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Understanding the Need for Outplacement Agencies by [Carolyn Green](#)

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Layoffs are as stressful to the person, who conveys the message, as they are to the people who are being conveyed the message. While it is important to ensure that the dignity of the employee is maintained, it is also necessary that the message is conveyed in a definite yet detached manner. More often than not, it is the immediate supervisor who conveys this message to the soon to be redundant employee. This supervisor is often overcome with guilt, anger, stress and fear (thinking about his own prospects), and the best of intentions are bungled. Outplacement agencies can help you handle layoffs in the most professional manner. They help the employee deal with the issue positively and also equip him with the necessary skills to find future employment.

Many times the scope of an outplacement agency begins by first analyzing the need for layoffs, helping the company assess the employees on the basis of performance, requirement and other metrics, and even charting the downsizing plan for the company.

Once a decision on the employees to be laid off is reached, the next step is to train senior staff, whom are required to convey the message, equip him with the necessary answers to possible questions, and possible situations. This is very important as an improper handling of this situation can lead to legal issues and also likely to affect the company's image.

Mishandling of this issue can also lead to frustration among the "surviving" employees. Whenever a company announces layoffs there's always a panic syndrome that spreads among the employees. Fear about their future, and guilt at being spared from the axe often leads the "surviving" employees to bad mouth the company. This can be damaging to the company's perceived reputation in the market.

But when the survivors see that their former colleagues are treated with dignity, and are being equipped with the necessary skills to make themselves employable in the market; confidence is instilled among these survivors.

Thanks to the recession, the outplacement industry is worth billions of dollars. Outplacement agencies have now begun to offer standardized services with little value or benefit to the redundant staff. Companies, who are in a hurry to get rid of the redundant staff and move on with regular business, add to this problem. Before you hire an outplacement agency, make sure to inquire about the agencies past performance, its values, culture, and its reputation in general.

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Carolyn Green has more than 7 years of experience in career guidance and has been writing extensively about a [outplacement agencies](#) and a [executive recruitment firms](#).

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