



Downsizing with Dignity: Notification Checklist

A solid separation strategy is essential to ensure dignity and respect during the notification process. Meridian Resources has been supporting companies as a human-centric outplacement consultant and service provider since 2000. We recommend the following sequence of communications for a successful termination meeting.

1. Share with the affected employee the purpose of the meeting. A brief explanation for the reason for termination should be communicated and it is best not to go through a step-by-step analysis of the documentation supporting the reason for the separation.
2. Advise the employee that the decision is final and cannot be reversed.
3. If appropriate, advise that alternative internal positions were explored and exhausted and emphasize that all relevant factors were reviewed when making the decision.
4. If applicable, stress that every key manager is in agreement with the decision.
5. Make it clear that the decision is final. Do not make promises of potential future employment that can create false expectations and prevent the employee from moving forward.
6. Make sure the employee is clear about the effective date of the termination.
7. Assure an effective review with the employee of the written summary of benefits. This summary should include, where applicable, severance pay, compensation for vacation and sick time, continuation of health and life insurance benefits, other benefits and re-employment/outplacement assistance. Have this documentation in writing, ready to present to the employee.
8. Have a final paycheck ready and available, if appropriate. If the employee is to leave immediately, have any final checks, benefits or vacation payments prepared.

9. Inform the employee how to collect his or her personal belongings and how and when he/she needs to leave the premises. Letting them come back after hours is a good idea as long as the visit is supervised.
10. Provide an outline of the next steps in the termination process, such as the last day of work, return of company ID, credit cards, keys, etc.
11. If applicable, provide the employee with a written summary of projects to be transferred to ensure a smooth transition of work if the employee will remain as an active employee for a period of time.
12. Be empathetic, not sympathetic. Terminated employees need to see that there is some empathy for their situation. Allow the employee to vent their feelings and be a good listener.
13. Genuinely wish the employee good luck and, in addition, express confidence in his or her future if at all possible. Offer any support in the transition that is acceptable by the company (references/recommendations).
14. Stand, extend a handshake (if appropriate) and remain standing until the employee has left the meeting location and begins the exiting process.



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