

# OPPORTUNITY!

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The BRIGHTON GROUP

oiPartners<sup>Inc.</sup>

The Brighton Group/OI Partners, Inc. is a locally owned and managed consulting firm specializing in career and organizational transition services. In-depth one-on-one consulting is the core of our distinctive approach.

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The need to lay off employees is never pleasant. The need to conduct larger scale downsizings is even more so. As the magnitude and scale of a downsizing increase, so do the surrounding potential risks if not managed tightly and well.

There is, however, an opportunity side to these situations. How you manage the event can demonstrate the organization's ability to positively manage change and take care of its people when difficult business decisions need to be made. Remaining employees want to see their former friends and colleagues treated with dignity and fairness. They will watch closely with the knowledge that this could happen to them. So how do you seize the opportunity?

There are several fundamental keys to turning trauma into success:

- Comprehensive planning on the front end. Scale increases the magnitude of all the planning issues *and introduces additional considerations that are not a part of a single layoff or a smaller event*. These include coordination with multiple managers organization-wide, the consideration of policy and precedent setting issues, consistent and defensible selection criteria, adverse impact reviews, increased security considerations, and preplanning for managing the newly downsized organization.
- Provision of severance packages that are fair and reasonable for a demographic pool that is diverse with respect to level, function and tenure.
- A clear and consistent internal and external communication plan for all parts of the organization and key external constituencies. Timing and message content become more critical.
- Training for managers on conducting the terminations and communicating the organizational and business rationale for the changes.
- Review of the logistics of the event with clear contingency plans with participating executives, managers, the HR team and supporting staff. Assuring the dignity of the departing employees is paramount.
- Clear communication of the transition support being provided, including EAP assistance, benefit continuation, vacation payouts and professional outplacement assistance.
- Availability of outplacement consultant/s to meet with the impacted employees immediately after their termination. This provides immediate emotional support and redirects the individual to moving forward.

Although the above seem straightforward, when you are facing a layoff event of increased magnitude, good fundamentals are more critical than ever. Your outplacement provider can be an invaluable partner at a time when your internal resources will be stretched by multiple demands and constricted timelines. When the stakes are high, the early engagement of outside experience and expertise can bring the kind of return on investment that assures ongoing success and turns potential trauma into opportunity.

***"A Better Human Experience...For A Better Business Outcome"***