

Monthly Newsbrief

Welcome to this month's 'Newsbrief'. We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter and find it useful. We also invite you to suggest issues you would like us to cover.

Nov 2019

Managing a Redundancy Process

In the current economic climate, it is increasingly likely that at some stage, you could have to manage a redundancy process.

In today's uncertain business climate many firms face the possibility of having to reduce their operating costs. This means that many managers will have to run a redundancy process. Apart from being an unpleasant process to manage, it can also be a legal minefield. As such, it is important to follow the correct procedures. The redundancy process follows the stages outlined below:

Preparation

This includes assessing whether redundancy is actually necessary before starting the process. You should also identify your time frame and prepare the appropriate documentation.

Selection

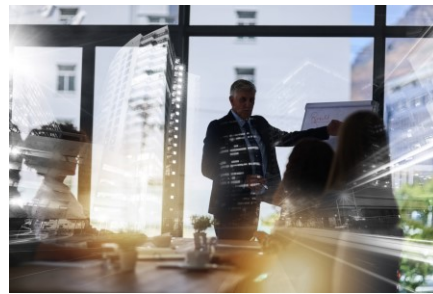
This includes selecting the pool of people under consideration for redundancy. You will also need to determine the criteria to be used in selecting those individuals. It is important that the selection criteria is objective and can be applied equally and fairly across the workforce. For example, experience, capability, relevant skills and competence.

Individual Consultation

There are legal time frames regarding consultation depending upon the number of people being made redundant. In any case, it is important to explain why an individual has been selected and to consider alternative employment in the company.

Notice of Redundancy and Appeals

Always remember to write to your employee to inform them of the dismissal and allow them the right of appeal.



The Termination Process

Remember to provide the employees with a written record of how the statutory redundancy payment has been calculated.

Throughout the redundancy process, communication is absolutely key. Having determined the need for redundancies and selected the criteria, it is good practice to ensure regular and open communication. This will help you and your firm to show that you've conducted the process in a fair and equitable manner in accordance with required legislation. If you are unsure about any legal aspects of a redundancy process, it is best to seek legal advice from a suitable law firm.

Making the Most of Alumni Networks

Whether it's your University classmates or the colleagues you trained with at your first firm, we all have an alumni network.

Your alumni network is an immense network of professional contacts - all with whom you already have one thing in common. That one thing could be a university that you attended, a previous employer or perhaps you took an evening study course together. How you are connected doesn't really matter. The fact that you have a connection gives you the right to reach out to someone and make contact. After all, people tend to be more receptive to contact from someone from within their network.

LinkedIn is a useful tool for reaching out to and connecting with your alumni. You can search by university or by employer and connect / re-connect with former colleagues. LinkedIn features some useful filters which can help you to find some of your old contacts by location, firm, etc. You can even set up a dedicated online group for your alumni network using the "Groups" page on LinkedIn. Members of your group can post messages, updates and communicate easily.

Online tools are great but there is no substitute for meeting up with your contacts, in person. If there is an annual alumni event then try to attend it every now and then, in order to maintain your network. If not, perhaps you can create an annual alumni networking event. It might be as simple as booking a private area in a bar and sending an email invitation to your alumni network.

Another great way to tap into your alumni network is to share your professional expertise. You could create a business blog or even offer to give a talk. If your alumni network has a common interest such as say, business startups, you could put together a panel of speakers who provide insights to your group. It makes a lot of sense to invest in cultivating your alumni network yet many business people don't make the time to do so. You could gain a real competitive advantage by taking the time to re-connect with your alumni.

Avoiding Burnout



In today's "always-on" society, business owners and managers are under more pressure than ever.

Stress related workplace burnout is now recognised by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as an official medical diagnosis. Here are some tips to help to avoid burnout.

Manage your time

It's impossible to sustain long-term happiness without appropriately balancing your professional and personal time. Avoiding burnout means using that time wisely, both now and in the future. Use an Outlook calendar or scheduling tool to keep close tabs on how you're spending your time. Regularly assess your week: How much time are you spending in the office? How much work do you do at home? How much time do you have fully to yourself? If any of those numbers look out of line, that's a sign that something needs to change.

Use your full holiday entitlement

A high proportion of business professionals don't use all of their annual leave days and they're paying the price for it. Time off work can provide a big boost to your productivity, creativity and overall job satisfaction. Working through your holiday might feel like the right thing to do for your career, but only increases the likelihood of burnout in the long run. Take holidays that will be good for your overall mental health - go somewhere relaxing and new. Even if it's just to a nearby destination, a change of scenery can go a long way toward helping you gain perspective on where you're at in life.

Separate work and home life

One of the most common ways burnout occurs is through work creep.

When professional responsibilities start to creep into your out-of-office life, whether it's in the evening, over the weekends or on holiday, that's a sign that burnout is approaching. People who work from home are most susceptible as the dividing line between work and family time is merely a closed door. One way of avoiding creep is by disconnecting. If your phone and laptop are always on and at the ready while you're at home, then you've never really left the office at all. Make an effort to fully unplug from the job when you're on your own time, and you'll notice a shift in how much you get from your time at home. Also, focusing your attention on different aspects of your life will help you feel more invigorated and creative when it's time to work again.

Embrace remote working

On the same note, you can get a change of scenery without fully leaving work behind. While it's important to completely disconnect during holiday time, working remotely can give your work the breath of fresh air it needs without fear of falling behind. Remote work has other benefits as well, such as increased productivity and a boost in company culture.



Taking a step back from the office allows you to work at your own pace and dictate your own style - and that can make a big difference in your overall job satisfaction. In order to make the most of your career, you need to be prepared to take a long term approach to how you work. Burnout cuts things short. Your career is a marathon, not a sprint.

Effective Internal Communication

Effective internal communication is key to creating an engaged workforce.

Effective communication between a company and its employees enables businesses to fully tap into the unique knowledge, insights, and talents of its people. Having an effective internal communication strategy can help to avoid misunderstandings. For example, if your firm is working on multiple, complex projects, a good internal communication strategy will help to avoid confusion and ensure that each team member knows what they need to do, what the deadline is, what the budget is, what is expected of them, etc.

Good communication flows both ways. As important as it is to give feedback to your employees, it's also crucial to teach your team members to give feedback. The key to this is an open and trustworthy culture that encourages dialogue between teams and individuals. Managers need to be willing to listen to their people and learn from them. They can use this information to help their teams to understand their role and how it fits with the objectives of the firm.

Internal communication should be part of a weekly routine. Employees want regular, real-time updates. They want to understand how their efforts are contributing to the success of the firm. Where employees are based in one location, weekly team meetings may be the best way to manage your communications. However, if your people are working from another location or they are mobile, it may be preferable to use a technology platform such as sharepoint, yammer or even video updates.

Finally, it is important not to overwhelm your team with too much information. People are constantly bombarded with emails, phone calls and social media. Your internal communications shouldn't add to this. Instead, keep it brief and include the high priority information first. You want your team members to be able to glance at the message, understand what's being communicated and what action is required (if any). When it comes to internal communication, keep it simple, ensure that your team feel informed and always welcome their feedback.