



## Quick Tips for Managers during a Layoff Process

Involuntary reductions in force create the most difficult experience that many supervisors or managers have to implement in the course of their entire careers. Prior to the layoff you must make painful recommendations about who stays and who leaves and then deliver the message to those who will be losing their jobs. Your knowledge of your employees' personal lives and needs makes this all the more difficult. After the layoffs, you must help remaining staff (the survivors) get back to carrying out the mission of the workplace with reorganized and re-assigned work. Expect that the survivors (including yourselves) will experience some or all of the following after the layoff: increased workloads, lower morale, increased job insecurity and increased health risks related to stress. To assist you during this time, the EAP offers the following tips.

### Effective Management Responses

- Check in with your own feelings, which might include guilt about the decisions you had to make, anger at the “powers that be”, relief that your job is secure, uncertainty about the security of your job, fear that an employee will become upset, sad about losing certain employees, worried about how laid off employees and their families will survive, anxiety about the future, questioning the meaning of work, difficulty concentrating, difficulty sleeping.
- Stay connected with your employees, even when you don't know what to say.
- Allow time and space for emotions: anger, loss, denial, guilt. Don't assume that people who are finding it difficult to cope are “resisters.” People move through stages of grief differently.
- Engage in career development discussions. Provide training/resources as possible.
- Help employees balance work and life. Allow some time for career development or meeting with EAP.
- Meet with each person individually. Reassure them that they are valued *and why*. Praise good work.
- Continue to lead. Provide guidance for meaningful work during this interim period.
- Make work reapportionment decisions in private and share the info with the survivors when the time is right. Realize that including the potentially laid off employees in meetings where their jobs are being divided up can be very upsetting for them and uncomfortable for those staying.
- Employees want to be heard. Listen to them without judging or prying.
- Emphasize the importance of self-care.
- Remind people that the EAP is here to help. **State of Vermont Employees: 1-888-834-2830.**
- Notice if someone is having a particularly hard time and help them call the EAP, or call us for a Supervisory Consultation to help you decide what intervention is needed.
- Take care of yourself. Eat well, exercise, get enough sleep, do what you love. Your positive energy will impact the workplace positively.

Employees are being coached to recognize that the stress of losing a job is like the stress of losing a loved one through death or divorce. Don't be surprised to see people feeling sad, angry or depressed, and realize that this type of loss is real and often painful. Allow them the time and space to adjust and transition. They need to grieve the loss of the work that they do. Remind them of the significant contributions they have made to the State of Vermont.

**EAP is available for THREE MONTHS post-separation from your job with the State.  
Call us for help with the transition: 1-888-834-2830**

Call EAP if you would like to talk confidentially to a professional about your feelings or to help a colleague access support: **1-888-834-2830.**

Visit our website at [www.vtstate.investeap.org](http://www.vtstate.investeap.org). Password: *vteap*

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