

Outplacement Services for Departing Execs: Carrot or Stick?

May 26, 2021 Anne Sample 0

Facebook Twitter LinkedIn Gmail

Timely Transition Support Brings Confident Separation and Stronger Business Reputation

Outplacement services are standard fare for senior leaders when downsizing occurs. Partnering with specialized firms enables organizations to recognize corporate executives for their contributions, demonstrate a strong employment brand and ultimately, ease the transition for both the departing leader and the company.

However, companies often mistake this valuable benefit for a bargaining chip rather than a critical resource that helps both sides move forward.

This occurs when decision-makers view outplacement as a point of leverage, awarding it only after departing staff complete separation agreements or at the end of a rescission period.

Typically, a cautious outlook or excessive legal concern fuels this reaction. The problem with handling outplacement as a stick is that it hurts both the company and the employee.

For businesses, the result can be a poor separation that:

- Negatively impacts brand reputation in the market
- Reduces cooperation during the transition process
- Makes it more difficult for the organization to move forward

For individuals, this tactic can:

- Delay much-needed career support—sometimes for weeks or months
- Create unnecessary pressure to an already stressful situation
- Amplify an adversarial perspective

Extend the Carrot with Immediate Outplacement

When transition support begins immediately, it generally results in better outcomes for all involved. I recommend using transition services as an incentive and enabler—in other words, a “carrot” approach.

WANT TO BE THE SMARTEST SOURCER IN THE ROOM?

Get the latest news and views in Recruiting, Sourcing and HR Technology delivered directly to your inbox.

JOIN NOW!

In the “carrot” scenario, the company grants access to outplacement support as soon it notifies senior leaders of an impending separation.

Outplacement services for Director, VP and C-Suite roles typically include personal discovery, career consulting and one-on-one coaching; tactical support such as resume development and LinkedIn training; collaboration on personalized job search strategies; as well as interview preparation and offer negotiation tips.

While it's still necessary to complete the appropriate legal agreements and finalize a transition plan, leading with career resources shows good faith and smooths the way for these efforts.

Early access to outplacement is particularly important:

- With departing (or even retiring) C-suite executives
- When separation is a surprise for the individual
- If the notification is done early, leaving weeks or months of employment before a final separation date
- For staff expected to provide training, knowledge transfer or support to others prior to exit

In these instances, outplacement services can lessen the impact of departure, remove unproductive emotions from the transition and create an environment that fosters communication and cooperation.

Focus on Outcomes, Not Time-Based Services

Immediate support is just one important criterion when selecting outplacement services for key executives.

Other considerations for a successful separation include:

- **Experienced consultants.** Tenured leaders deserve equivalent expertise in their outplacement team, as well as resources who understand the unique challenges that executives face. There's no substitute for the insights and rapport an experienced outplacement consultant can deliver.
- **Outcome-based services.** Time-based outplacement heightens the pressure for executives during an already stressful time, and usually expires long before senior leaders land their next opportunity. Outcome-based services provide the same support without time constraints.
- **One-on-one support.** Many firms rely on webinars and digital tools, when in reality, senior leaders find more benefit in peer-to-peer outplacement engagements. Opportunities for one-on-one coaching let each executive tailor career services to meet their specific goals.

Show Empathy, Dignity and Support

The right approach is especially critical in the current climate. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic last spring, corporate executives have navigated numerous challenges, from pivoting business models and protecting worker safety, to managing through temporary closures and weighing issues of racial justice.

Many took sizable pay cuts to sustain their organizations.

While economic realities may still dictate eliminating some of these key positions, brand-savvy human resources teams (and even corporate boards of directors) should recognize the outsized efforts of key executives during the past few months.

A separation that's conducted with empathy, dignity and adequate support is critical. Organizations that overlook crisis leadership risk appearing tone-deaf to current employees, potential new hires and even customers.

Every transition presents the opportunity to begin a new course. And while no organization enjoys making difficult choices about their workforce, when respect, compassion and appropriate resources accompany those decisions, it creates greater outcomes for all involved.

ANNE SAMPLE

NAVIGATE.FORWARD

Anne deBruin Sample, CEO and owner of [Navigate Forward](#), is an experienced HR leader. Anne has an enviable track record of leading business-building transformation and developing top talent. Anne engages her passion in helping leaders find new destinations through transition coaching and leadership development. Previously, Anne has worked in various HR and strategy roles for Whirlpool, PepsiCo, Walker Digital, Thrivent Financial, Caribou Coffee and Bagels, and Citibank.

She currently serves on the Board of Directors of MyMeds, a startup providing individuals with digital health tools and real-time data. Anne prioritizes giving back. Navigate Forward continues to contribute at least 4% of corporate revenue to charitable causes. Anne is active in local charities including the Light of Hope Home and School for Girls in Kenya, Opportunity International, and is a mentor for ACES. Outside of work, Anne enjoys traveling with friends and family, entertaining, and making connections.

- Company Culture Employment Guest Post Hiring HR Job Market Leadership Recruiting Industry Talent Acquisition Technology Tips

Previous Post **Hibob, SmartRecruiters Integration Tackles Onboarding Issues** Next Post **Ongig - 12 Ways to Get a Discount from Me with Rob Kelly**

Leave a Reply

Facebook Comments Default Comments (0) Disqus Comments (0)

0 Comments Sort by Oldest

Add a comment...

Facebook Comments Plugin

Related articles

- How VR Can Make Your Hiring Process Truly Equitable**

Women in Tech, a Book for Guys With Eva Helén

HCM Talent Technology Roundup June 4 2021

About

With over 100K strong in our network, **RecruitingDaily.com** is part of the **RecruitingDaily.com**, LLC family of Recruiting and HR communities.

Our goal is to provide information that is meaningful. Without compromise, our community comes first.

Meet our team >>

Join the Network!

RecruitingDaily.com
RecruitingBlogs.com
RecruitingConferences.com
RecruitingTools.com
RecruitingWebinars.com

Contact

RecruitingDaily.com, LLC
 One Reservoir Corporate Drive
 4 Research Drive – Suite 402
 Shelton, CT 06484
 Email us: info@recruitingdaily.com