

Reduction in Force (RIF) Best Practices



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The handling of a Reduction in Force (RIF) significantly impacts an organization's brand and reputation, as well as how remaining team members perceive the treatment of departing employees. Following RIF best practices is essential to navigate this process with sensitivity, dignity, and respect, demonstrating a commitment to the well-being of all involved.

1

Follow a Clear Process

Utilize AJO's expertise to craft a robust implementation strategy aligned with best practices. Engage your Legal team to ensure compliance with labor laws, fair treatment, and grievance minimization.

2

Plan & Provide Advance Notice (when required)

Collaborate with AJO, your Corporate Communications team, and the managers of potentially impacted employees to prepare the final implementation plan. Keep in mind that, under certain conditions, advance notice of 60 calendar days is required under the Federal WARN Act.

3

Prepare for the Layoff Notification Meeting



Schedule notification meetings thoughtfully to minimize disruption, avoiding holidays and Fridays.



Ensure both the employee's manager and/or an HR representative are present to address logistical and emotional needs. Consider offering access to an on-site AJO Consultant as a post-notification resource.



Prepare necessary documents including final paycheck, notification letter, separation agreement (with details on severance and benefits continuation), and outplacement service information. Provide clear contact points for employee inquiries.



Develop a communication plan to address the impact of workforce reduction internally and externally, coordinating with Corporate Communications as needed.

4

Conduct the Notification Meeting

Approach notification meetings empathetically, ensuring dignity and respect for employees' emotional challenges. For virtual notifications, consider having another manager or HR member present. Managers or HR should be prepared to review the RIF package with affected employees.

5

Provide Outplacement Services

AJO offers exclusive outplacement services, including personalized coaching, resume and LinkedIn reviews, interview prep, job search strategies, and an online career transition portal. These services ensure departing employees receive professional support, underscoring the company's commitment to their future success.

If your organization is facing a potential workforce reduction, AJO can help. We were founded some four decades ago to provide a full range of customized career transition services. Since then, we've coached more than 14,000 candidates through the complexities of change, turning unforeseen challenges into real opportunities.