

5 QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE IMPLEMENTING AN OUTPLACEMENT PROGRAM



While restructuring and redundancies are a reality for many organizations during uncertain times, providing a comprehensive outplacement program to exiting employees isn't just the right thing to do, it makes business sense. Here are five questions to ask yourself before you get started.

1 WHY ARE YOU INVESTING IN OUTPLACEMENT?

There are many reasons to invest in outplacement. The most obvious is ensuring that your employees are provided with the tools and information they need to make their transition as smooth as possible and to approach a very difficult job market with confidence. Although you may not be able to control the opportunities available to your former employees, you can ensure they're equipped with a winning resume, knowledge of the hidden job market, online networking techniques and an understanding of their transferable skills.

It's also important to remember that each employee will have different career goals – so support must also take into account options such as self-employment, consultancy, higher education or retirement.

Not only is outplacement the right thing to do for your people, it's also key for maintaining employer brand. In today's digital world of social media and employer review sites such as Glassdoor, businesses must remember that former employees are critics and customers too. Offering outplacement services means that those in transition get professional help in identifying and preparing for their next career move so they land on their feet faster, and current employees are more likely to view the changes positively and stay engaged and committed to their work. Companies that downsize their workforces without offering outplacement support can experience serious setbacks, such as downsizing a workforce by 1% can lead to a 31% increase in voluntary turn over the next year¹.

Businesses must also consider the concept of boomerang workers, with the very real possibility that former employees represent a rich talent pool for the future. It's therefore vital that those employees leaving the business do so feeling supported and cared for, should you have a need for their skills again in the future.

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¹ [Layoffs That Don't Break Your Company](#): Harvard Business Review



2 WHAT DO YOUR EMPLOYEES REALLY WANT?

Although compensation will be a key consideration for those leaving the organization, it's simply not enough to provide exiting employees with a financial package and send them on their way.

Our research tells us that one-to-one coaching provides the greatest benefit to candidates undergoing outplacement programs – offering a confidential, impartial opportunity for individuals to explore their options with a qualified career coach.

With a recognition that the world of work has undergone a significant shift, the focus for many outplacement discussions will be on upskilling or reskilling: helping individuals identify potential opportunities outside of their sector or expertise, highlighting areas for development, and supporting them through the training that will help gain those skills and boost employability. Even more encouraging is that workers want this training. According to ManpowerGroup research, 79% of employees who are offered free training like their jobs versus only 61% who are not offered training².

At the peak of the financial crisis, restructuring saw thousands of financial services employees lose their jobs, in some cases so suddenly that they were left with no additional skills support and no job prospects. Consequently, the reputation of the financial services sector took a serious hit and banks were left with a workforce where morale, productivity and loyalty were at an all-time low.

In addition to your employee's skills, consider how you can support the mental and emotional wellbeing of your employees. Outplacement programs can also encompass resilience and change management training, providing techniques to deal with the stress and uncertainty that comes with losing a job.



3 ARE YOU COMMUNICATING FAIRLY AND TRANSPARENTLY?

Communication is key for any change, especially where this involves restructuring. How you restructure your organization and prepare it for growth is directly impacted by how you treat departing employees. Feedback from candidates highlights that poor communication has a negative impact on morale during times of change, often making the difference between a successful and unsuccessful initiative.

Providing clarity from the outset is vitally important to help individuals understand how they will be affected and what the changes may mean for them, as well as avoiding mixed messages travelling across the company. Although it may be tempting to shy away from delivering difficult messages, answering questions such as 'What does this mean for me?', 'What are my next steps?' and 'Where can I go for more information?' will ensure that employees don't feel overlooked or ignored during difficult times. Having invested in an outplacement package, it's also essential to communicate the benefits of the outplacement support to individuals and line managers, who may be managing referrals.

Communication must be delivered consistently across the entire organization; often we hear that messaging becomes blocked or diluted as it's filtered down through leadership channels, leading to mistrust or disengagement. It's also important to remember that communication shouldn't just be an area of focus during a specific change: an ongoing internal communication strategy should be business as usual, ensuring employees feel valued and informed about all aspects of the business, with the ability to connect their individual role with business success (or failure).



² [Closing the Skills Gap: Know What Workers Want](#): ManpowerGroup

4 WHAT ABOUT THOSE WHO REMAIN?



Organizations often focus on those exiting the business yet make little investment in those who stay despite the difficulties and increased expectations that may be placed on these individuals to maintain business as usual with a reduced workforce.

Developing an engagement strategy that covers all groups, especially those that we will tasked with moving the organization forwards is key. This could take the shape of team building, upskilling or simply a regular communication to demonstrate care from the top down. It's critical that individuals understand the role they play and the value they bring in helping shape and steer the new world.

Arguably, the most critical factor in the success of any organizational change is how people are led. Given this, effective leadership is vital in ensuring a consistent and clear message is delivered across the company.

It is often expected that leaders naturally possess the skills to cope during uncertain and difficult times. Employees look to their leaders for guidance and support, yet often they too are struggling with the situation put upon them. Consider providing training to help leaders and managers communicate messages effectively and consistently, allowing remaining employees to move forward feeling respected and valued.

5 FINALLY, CONSIDER WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR FROM AN OUTPLACEMENT PROVIDER

Choosing the right provider has never been more critical. With individuals entering an employment market that's changed overnight, now more than ever you need a provider that provides flexibility, choice and results, giving individuals the skills and resources to make critical decisions about their futures. **ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER INCLUDE:**



FLEXIBLE DELIVERY – You need to ensure that accessing support is as easy as possible for your exiting employees. Does your provider offer on-site, virtual and group options? With remote delivery now essential in the current climate, look at the structure of how programs are delivered – is content broken up into bite-sized chunks or are candidates expected to spend hours attending virtual workshops? Is the technology used reliable and GDPR compliant? Can participants pick and choose from a series of topics to suit their career goals?

MARKET EXPERTISE – with high unemployment rates, you need to be assured that your outplacement provider has the job market knowledge and connections to help your people land a new role as quickly as possible. Does the support include an individual assessment to understand current skills and then creating a plan to help them develop the skills they need to close the gap for jobs today and tomorrow? Consider whether the support includes a focus on transferable skills and identifying alternative sectors or job roles.



COMMITTED COACHES – Look for career experts who are available to transitioning employees when they need them — helping them land faster with more confidence. How does your provider tailor support to suit individual challenges? Understand what the participant journey looks like, and whether you'd be happy to undertake it yourself. If delivered virtually, do your employees also have access to coaches via the phone or access to coaching support on weekends?



SCALABILITY – it's impossible to know how your requirement for outplacement support may flex over the coming months – so choosing a provider that offers the option to scale up or down on short notice is key. If your organization is international, can support be delivered consistently to all employees, regardless of geographical location?

HELPING ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS THRIVE DURING TRANSITIONS

Enable individuals to land up to 2X faster with Right Management outplacement

Right Management outplacement services enable departing individuals to land better roles, faster, to minimize the disruption of workforce transitions while also supporting remaining employees with career development support in the form of coaching and upskilling. This comprehensive approach is aimed at maintaining employer brand and ensuring business continuity by proactively engaging and retaining critical talent.

Why Right Management?

- **SPEED OF TRANSITION** – We land people up to two times faster and in better roles
- **FLEXIBILITY** – Flexible delivery via programs tailored to meet organizational and individual needs
- **GLOBAL REACH** – Consistent outplacement program support throughout the world
- **EXPERTISE** – Our network of 2,500 dedicated coaches make the transition smoother and improve employee satisfaction



Our Coaches Make The Difference

87% of buyers of outplacement services rank individual one-on-one coaching as the most important service they offer for workforce transition.

Source: Why Organizations Rely on Outplacement

"Your staff was nothing short of excellent, complementing strong human touch and professionalism. It was a tremendous help that supported me through a challenging period and made it a period of growth."

"My coach was extremely helpful and very knowledgeable. She helped me with my resume, not just content, but also format, and gave excellent, useful suggestions."

"My coach communicates beautifully. He knows his business. I had questions about retirement rather than getting a job, and he insightfully helped me realize what my path into retirement will be, using my best experience and best skills."