

# Three costly outplacement mistakes



Staring into the eyes of a hardworking, loyal employee and breaking the news of their redundancy would have to be one of the most difficult parts of a HR professional's job. That is why the topic of outplacement is so important, it is the last act a HR professional can do for an employee in need, and often the last memory a transitioning employee will take with them when they leave.

When it's done right, it can have incredible results for both the company and a transitioning employee – but when it's done wrong? The costs to your employment brand and the negative perception remaining staff have of your company can be catastrophic.

To ensure you handle it the right way, here are the three common and costly mistakes HR make with outplacement – and how you can avoid them.

## **Mistake 1 – Assume your employees know what to expect**

In most cases, an employee won't see a redundancy coming let alone know what needs to happen after it. So don't make the mistake of assuming an exiting employee knows what to expect. Being in shock, they will likely not have the mental clarity to ask the questions they need to, it will be up to you to walk them through it.

For this reason, it is crucial that you explain the process they will go through as they leave the company. If you have organised outplacement services (and you should have!) now is the time to tell them about the outplacement program, who their career coach will be, what the service will include and the benefits for them, and what their next step is.

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## Mistake 2 – Organising in-house outplacement

While in-house outplacement can seem like a good way to support your exiting employees and cut costs, it can often set them back further in their career transition.

When going through redundancy, transitioning employees can often experience mistrust and a range of emotions from embarrassment to betrayal. This can make employees close up during in-house outplacement programs and become stuck in the trauma of the event unable to focus on moving forward in their job search. An external partner has the right experience – and the right emotional distance.

What many people don't realise is that outplacement isn't just about teaching how to write resumes and cover letters or have a great interview, it's about providing the emotional support employees need to transition from one career to another. You can't expect an employee to be open and receptive to receiving that support internally from the people who are transitioning them out.

The best person to be able to provide the support your employee needs is an independent career coach who knows what they will be going through and can provide them with the expertise your transitioning employee needs to get a competitive edge in the job market.

## Mistake 3 – Leave the outplacement decision up to the employee

Outplacement is as much for your reputation as it is for your exiting employee's career benefit. So don't give your exiting employee a card with your outplacement provider's details and say "give them a call if you want help." Ideally, the employee should be introduced to their career coach immediately after their meeting with you.

This will allow your employee the opportunity to debrief after their meeting, ask questions, build a relationship with their coach and commence their outplacement program immediately. Your employees need to see the 'what's in it for me' benefit of the outplacement program, so they continue with it, and their career coach is the best person to do that can do that.

Need help transitioning employees out of the workplace? Want to provide different – and relevant outplacement support for your transitioning employees? Call the career transition experts, Turning Point Partners today on 1300 27 83 45, or email [friendlyteam@turningpointpartners.com.au](mailto:friendlyteam@turningpointpartners.com.au)