to gel and once again a routine and sense of "normalcy" begin to become apparent. The old ways fade into memory and the new ways become the expectation. People feel competent and confident again. Productivity increases as people focus on the job at hand rather than dwelling on personal anxieties.

Tips for Managing After Downsizing...

Recognize that downsizing or any dramatic change will be met with an emotional response that will be as intense as the situation is threatening. In many cases people will feel victimized and will need to mourn their losses before they can move on. Try to buy them time and professional counseling if you can.

In any given group, expect that 70 to 80% will be apathetic or take a "wait and see" attitude. They need to be led. Another 10 to 15% will be openly hostile or will subtly sabotage the changes and try to return to the way things were before. The remaining 10 to 15% are your leaders. They will proactively try to help you make things work. Put them in charge of the others.

Try to exude optimism and "can do" regarding changes that need to be made. Promote optimism and positive thinking and speaking as much as possible. Don't deny the trauma and pain that is occurring, but find the bright spots and emphasize those rather than dwelling on the losses, the difficulty of making the transitions or all the work that is piled up

and needs to be done. Minimize criticism and fault finding. Celebrate every success, no matter how minor.

Develop a vision of the future that draws people toward doing the right things. Specifics can be developed as you go along, but it is essential that people have a clear and understandable picture of the goal in their minds. It is also important that they see something in it for themselves so they will begin to get on board and lend their voluntary support.

Build teamwork. Create a sense that "we are all in this together and need each other to make it." Acknowledge that everyone's contribution is essential and their input is valued. Encourage group discussions where people can freely express their feelings and offer suggestions. Bring treats. Sometimes even a bag of cookies can offer some comfort and break the ice. Get people kidding and laughing.

If you can see what is coming with some time to prepare, then start creative problem solving as soon as possible. Get training for managers and other leaders in the human aspects of change. In good times, most managers are 80% technically oriented and 20% people oriented. During times of crisis, those numbers should reverse until routine is established again. Most technical managers will need human resources training and support. Read books and take courses on managing change.

Way over communicate everything. When things seem to be coming apart, the normal communication links break down just as suspicion and mistrust begin to predominate. Some news is always better than no news, even if it is the same old news. If people don't hear anything, they fear the news is so bad that no one wants to tell them. Bore them to tears with as much detail as often as possible. Trust will build.

Be honest about the realities and future expectations. Don't say "the layoffs are over" if there is any uncertainty that the business situation has stabilized. It is not uncommon for a series of changes to occur during the process of readjustment. If people begin to relax their guard only to get more shocking news, they will be much slower to trust any statements in the future.

Empathetic leadership is far more effective than being a threatening autocratic boss. Certainly some things need to be pushed, but during the traumatic transition period, don't focus too much on efficiency, mistakes or poor attitudes. Instead spend your efforts in coaching and encouraging people to be successful in bridging the gap between the old and new. Reward each success and let the ones who adjust more quickly be examples for the struggling members of the group.

Remember that personal strength and strong supportive relationships are often forged in the fires of adversity. When the crisis has passed, many people will be surprised by some of the skills they exhibited that they would otherwise never have realized. They may well be on the road to new careers, happier lives and better jobs.

Remember: in today's business environment...change is the norm, not the exception.

SURVIVORS CAN SOAR AFTER DOWNSIZING***Leadership and Vision After Layoffs and Downsizing***

By Susan M. Heathfield

You're downsizing, right-sizing, cutting staff and experiencing layoffs, for all the right reasons. Your goal was to increase productivity, quality, customer care, and profitability, and to reduce costs and waste. Like the phoenix in ancient mythology, you've succeeded. You rose from the ashes and regenerated yourself. Those who remain with you, the layoff survivors, have fulfilled your highest expectations in this process. They've stepped up to the challenge and soared to new heights of accomplishment.

This is every organization's dream during a downsizing. The decision to layoff people and downsize is not made lightly. Once made, however, you can increase the probability of these positive downsizing results by doing some simple, but profoundly complex, activities, right.

Your Leaders Must be Visible and Involved During Layoffs

During layoffs and downsizing is not the time for organization leaders to retreat to board rooms and private offices to plan the future. After a downsizing, or following any major change, for that matter, leaders must be visible and accessible. Layoff survivors need to interact with their supervisor and the organization leaders on a daily basis.

Leaders may have to listen to people express pain and sadness. As a leader, listen, really listen, without judging or trying to solve the problem. You can't. You can only use each conversation as an opportunity to re-emphasize the necessity for the downsizing. You can speak positively about the mission, vision, and plans for the future. You can thank each individual for pitching in and making the changed organization an even more effective and inviting workplace after layoffs.

At the same time, managers and supervisors must be strong leaders, decisive yet participatory. You must inspire confidence, at this time, so people feel you can be depended upon as they take the first steps into the unknown future.

Re-emphasize Mission, Vision, Values and Goals After Layoffs

Morale, climate and culture are negatively impacted during layoffs and downsizing. You will need to recreate the work environment, so that people build their self-esteem, find work satisfying, and achieve at higher levels. The foundation for this progress is to re-emphasize the organization mission and the values⁶.

The vision for the future has undoubtedly changed or received new life in the downsizing process. Now is your opportunity to spend time with small groups of people talking about

each of these. Reaffirm their meaning and impact for your organization. Let people ask questions and talk about how their goals fit into the larger picture after the layoffs.

Talk about the culture and work environment you want to create post layoffs. Define what you need to do as a group to move in this direction, despite the loss of coworkers. You need to pay more attention to rewards, recognition and helping the remaining employees feel valued and appreciated.

A few weeks after a downsizing, one of my clients established a “good news board” on which any employee could post information. Another formed a “smile team,” not just to plan events such as potlucks and parties, but to work to build the overall morale of the organization. Another started publishing a weekly one-page report that kept staff informed of goals and direction.

This is also a good time to look at the goals of each work unit to assess their connection to the overall plan. It is important, following a downsizing, for each of your survivors to feel his work is integral to the accomplishment of the business plan.

You Cannot Over-Communicate During Layoffs and Downsizing

Throughout the layoffs and downsizing process, communicate the facts as honestly as you can and with great compassion. People must walk away from meetings and one-on-one discussions with the feeling that decisions were fair and legitimate.

They must feel the decisions were good for the business and their future. They need to understand the context in which decisions were made. They need to hear that a rational, well-thought-out decision making process occurred. Express empathy for those who have lost coworkers with whom they shared relationships. You cannot over-communicate during a layoff or downsizing.

Make Sure Some Things Stay the Same Following Layoffs or Downsizing

A commitment to the continuation of regular group and one-on-one meetings following the layoffs and downsizing is also important. It is a mistake to bring sarcasm, an apparent lack of empathy, blame or criticism of those who are leaving to these sessions. To maintain morale, the people remaining must have seen the downsized individuals treated with dignity and respect.

Treat People With Dignity and Respect During the Downsizing

Escorting people and their work artifacts out the door with security personnel or a supervisor standing guard, is not an effective way to assist the layoff survivors to feel warm and fuzzy about your organization. It is much better if you hold a meeting toward the end of

the day, break the bad news and then assist the individuals to pack up their belongings when most of the workforce has gone home.

Or, as one manager in a client company decided, he met each employee on the weekend to help them pack and wish them well. This also allowed him to “check up” on the former employee several days into their unemployment. In my observation, this manager’s remaining staff pulled together and quickly returned to a high level of productivity.

A debate is ongoing about the timing of communication about layoffs and downsizing. I believe an organization should tell people as much as possible as soon as information is known with some certainty. This includes the timing of private discussions between managers and employees who may stay or lose their jobs as a result.

In one client company, we recently downsized the workforce. I believe this event should occur early in the week so people have time to start their job search. The managers decided to act on a Friday, however. We had received the feedback from employees that not knowing who would lose their jobs, and wondering all weekend, would be worse for morale. So, we acted.

Design an effective communications strategy for before, during, and after the layoffs and downsizing. It is the critical factor that supports your workforce quickly unifying around the mission, vision, and new organizational structure. Effective communication ensures the ownership of the new strategies for success.

As you design your strategy, think broadly about all the possible ways to communicate during layoffs. Hold company meetings; schedule one-on-ones; publish a transition newsletter; use email, Intranet, and Internet resources; hold frequent department gatherings; post minutes and notices; use voice mail for messages; encourage informal planning sessions that are focused on forward progress.

These tips will help your company thrive following layoffs and downsizing activities.

Introduce Efforts to Increase Your Organization’s Competitiveness Following Layoffs and Downsizing

Layoffs and downsizing are never the only answer. In fact, if employees see you immediately begin to address other aspects of uncompetitive practices, they will rally from the downsizing in record time. This is your opportunity to look at all business processes and eliminate possible waste. (If you are a manufacturing company, you may already think of this as lean manufacturing. If you are not a manufacturing company, you will want to read *Lean Thinking*, to understand how to build a lean enterprise throughout the value chain. See sidebar.)

With fewer employees, consider eliminating unproductive meetings, initiatives that don't put you closer to your customer, and employee requirements that don't add value to your product or your service. Process map your key work processes to eliminate non-value added steps.

Look especially to eliminate steps that are redundant, repetitive, time adding or permission requiring. Additionally, use a systematic problem solving process to tackle consistent, irritating problems. Create measures of success, and provide constant feedback, so people know how they are doing within the new organization.

If you have downsized across the board - almost never recommended, if you have a choice - eliminating management positions as well as professional, clerical and technical positions, you have a powerful opportunity to consider empowerment and involvement initiatives. Since you have fewer people, you will want to develop more engaged, thinking, caring employees, who are involved in decision making at a higher level such as the *join leadership style*¹⁹.

More Steps to Take During Downsizing and Layoffs

Take these additional steps, as an organization, to rally your survivors after layoffs and downsizing experiences.

- Reinforce daily, in a positive, mind and heart-stirring way, the vision, mission, and excitement of moving forward with the organization. Emphasize the positive goals that you can accomplish this year together. Make certain that the goals cascade through the organization so people feel strategically connected to the overall strategy and direction. Review the goals publicly, on an established schedule, so people feel part of something bigger than their work unit. Review the goals and progress within work units as well. This helps people focus on progress and the future rather than on the layoffs, the downsizing and the past.
- Provide rewards and recognition wherever you feel you can legitimately do so. Be creative and have fun with these.
- Continue to hold expected events, sponsorships, and programs that people have come to count on from the company before the layoffs. Keep the familiar meeting structures unless the group decides to change them. Do not cancel expected forums because everyone is too busy or you feel there is a lack of interest. They become even more important during times of change. One client cancelled their summer company picnic because it was too close to the downsizing. I would have recommended moving the picnic a few weeks, but holding the picnic was important. Having some things not change can provide stability in the midst of a downsizing. It also sends the message that life at work does move on.
- Increase activities that will restore employee harmony, friendship, and trust. Begin to establish some new traditions as an organization following the layoffs.

As an example, form a Spirit/Smile/Energizing Team, a team of employees to create random, yet regularly scheduled, activities. Give the team a budget and get out of the way! I've known teams to take these actions in support of positive motivation and employee morale:

- create a secret holiday pal gift-giving;
- schedule lunch and learn book discussions or presentations on topics people care about;
- hold ice cream socials;
- compete for the best decorated holiday windows;
- serve hot chocolate/cider/doughnuts on fall days, and give away a pumpkin to each employee;
- create awards for attendance, service and contribution; and
- do philanthropic work such as adopting a needy family for the holidays.

Only staff imagination limits the possible ideas for new traditions within your organization.

- Consciously foster creativity and innovation. You have so much to do with fewer resources! Think about instituting “share” sessions at which people demonstrate their innovative ideas from which others can learn. Hold Kaizen (continuous improvement) or business process improvement sessions around certain operations or processes.
- Design “what if” scenarios into the current business plans. These can take into consideration the best thinking of the new team as well as create contingency plans for various possibilities. Business plans do not function any more as they perhaps did, even ten years ago; now they must be viable, flexible, constantly changing documents.
- Finally, to re-emphasize, people must feel as if you know what you are doing, even when you feel battered yourself. A positive, optimistic outlook must be demonstrated by key leaders, decision makers, and attitude leaders or key communicators.

During and following layoffs and downsizing, focus on interactive, visible leadership that re-emphasizes vision, mission, values and goals²⁶. Foster open communication and emphasize actions that increase your organization's competitiveness. Pay attention to the initiatives described here, and you'll jump start your opportunity to soar beyond even your wildest dreams! I wish you great success on your flight!

FREQUENTLY ASKED SURVIVOR QUESTIONS

As a supervisor, you should be prepared to answer many questions and comments from the surviving employees, including the ones listed below. It is recommended that you discuss them with other supervisors and management in your department to establish a consistent message for employees throughout the department/division.

1. *How many positions were eliminated?*
2. *Why were these positions eliminated? Or, why wasn't _____ position eliminated?*
3. *Was there any way to save these jobs?*
4. *What happens to the work these positions were responsible for?*
5. *What will happen with their calls, mail and email?*
6. *How much does this reduction in force save our budget?*
7. *[as appropriate] How will outsourcing these responsibilities save our department money?*
8. *What is the organization doing to help the people about to lose their jobs?*
9. *What benefits will the employees who lose their jobs receive?*
10. *It sounds like we're piling more work on fewer people?*
11. *What are our strategic objectives and how have they been modified in light of the staff reductions?*
12. *When will the affected employees be leaving?*
13. *Will we have any additional layoffs?*

RESOURCES

Aftershock: Helping People through Corporate Change, Harry Woodward and Steve Buchholz.

The Corporate Culture Survival Guide, Sense and Nonsense about Culture Change, Edgar H. Schein and Warren G. Bennis.

Our Iceberg is Melting, John Kotter and Holger Rathgeber.

The Way of the Ronin, Riding the Waves of Change at Work by Beverly A. Potter and Matt Gouig.

Who Moved My Cheese: An A-Mazing Way to Deal with Change in your Work and in Your Life, Spencer Johnson, M.D.

This Isn't The Company I Joined: How to Lead In A Business Turned Upside Down, Carol Kinsey-Goman, PhD

WORDS TO INSPIRE YOU

If you don't like something, change it; if you can't change it, change the way you think about it.

~Mary Engelbreit

The chaos of not knowing what to do next opens the door for a completely new option.

~Author Unknown

When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves.

~Victor Frankl

REINFORCEMENTS ON THRIVING ON CHANGE

The most difficult behaviors to change are those which made you successful.

How you label change (positive or negative) is totally within your control.

In a living system, transformation is a *healthy* response to a changing environment.

Your value to any organization is based less on what you know, and more on how quickly you can *learn* and *unlearn*.

Change is steeped in ambiguity. Stop waiting for someone to give you “the plan.”

The only real security in changing times is that which you develop within yourself.

Change is *logical*. Do you understand the business rationale?

Change is *emotional*. How are you dealing with denial, resistance, choice, acceptance, and commitment?

The birth of something new always means the death of the old. Mourn and honor that which you have to leave behind.

Flexibility means that you simultaneously commit to a change strategy and stay ready to alter course at any time.

It's okay to choose *not* to change as long as you understand and accept the consequences.

Change is chaotic, unpredictable, and challenging. Take good care of yourself!

Change is chaotic, unpredictable, and challenging. Enjoy it!

You will never have a better time to *make a difference* than now, in the midst of chaos.

Cherish your sense of humor. It will either keep you sane, or help you see the funny side of going crazy.

Gandhi said “You must become the change you want to see in the world.” It's as *simple* and as *difficult* as that.

Always remember that no matter how overwhelming the forces of change may appear, they can't compare with the power of the human spirit.

"Life's not about waiting for the storms to pass...
It's about learning to dance in the rain." ~Vivian Greene