

The Five O'Clock News[®]

from America's Premier Career-Coaching and Outplacement Service

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"One organization with a long record of success in helping people find jobs is The Five O'Clock Club."

FORTUNE

Celebrating 25 years—
America's Premier
Career Coaching and
Outplacement Network for
Professionals, Managers
and Executives

Say a Kind Word

Five O'Clock Club Survey Shows that
Dismissals With Dignity

Benefit Employees and Corporations

**Bruising Lay Offs Can Leave
Long-Term Scars**



Andrea Weinzimer
VP, Human Resources
Hachette Book Group USA
HR HERO OF THE YEAR
for outstanding compassion
and decency to employees



Star closing pitcher for the New York Yankees, Mariano Rivera.

In this issue

- ◆ **Advice for Managers Who Must Let Employees Go**
- ◆ **Termination Practices: What Works and What Doesn't**

“I think of myself as the Mariano Rivera of HR. Someone makes a mistake on the management side and they come to me, or my colleagues send me to them, and we have to “close” it—that is, we’ve got to fix it, clean up the mess. And other times, managers do a great job.

“I think that one key role of HR is to let people leave an organization with their heads held high and with their dignity as much intact as when they walked in.

“Because, really, they’re moving on to another chapter in their lives, so this isn’t the end of something. It’s really the beginning of something else for them. If we can ease the way for them, good for us.

“Also, remember that the person you help to terminate may some day be your boss. So, be careful.”

Andrea Weinzimer's comments on receiving the HR Hero of the Year Award

When Your Employer Cares About You THEY CHOOSE THE FIVE O'CLOCK CLUB FOR OUTPLACEMENT

We are proud of our many HR customers who *care* what happens to their displaced employees. In fact, HR people can become *heroes* in their companies by telling their employers about the Five O'Clock Club outplacement program. We work with each employee *for at least one full year*, even if the person lands a job quickly, which is a great benefit. Our guaranteed package means that we will continue working with the employee even if he or she decides to do consulting work for a while, loses the next job, or needs help handling the political situation in a new job — even for months! And this package costs far less than what the employer would pay at an old-fashioned outplacement firm. HR professionals can learn more about the Club by observing Five O'Clock Club outplacement coaching in action. To do so, just call 212-286-4500 and ask for David Madison.

Advise Managers to Say a Kind Word to Departing Employees

We recently conducted two confidential surveys: one of human resources executives and one of displaced employees. We found that managers were not handling the termination process as well as they should. Sixty percent of employees said they would definitely *not* recommend the organization they used to work for, primarily because of the way they were handled

during the termination process. This makes it difficult for HR to recruit new employees. Furthermore, unpleasant firing practices can negatively impact the employee's future job search, destroy morale for your remaining employees, and increase the chance of lawsuits. One HR person said that she herself was escorted out by two guards and forced to walk past employees. Even though she knew this was company policy she suffered for months from the way she was treated.

Our study showed that managers neglected to say a positive word during the termination process even to long-term employees — people who had been on staff for five years or more! In these fast-paced times where companies have to change direction and employees get displaced because they are no longer the right fit, we all have to slow down and *take care of* displaced employees. You can see the results of our survey, "Perspectives on Termination," on pages 3 to 5 in this magazine. HR professionals can give their managers the handout on pages 8 and 9, which provides safe, positive words they can say to departing employees. The bottom line is this: Managers *must* say a kind, positive word to the employee during the termination process.

In the survey, many employees said they wished that HR had been at the termination meeting and thought it would have been handled better. Employees in

general do respect the abilities of HR to handle terminations well.

Research has shown that the sooner the employee gets started in outplacement, the better he or she will do in the search and the less likely he or she is to sue. The two go hand in hand. If a job hunter spends time suing her former employer, she is less likely to conduct an effective job search. Job hunters have a choice of suing the former employer or getting on with their lives, but they can't do both effectively.

When The Five O'Clock Club gets an assignment from HR, we contact the

Continued on back page



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Article submissions based on 5OCC methodology are welcome. There is no guarantee of publication. All submissions become the property of The Five O'Clock Club, Inc.



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Perspectives on Termination

by Human Resource Professionals and Employees

Surveyed: 136 random members of the HR Network and 228 members of The Five O'Clock Club

Survey context to HR: Think of a recent occasion when a manager had to let an employee go.

Survey context to employees dismissed: Think of a time when you were dismissed from a job.

Question/ Issue:	Human Resources said:	Employees said:
How do you feel about the way the dismissal was handled?	80% were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the way the person was let go.	56% were "unsatisfied" or "very unsatisfied" with the way they were let go.
During the dismissal meeting: Was the employee given an explanation about why he or she was being let go? Was the employee's performance discussed?	94% said the employee was informed about the reason for the dismissal. 82% said discussion of performance was either neutral or negative.	74% said they were given a reason for the dismissal. 62% said discussion of performance was either neutral or negative.
Should the person have been let go? (Was the dismissal necessary?)	Thought the dismissal was necessary with 87% answering "yes" or "definitely."	69% said the dismissal was "not" or "definitely not" necessary.
Do you think the dismissed employee would <i>recommend</i> the organization to a friend who was looking for a job?	50% said the employee would recommend the organization.	<u>69% of employees said they would "not" or "definitely not" recommend the organization.</u>
Can you think of ways the dismissal could have been handled better?	63% said "yes," the dismissal could have been handled better.	74% said "yes," the dismissal could have been handled better.
How do you think the way the employee was handled during the dismissal affected his or her job search?	28% rated the impact on job search as "positive," 60% as "neutral" and 12% as "negative" or "very negative."	15% rated the impact on their search as "positive," 44% as "neutral," and 42% as "negative" or "very negative."
<u>How were long timers treated?</u> 24% of employees fired had 5 to 25 years tenure.	HR said that <u>11% received a positive word about their performance. 89% received a negative or neutral word about their performance.</u>	

WHAT THE EMPLOYEES SAID

about their dismissal

Dismissal notification:

- ◆ Companies expect two weeks' notice from employees. Employees said they wanted two weeks notice also.

The brutality of a same day / same minute dismissal:

- ◆ Two weeks' notice or a week's notice or some sort of heads up would have been professional. Instead I was given same day notice and one hour to clear out, and escorted off the property.

- ◆ I would have preferred to negotiate a departure and to be able to announce that I was leaving. Many people were dismayed at my sudden disappearance. The whole event was humiliating.
- ◆ I was treated like a criminal. I was told I could not go back to my desk, even if I had forgotten something. I had to leave through a special exit.

The unkindness of the way they were dismissed:

- ◆ I received a phone call while out of town on business. It made the dismissal that much more chilling. He could

WHAT THE EMPLOYEES SAID, cont'd.

- ◆ have waited a day until I returned home.
- ◆ Society has become so litigious that there is more focus on covering the company's hind parts than on doing the right thing for employees.
- ◆ Layoffs were done in a mass meeting, which I was not told about. I found out I was laid off when I got back from lunch and everyone was reacting to the news.
- ◆ I was on the publicity committee. We had a conference call on the Tuesday before the "black Friday" bloodbath. That's how I heard about it.
- ◆ They got rid of me; I put a lot of time in there.

Lack of recognition for past performance:

- ◆ They could have acknowledged my contributions to the growth of the company.
- ◆ There was no recognition of my contribution to the company.
- ◆ Could have been more balanced in his assessment; instead focused on and created negative feedback to strengthen his case.

Lack of warning and explanation about the dismissal:

- ◆ Should have been remediation steps if there was a problem. Had perfect evaluations prior to this problem.
- ◆ I could have been informed at any point in time that expectations of my performance were not being met, and given an opportunity to change.
- ◆ I could have been given a warning of some sort; I should have been able to speak with a superior about it; my colleagues should not have been told I was fired.

DISMISSAL RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ◆ Treat people with respect.
- ◆ Show more empathy from senior management.
- ◆ Provide better severance pay or outplacement services/career coaching.
- ◆ Have HR present at any dismissal.

HUMAN RESOURCES EXAMPLES OF POSITIVE DISMISSALS

Prepare managers for the dismissal:

- ◆ Dismissals are always very stressful. I have found that when managers are prepared with a little bit of a script, they stand up to the pressure better. The last termination I assisted with went far more smoothly than it might have because the manager was prepared and we had a decent severance package to present.

Provide support for employees being laid off:

- ◆ Turndown in business necessitated layoff of several employees. Brought in résumé writing session for those needing assistance, offered assistance in photocopying, and offered managerial level outplacement services. This was a "good" experience. Those in the layoff group felt that the company provided beneficial services to them. Those who survived the layoff felt good about how the company treated those in the layoff group.
- ◆ The employee was allowed ample time to remain on the company payroll prior to her actual last day worked in order to conduct a new job search. This enabled her to seek new opportunities while she was still gainfully employed. This boosted her confidence and made her more marketable. More employers should consider offering job counseling while the employee is still in transition, not necessarily always after they're separated.
- ◆ I have terminated hundreds of employees, so no one story stands out. Most of the time when an employee is ultimately dismissed for performance, there is a sense of relief. It's hard for people to admit that the job is too difficult for them to succeed at and they are afraid to leave and face the unknown. We terminate with a transition package and help to start them on a job search.

Provide performance counseling for poor performing employees:

- ◆ We had a seven-month employee who had been counseled at the two- and four-month mark on her deficient performance in an important part of her job. She admitted that the technical part was complex, but that she was working hard to do it. She handled the clerical functions satisfactorily but continued to make errors in the analytical functions. Rather than continuing to try to make the employee into something she wasn't, we decided to terminate her. We referenced the prior discussions about improving, told her the improvement didn't happen and therefore it was time to leave the company. We paid her to the end of the month. She said she understood, apologized for not making it work and thanked us for the notice time. **Moral: Proper counseling and documentation lead to a "no surprises" dismissal.**
- ◆ When dismissals are done properly, employees feel that they have been treated fairly. In many instances, the only communication employees receive is when they are in the HR department with their supervisor. It is difficult because they do not receive timely feedback from their supervisor. I always try to be as forthright and

as specific as possible with an employee and treat him or her with respect. I try to empathize with how difficult it is going to be to go home and tell loved ones that their employment has been terminated.

- ◆ As the HR point person involved, I always stay focused on the ethical and legal aspects. Do not be influenced by the department if the decision-making information is not substantial enough. Remember, would you feel confident about what you say or communicate during a termination if the whole company and CEO were watching? If not, you should think things through again.
- ◆ My HR motto: I believe that no discharge should be a surprise to an employee. The employee should have significant information about the manager's expectations and where he or she is falling short with an ability to perform appropriately. The company's responsibility is to help employees achieve their best, and treat them with dignity if they haven't.
- ◆ I worked for an organization that did not believe in giving verbal or written warnings of any kind. Any time employees were brought to my office to be terminated they had a complete look of shock on their face and had absolutely no idea that there was any issue with their performance. I always felt that this was a failure on the part of the manager. The manager never took the time to help train or point out areas in which an employee needed to improve, and the employee assumed that he was doing everything the manager wanted. At least with a warning, you can give employees an idea that an aspect of their performance is not up to par and they need to improve, which they often do. In the worst case scenario, if they do get fired, at least they were made aware that their performance was lacking, so they are not completely shocked when it occurs.
- ◆ A dismissal that I was involved in that went well was with an employee who had personal issues that were impacting her work performance. The employee was given support through our EAP program and still did not improve her work performance. The manager felt that the work that needed to be done was *not* getting done and that it was now necessary for dismissal. The employee was well aware that, if she did not show improvement in her performance, she would be separated from the agency. At the dismissal meeting, the employee said that she had basically "fired herself" because she hadn't done her job. For an employee to be clear that she had been given the opportunity to improve and chose not to and was now faced with the consequences of the decision — it was a great process to participate in and witness.
- ◆ Ideally, a person should be given one to two *verbal* warnings, then a written. It's important that the written

warning states the problem, anecdote and consequences if the situation does not improve. Also there should be a date for the problem to be resolved.

- ◆ Since we put our new "warning" system into place, terminations have gone much more smoothly. The *warnings* are more difficult for the employee to take than the termination itself. They are usually in shock but are more verbal about stating their side of the case. If they feel there is no hope for them to change and they do not like their job or manager, they usually put themselves on pause and just wait for their package. If they are surprised and don't agree with the warnings and it is something that is changeable, you will see a complete change in one week.

One interesting example is an employee who was very proud, received the warning and disliked his new boss. He fought for over an hour with everything we were saying. He barely improved, really had outgrown his position and did not get along with his manager. In the termination 30 days later he had lists of things he thought he had improved on. We said that the time for discussion had passed and that it was not working out. I started going over his severance agreement and he asked if the two managers could leave the room. He then took a resignation letter from his pocket and said he would rather resign than be let go. We agreed that he could stay one week and actively look. The next day he came into my office, said he did not know what severance was and took the package.

- ◆ Generally I think the more HR is involved, and the more notice is given to HR to prepare, the better the dismissal goes.
- ◆ I have been involved in many exit interviews and, unfortunately, most people do not see the termination coming. They do not take responsibility for their own actions or lack of actions. The worst scenario is when an individual becomes angry and walks out, leaving behind any information and paperwork about remaining benefits, *e.g.*, COBRA. We mail the info to the home address.

Treat the employee being dismissed with dignity and respect:

- ◆ We should never forget to treat the employee as a person. I feel that this is where HR comes in—we can offer the human touch that managers may forget in looking at the bottom line.
- ◆ After announcing to 100 employees, in one of our manufacturing facilities, that we would be closing down in one year, I received a standing ovation for being forthright with them and treating them with respect. ●

The Annual Dinner for the Five O'Clock Club Guild of Career Counselors in the New York Tri-State Area

Forty-two people attended the Annual Guild Dinner on September 7, 2006. The New York Area Guild offers four training workshops per year for its members — Five O'Clock Club career coaches — but once a year we get together, with spouses, for an evening without shoptalk. The Guild is headed by David Madison, Ph.D.



An “Extremely Special Fellowship”

by John Kelly



John Kelly, a successful Five O’Clock Club job hunter, was our guest speaker at the Annual Guild Dinner of the Five O’Clock Club career coaches. He is now the CEO of a small software firm in Connecticut.

As I look at this group of coaches gathered here, I had no idea there were so many of you! I think you should feel very privileged to be a member of the Guild. The Five O’Clock Club is extremely special. What appealed to me is that you’re not really like a business. You’re more like a fellowship, and the self-help way the Club works is, in fact, unique and special. This should be cultivated and nurtured as the organization goes forward. It’s your greatest strength and differentiator.

“The Five O’Clock Club is not like a business, but more like a fellowship.”

I worked for seven years for a company that doubled in size. The management team was being stretched too thin. I recommended that a consulting firm be hired to help us sort out the best organizational scheme to carry us forward. It was a bit distressing to find that my position was not on some of the charts that emerged. One morning, after a great day with my boss, I was called to his office and told, “We don’t need you to work here anymore. We’ve selected one of the recommended charts—and you’re not on the chart.” When I called my fiancée, René, who is an HR professional and coach herself, she said, “This is the best thing that could have happened to you.” I went home and called all my friends, who told me that I’d get another job in a heartbeat, which, of course, I didn’t believe. I had become too settled, perhaps too complacent—I’d bought into the corporate mythology that the grass couldn’t possibly be greener anywhere else.

“My group was made up of senior executives, and they pushed me to think that I could aspire to go higher.”

Because I’m a sales guy, I assumed that the way to look for a job was to throw as much stuff against the wall as possible, and something would stick. I’d been offered outplacement at one of the traditional firms, but I’d come across the Five O’Clock Club through a Google search, and I thought it looked pretty interesting. I found one of the books in a bookstore, I joined the Club on my own—and then my company agreed to my request that they purchase Five O’Clock Club outplacement. It turned out that it was cheaper for them, but it was a good deal for me.

I’m absolutely confident that I got a lot more out of the Club’s process than I would have through traditional outplacement. Even though I *thought* I knew how to look for a job, *you* taught me how to look for a job. I now feel confident that if I ever have to go through job search again, I’ll know what to do, and I’ll come back to the Club.

My one-on-one coach was Jim Borland, who has a straightforward, no-nonsense approach. He would tell me flat out, “You need to do this differently.” He asked the difficult questions that I didn’t want to ask myself. And I’ve been back to see him for additional coaching on doing well in my new job.

I ended up with a much better position than I would ever have dreamed possible. I studied the books as if I were in graduate school again—because there’s a lot in them. I did the Forty-Year Vision, putting a lot of thought into what I really wanted to do. My fiancée, René, was telling me, “You need to be a CEO, you’re ready to do that.” I doubted it because I wasn’t seeing much beyond where I was. But Jim, René and especially my small group at the Club helped me with this. My group was

made up of senior executives from various companies, and they pushed me to think that I could aspire to go higher. That helped me tremendously.

“I felt that the Club was the right place to be and that I was going to be taken care of. You don’t get that at a traditional outplacement firm.”

The Club methodology taught me to analyze the types and sizes of companies I should look at. Should I go for a comparable or more senior role? How should I position myself for a company that is different from the one I was in? How do I present myself under one set of circumstances on a Tuesday morning and a different set of circumstances on Wednesday afternoon—when the opportunities are considerably different? The approach I’d always used was, “Here’s what I do—see if you like me.” The Five O’Clock Club approach is to find out what they want to buy, then position yourself: “I’m what you want to buy.” That’s real salesmanship, and that’s where the Club really helped me.

The most important thing in my whole experience with the Five O’Clock Club was the feeling, when I walked in, that this was the right place to be and that I was going to be taken care of. You don’t get that at a traditional outplacement firm, where you get a desk, a phone and a database to look for a job. Coming to the Club was almost like walking into an emergency room and being taken care of by people who are going to make you better. I referred one of my friends to the Club who ended up with four offers. He said to me, “This really works!”

But it only works if you work it. So I say to this gathering of Five O’Clock Club coaches: Keep up the good fight—this is good stuff! ●



A Kind Word Helps

Advice for Managers who Must Let Employees Go

Heroes come in all sizes, and you don't have to be a giant hero. You can be a very small hero. It's just as important to understand that accepting self-responsibility for the things you do, having good manners, caring about other people—these are heroic acts. Everybody has the choice of being a hero or not being a hero every day of their lives.

George Lucas, film director, as quoted in *Time* magazine, April 26, 1999

If you lay off one or more staff members, what impact will your actions have on those who leave and those who remain? Are you likely to lose the commitment of your best people who will worry about their positions? Or will morale *increase* because you handled the terminated employees with dignity?

The Five O'Clock Club, the nation's leading job coaching and outplacement company, recently conducted a survey of fired employees to discover how they felt about the way terminations were handled at their organizations.

- ◆ In the exit interview, job performance was covered 94% of the time. 82% of the time employees were not given any positive feedback about their performance, according to HR.
- ◆ In fact, HR reported that only 11% of long-term employees—people who had worked at the company for over five to 20 years—received a positive word.
- ◆ **69% of workers said they would not or definitely would not recommend the organization to fellow job seekers.**
- ◆ 42% of workers rated the impact on their job search as negative or very negative.

Why Say a Kind Word?

Termination with dignity protects corporate profitability. If you say a kind word to employees during dismissal,

they are much more likely to be positive about the organization, recommending the organization to a friend who is looking for a job and recommending the company's products and services.

In addition, unpleasant firing practices can negatively impact the employee's future job search, destroy morale for your remaining employees, and increase the chance of lawsuits. Allowing people to keep their dignity well serves all parties involved in the process.

Employees are more likely to say a kind word about the employer if the employer says a kind word to them during the exit process.

Can a Kind Word Get You in Trouble?

Alan Sklover, the well-known employee's attorney, says the risks of saying a kind word are overblown. The things HR and managers can say to "get into trouble" are quite limited to:

- ◆ promises or assurances to provide additional assistance, benefits or compensation;
- ◆ words or phrases that would suggest a discriminatory mindset;
- ◆ words or gestures that are negative, attacking or humiliating, whether about the employee, the company, or the decision to terminate the person.

Mr. Sklover suggests managers consider kind words such as these:

- ◆ "Your being let go does not mean anything negative about you, personally. To the contrary, you are universally considered a kind, considerate and compassionate per-

son." [Ego Support]

- ◆ "You have made considerable and long-lasting contributions, and they are acknowledged and appreciated." [Reputation confirmation]
- ◆ "You have many good friends here. We hope those friendships will continue." [Relation continuation]
- ◆ "I understand the many emotions you might be feeling right now. You have every right to feel that way." [Emotional support]
- ◆ "Loss of employment is undoubtedly a difficult experience. We're confident you have the ability to overcome this setback." [Confidence building]

Here are a few tips from the experts at the Five O'Clock Club (www.fiveo'clockclub.com):

- ◆ **Be Honest:** Tell the employee what went wrong. People are more likely to go forward if they are given an explanation.
- ◆ **Be Positive:** Yes, a kind word helps. For example, "George, you've been a trooper. I'm sorry that the organization has moved in a different direction."
- ◆ **Be Compassionate:** Allow separated employees a "decompression period" in familiar surroundings. Let them have some control over how they leave. If possible, let them finish tasks they want to finish and make arrangements for keeping in touch with co-workers.
- ◆ **Be Pragmatic:** Have available full written summaries of severance benefits prepared with as much care as the benefit booklets handed to new hires.
- ◆ **Seek Closure:** Discuss other issues such as professional references, so the employee can formulate a strategy to move forward.
- ◆ **Help Them to Move On:** Provide your employees with the kind of out-

placement that gives them dignity while positioning them for the future.

Be Prepared to Review His or Her Strong Points with Each Employee

Even in a termination-for-performance where skills or personality were not adequate for a particular situation, you can *still* acknowledge the person's assets and abilities. Remember: A generous dollar settlement usually *cannot erase bitter memories of uncaring or even unkind words.*

Indeed, in those few cases in which former employees have taken legal action, it usually has revolved around treatment during the separation process.

"The Package"

An key element in enhancing an organization's reputation is the quality of "the package," which allows the individual *to move forward* professionally and personally. Termination with dignity presupposes that "the package" will include:

- ♦ severance pay,
- ♦ professional support for the process of finding a new position (*i.e.*, outplacement and other services) including **a conversation with the career coach as soon as possible after the termination (*i.e.*, within 30 minutes)**, and
- ♦ a discussion to help separated employees understand what combination of severance pay and support services is appropriate.

Carefully prepared (though flexible) positive scripts are an indispensable element of the process.

Managers should have a full description of the termination services ready to distribute: a detailed written explanation of benefits, *i.e.*, outplacement help, education grants, health insurance continuation, and so on.

Information Sharing

While there may be no way to eliminate the element of surprise, there are

Preparedness includes:

- ♦ an agenda for the meeting
- ♦ asking HR to attend the meeting
- ♦ carefully prepared (though flexible) positive scripts
- ♦ plans for taking care of separated employees (including quality monetary packages)
- ♦ a full description of career coaching and other services ready to be distributed
- ♦ a list of each employee's contributions and strong points that have been valued over the years
- ♦ working with HR to insure the appropriate payout, benefits package and outplacement support

ways to reduce shock and humiliation in the wake of a downsizing that has been a closely guarded secret. Except in the most unusual circumstances, there is little justification for "sudden-death" discharges; horror stories abound of fired employees being asked to leave the building immediately, even being escorted from their desks to the door by security. The trusted employee has suddenly become a threat.

This creates the impression that the termination is a punishment, causing humiliation and resentment. Some managers assume that this is simply the way to do it: It's over, let's make a clean break.

Instead, consider the consequences in each case. Most managers would resent an employee failing to give two weeks' notice; while, of course, the dynamics are different when the separation is the

employer's decision, organizations should consider the positives of allowing people a period to finish tasks and make arrangements for keeping in touch with co-workers while starting with their outplacement services. This may strike some as being highly idealistic, but carrying it off would depend heavily on *how well the reason for the termination has been explained.* ●

Quotes to Inspire You

He means well, but he means well feebly.

Theodore Roosevelt

(speaking about a political rival)

To feel that one has a place in life solves half the problem of contentment.

George Edward Woodberry, American poet, critic and educator (1855-1930)

In those few cases where the former employee has taken legal action, the reasons for doing so usually have revolved around treatment during the termination meeting.

Therefore, during the meeting, consider the following:

- ♦ The employee wants to know what went wrong. People are more likely to be able to go forward if they are given an explanation.
- ♦ The employee is listening for a kind word about past performance.
- ♦ There is the matter of pride: How will the departure be portrayed to the remaining workforce?
- ♦ There are the pragmatics: How am I going to survive? Have available full written summaries of severance benefits—prepared with as much care as the benefit booklets handed to new hires.
- ♦ Discuss other issues, such as professional references, so the employee can formulate a strategy to move forward.
- ♦ Allow people to return to familiar surroundings—to proceed with some degree of normalcy for the time being. This is part of the empowering process.

HR's Secret Weapon: Kind Words

by Alan L. Sklover, Esq.



Panelist Alan Sklover, Partner, Sklover & Donath, LLC, told the audience how to avoid having their employees come to someone like him for help.

Job loss is probably one of the most traumatic events of life, and HR officers who have to shoulder the burden of firing people see the pain up close and personal.

Most HR officers are probably aware that the trauma can last for weeks or months, but my business has put me in a unique position to see just how profound and prolonged the pain can be. As an attorney who has counseled people for almost 25 years on severance issues, I can assure you that few life crises are felt more acutely than job loss.

To do my job well, I make a point of talking extensively with my clients, to get a glimpse of their job histories, their hopes for the future, how they were recruited for the job that they lost—and the impact of the loss. Even months after a dismissal, I hear about the problems they have with sleep, with their digestive systems and their backs—as well as with spouses and with intimacy. Commonly, the intense emotions are still there: I can almost see the steam coming out of their ears.

Driven to Call a Lawyer

Sadly, ironically, in the majority of cases, it didn't have to turn out this way. Had the termination been handled with care and sensitivity, I might not even be working with the client: Hurt and anger drive people to call a lawyer. But once they're in my office, part of my responsibility is to move people from the emotional level *to the rational level* in dealing with issues. Of course, despite the hurt and the anger, they are usually *somewhat* rational, and I help them focus on The Three T's of Transition, issues that fall within my expertise:

Hurt and anger drive people to call a lawyer.

Timing: When a separation occurs, sometimes there can be lack of clarity about *when* certain things are supposed to fall into place, for example: When is the termination officially effective? When does health care come to an end and when can stock options be exercised? I move to get the client grounded on these practical issues.

Terms: Commonly, clients are in

my office because of dissatisfaction with the terms of severance offered, and perceived unfairness. They hire me to get a better deal on the severance agreement; more money, benefits and health insurance, easing of non-competes, and help with job search (outplacement).

When a firing or dismissal has taken place, reputation is at stake.

Tone: There are good ways to be fired, and bad ways to be fired—and it's always in the best interest of the client for it to look like a good firing. "What is going to be the story?" is a very legitimate concern. What will a person be able to tell colleagues and customers? In the case of higher level executives, what will be contents and tone of a press release?

Clearly then, there are a lot of issues that I help clients with. It is my role to be their zealous advocate. I represent their *business* interests in terms of **revenue, relations and reputation**. We do what we can to keep the money coming in as long as possible; we do what we can to keep important business



Alan Sklover revealed his trade secrets of why dismissed employees may sue.

relations intact; it's important not to burn bridges—with the former employer and the book of clients—because life goes on (which means that the career goes on). And, most importantly, when a firing or dismissal has taken place, reputation is at stake. We want to keep the firing or dismissal from reflecting poorly on the client.

Both the employee and the organization need HR to protect them.

Sharing Trade Secrets

In speaking before a forum of HR executives, I run the risk, of course, of divulging trade secrets to those professionals *against whom* I may very well someday be negotiating. Why would I do that? More about that at the end. But I do want to give you a few tips about what you can do to keep people from coming to see me in the first place.

As human resources professionals you have two primary responsibilities, namely, to the employee being fired and to the organization you represent. Both need protection in this situation fraught with legal and emotional dangers.

On the employee side of the equation, it is vital to treat the person being discharged decently, even if it's a firing for cause. No matter how the person may have failed or fallen short—no matter, even, how much the person may be *disliked*—it is vital to bear in mind that basic human values, such as decency and kindness, still apply. Radio Shack made the headlines recently by firing people by email, which, by any standard, is brutal. And we hear the stories of long-term employees being escorted from the building by security guards—sometimes not even being allowed to say good-bye to colleagues or clean out their desks. Why would HR professionals countenance such behavior?

When employees are treated this way, they come to my office with an agenda based on rage: "I am prepared to

mortgage my house to sue—to get back at these people." And the word that I frequently hear from these folks is "humiliation." As their zealous advocate, I have adopted a term that resonates well with them. I speak of humiliation as "murder of the soul." They ask for a pen to write that down, and, when I get into court, juries nod when they hear those words...because many of the jurors *have been there!* HR professionals have an obligation to prevent humiliation—not just to prevent litigation, but to avoid damaging people. Clearly, at the time of the firing, people usually can't absorb much information—hence they do not hear what you may be telling them about timing and benefits. But *they usually do hear kind words* because almost everyone wants to hear something that can help take the sting away. So the HR officer who is preparing to fire someone should *go into the meeting with a prepared script that includes kind words*—and make sure that the manager or supervisor knows the kind words as well. Come up with the positive things that can be said to help build self-esteem, and bend over backwards to avoid words and actions that could result in humiliation.

Protecting Your Employer

On the employer side of the equation, HR has the obligation, of course, to protect the company or organization. Treating people kindly to avoid litigation helps in that direction, obviously. Yes, you don't want to damage people during the exit process. But you don't want to damage the company either—quite aside from the matter of avoiding litigation. Your ongoing responsibility is to acquire, retain and motivate the workforce. *How people are fired has an impact on the organization's reputation* among the employees who remain and in the community at large. In the process of offering kind words, however, choose your words carefully. Having a script means you've thought *carefully* about what to say, so that, while offering the kind words, you don't say things

that aren't exactly true and that can haunt you later, for example, in terms of continuing benefits and support. Nor do you want to say things that may seem appropriate or consoling at the time, such as, "Well, you were about to retire anyway, weren't you?"—which is a good way provoke a suit for age discrimination. Choose kind words, but choose them carefully.

We hear stories of long-term employees being escorted out by security guards. The word we hear is "humiliation."

Promoting the Outbreak of Kindness

So why am I divulging trade secrets? "But are these really trade secrets?" you may ask. "Haven't you just been talking common sense?" Would that it were so. We still read headlines about mass firings by email; we hear of fired employees being ushered out of the office by security; every day HR officers mumble and fumble through firings, sometimes with horrible and expensive consequences. I am sharing my trade secrets because they may help; because I do not fear a worldwide outbreak of kindness and "weakness"—I am not concerned about a pandemic of peace and love!

I mean it from the bottom of my heart that, at this stage in my life, every day I try to do my part to improve the lot of people who lose their jobs. I ask you to consider the same thing, and that kind words and good deeds are not just the right thing to do, they're also good business. ●

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The Nuts and Bolts of Termination

Done the Right Way

by *Patty Bradley, Director, HR, Pharma Development, Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation*

with *David Madison, Ph.D.*

Iwould put this question to any human resources officer who is responsible for letting people go: “Have you ever been fired yourself?” If you have never been on the other side of the desk, you must work harder to understand what you’re putting people through.

One of the best pieces of advice I ever got actually came during my high school graduation ceremony. The principal, Dr. Van Hogan, said, “Always put yourself in the other guy’s shoes.” Of course, my whole row of freshly scrubbed 18-year olds kicked off our shoes and began exchanging them, but even smart-alecks can take away lessons from graduation speeches. His words left an impression—maybe because we acted out the words on the spot! At one time or another, we’re all in that place where we don’t want to be. Keep that in mind when you’re getting ready to fire somebody. Here are a few fundamentals to keep in mind.

At one time or another, we’re all in that place where we don’t want to be.

Leave as Little to Chance as Possible

I don’t think it’s possible to be over prepared. You need to be very well rehearsed in terms of what you’re going to say, and you need to make sure that managers are prepared as well. There should be no such thing as playing it by ear. Think in terms of a script—yes, actual words and sentences written out to be reviewed and rehearsed before the firing meeting. Make sure that managers know what they can and cannot say. If you have reason to believe a manager doesn’t get it—or is a loose cannon—have more than one session with the manager. It falls on your shoulders to make sure that a firing meeting leaves the employee with as much self-esteem and hope as possible—and does not leave the organization open to litigation.

Provide a Transition Package

Let people know how the organization will help them get on with their lives and their careers. They need to know the details of severance pay, continuation of benefits, how the transition to COBRA works, etc. Put them in touch with the outplacement coach—indeed, if possible, arrange for



Patty Bradley shares her in-depth experience on how to prepare for termination meetings.

the coach to be on site to speak with the employee or to be in touch by phone as soon as possible.

When letting someone go, there should be no such thing as playing it by ear. Think in terms of a script.

You know how you hate to see errors on résumés or cover letters? When you’re drawing up the severance documents, you have to be just as obsessive about correctness. Are you sure that all of the information in the personnel file is up-to-date? Unless your employee records are audited regularly—and especially if you have employees at multiple sites—you may not have up-to-date information on addresses, phone number, titles, and family members. It’s an oh-no moment to hear, “I don’t think this information about my length of service is correct.” The severance documents should be reviewed thoroughly by your legal staff and by others in your office whom you can trust to spot errors.



159 HR professionals listen to advice on terminating employees with respecting their human dignity.

Proceed with Caution: What Else May Be Happening with the Employee?

If you are handling a downsizing that involves dozens or hundreds of employees, you may have little control over timing and context. But if you're handling a one-off termination, be as well informed as possible about the employee's personal circumstances. What kind of background noise might there be? Are there major problems on the home front? A recent divorce? A sick child or dependent parent—or a death in the family. Maybe personnel doesn't usually track such things, but if you're about to fire somebody, find out about the background noise.

The worst episode I've ever heard about: A man whose young brother died on a Friday called the office on Monday to say that he wouldn't be in. But the manager, who had arranged to fire him that day, coaxed him to drop by. So, on his way to pick out his brother's casket, he found out that he was losing his job. Clearly it would have been a very good idea for the manager to find out why the guy had planned to skip work. There are so many things that we don't have control over—obviously terminations have to go forward despite personal problems and tragedies. But you do need to be aware of the context of your actions and be as sensitive as possible to the situation. Which leads to be next point.

Make Sure that the Individual Feels Cared For

When you call the person into your office, give the meeting your full attention. Nothing else in the world, no one else in the world, is more important than the person you're sitting with. Just think about it: if you're lucky, at the end of your career, maybe you'll be able to count only on one hand the number of times you've been fired. But each of those occasions will be etched in your memory forever. How do you want others to feel when you're the one handling the firing? It's up to you to make sure that the person feels cared for. Have water and tissues handy, and be prepared to respond to the trauma as compassionately as possible. Of course, the person will have questions later, so don't just say, "Be sure to call me if you have any questions"—take the call, or return the call as soon as possible. Don't make anyone wait 24 hours. More than anyone else in the organization, the HR person is the one who can convey the message: We still care about you.

It's up to you to make sure the person feels cared for.

Do It Face to Face

Does this really need to be said? Well, yes. Radio Shack made the headlines by firing people by email. I read of a case as well in Great Britain of a fir-



"I'm quite surprised. This morning when I called Johnson a lazy bum, and fired him on the spot, he took it quite well."



Kate Wendleton enthusiastically moderates the panel and fields questions.

ing that was done by text messaging. Who thinks these things up? No one likes the face-to-face encounter—dealing with the tears and the trauma; it's emotionally draining for everyone. But the coward's way out is no way to conduct business responsibly.

Keeping people in the dark, when their jobs and careers are at stake, rarely is a motivator.

A Closing Thought: What About the Survivors?

How you fire will have an impact on the remaining workforce—especially if many people have been let go. But even if people can see that others have been treated decently, the fear factor can be huge.

You need to be very clear about what happened, how work is going to be handled by fewer people, and, as honestly as possible, what will be happening in the weeks and months ahead. Organizations tend to want to say as little as possible—and maybe that is necessary in many circumstances—but keeping people in the dark, when their jobs and careers are at stake, rarely is a motivator. HR can lead the way in helping management to strategize the maintaining of survivor morale. ●

Terminating Employees

with Clarity, Dignity and Respect

by Michael Lewis, J.D., SPHR
Sr. Director, Human Capital at the international law firm of Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP
with David Madison, Ph.D.

Many managers who face the chore of firing people probably think they would get a passing grade on how they do it. They might need to think again: During the last 15 years, employment-related litigation has exploded in this country, much of it related to the circumstances under which people have been terminated. Jury awards granted in trials on the state level especially have grown to staggering proportions. These trends probably mean that somebody needs to be *paying more attention*.

Employment-related litigation has exploded, much of it related to the circumstances under which people have been terminated.

HR has a role to play in protecting companies from relentless litigation. It turns out that it matters very much how people are terminated. A study by Duke University/Ohio State revealed a couple of key factors in prompting people to sue:

• **Discharged employees who felt that they were given an inadequate explanation for the termination—or no explanation at all—were ten times more likely to bring some kind of legal action against their former employers**



A chance for HR professionals to network.

(in contrast to those who had been given a clear, adequate explanation).

• Discharged employees who felt that they *had not been treated honestly, fairly or respectfully* were far more likely to bring law suits or other forms of legal action. Of those who had been treated well, almost none in the study of 1,000 people had sued.

What More Needs to Be Said? Doesn't that Tell the Tale?

It boils down to *explaining the termination and providing decent treatment*, assuredly with more emphasis on the latter. Lawyers can tell you that juries obsess over the way in which a person was treated—they focus far more on that than on the reasons for the termination. So the way managers handle terminations is absolutely critical.

I can offer a few suggestions, based on my experience, to help make terminations — difficult and emotional as they are — as good as they can be.

Juries obsess over the way in which a person was treated.

1. **A foundation of solid policy:** Well thought-out policies and practices are vital. Nothing should be left to whim. Managers who proceed according to their own instincts or styles can get everybody into trouble. They need to know the company policy and philosophy on such issues as severance, continuation of benefits—and *how people are to be treated*. “Well-thought out” means that human values and company reputation have been taken into careful consideration, so that people leave with as little damage as possible—and hopefully with positive outcomes as well.

2. **Err on the side of generosity:** There can be so many variables in cal-



Michael Lewis, an attorney, as well as an HR head, provided his perspective.

culating severance—length of service comes to mind especially—but who gains if an organization gets a reputation for being stingy? Even if there is no severance, just paying an employee, through the end of the pay period, for example, is a simple and inexpensive, but also an effective measure of good will. Such gestures can go a long way in helping the healing process—as well as paying the bills.

3. **Surprises are not a good idea:** Corporate leaders commonly have trouble with the concept of transparency, but the more people know about what's going on the better. Even if your organization isn't bound by the provisions of the Warn Act, remember that the philosophy behind the act is a good one. When an employee is called in to be fired, that employee should have a pretty good idea that it's coming. Especially if the firing is based on performance, the employee should have been given a well-communicated warning—and an opportunity to improve performance.

4. **Thorough preparation is extremely important:** Obviously, consult with the company's employment counsel, but

coach the manager who will assist with the termination as well. Be very clear about how the termination will be articulated and about the tone that should be maintained. Of course the tone should be firm—because it is a termination after all—but it should also be cordial and respectful. If it appears that the meeting is getting off track (it's so easy to get into a debate about whether the firing is justified), the HR representative in the meeting should be alert to move the discussion back to the agenda and reset the tone if necessary.

Managers who proceed according to their own instincts or styles can get everybody into trouble.

5. Assess possible security issues, and be prepared: In the majority of cases, this is not a concern because violence is not expected. If you have reason to believe that someone might lose control, however, arrange for security personnel to be on hand, but not in a way that will be embarrassing or humiliating. Having a uniformed security guard show up might alarm other employees and the person about to be fired. However, having security in plain clothes—posing as a maintenance worker or a client, for example—won't call attention to the situation, but will still provide protection if necessary.

And, except in the most unusual circumstance, try to avoid having the employee escorted abruptly from the building by security. The termination should be handled with respect for the feelings of the individual, and a police escort is a deeply humiliating experience.

What to Say and Do—and Not to Say and Do

1. Based on the formal studies mentioned at the outset—and common sense—the reason for the termination should be absolutely clear, but stated as non-judgmentally as possible.

Otherwise, the employee will fill in

the gaps and come up with imaginative reasons as to why he or she is being let go. Keep speculation about politics, personal grievances or personalities out of the conversation by focusing on the real specific reasons for the termination. Also avoid speaking of legal concepts, *i.e.*, defending the company's right to terminate, comments like: "You know that this is an 'employment at will' state, which means that we have the right to discharge people for any reason," really don't belong in this type of meeting and only increase speculation that the termination isn't fair or justified.

2. Once the reasons for the termination have been explained, move into a discussion of career transition. This is the time to try to get the person focused on the future. In fact, this should be the most important part of the meeting. Explain that career help is being providing in the form of outplacement—the Five O'Clock Club, for example—and *explain what outplacement means*. **If possible, have the outplacement coach, who is trained to deal with the emotional trauma following a termination, in an adjoining office.** It is in everyone's best interest to have the employee focused on the future as soon as possible. **If a coach can't be on hand, make sure that the employee is contacted very quickly to get the healing and helping process underway.**

3. Don't be afraid to talk person-to-person. Maybe you have been through the trauma of termination yourself—and you know that it was not the end of the world. *Don't be afraid to talk about your own experiences.* Or describe the experiences of others who have used being fired as an opportunity to move



HR professionals pouring in at 8:00 am.

onward and upward. The coach has been hired to urge the person in this direction, but your own personal touch in this regard can help as well.

Who gains if an organization gets a reputation for being stingy?

4. Follow-up is vital as well. The terminated employee will have questions in the days and weeks that follow. Make sure that someone on the HR staff with good interpersonal skills is designated to work with the person. This HR representative should be tuned in, not just to provide information, but to use each conversation to help keep the person to stay focused on career transition and the next opportunity.

Because you *do* wish the terminated employee well, the underlying concept is respect for the individual and doing everything you can to preserve his or her dignity. ●



Gwen Robinson told the audience that she always made a follow-up phone call to displaced employees the very next day to make sure that they were okay and had understood the details about their benefits.

Compassion

by Richard Bayer, Ph.D.

Richard Bayer, Ph.D. is a theologian and an economist, and is the Chief Operating Officer of The Five O'Clock Club. He is the author of an academic hardback on employment economics, as well as the popular, *Good Person Guidebook: Transforming Your Work & Personal Life*.



Richard Bayer, Ph.D.

“ We may have uneasy feelings for seeing a creature in distress, without compassion; for we have not compassion unless we wish to relieve them.” –Samuel Johnson

When we have a job, we spend most of our waking hours in the workplace, and so our virtues must show there if they are going to show anywhere. The workplace can be a dramatic venue to show compassion if you think about it! It is where hope rises and falls, reputations are formed, fortunes are made and lost, people develop or squander their talents, systems help or oppress people, colleagues are treated justly or unjustly, and so much more. What an arena for compassion to be championed or stifled. In other words, the workplace is a setting to show whether or not we have compassion. And it is choice for most of us. For a select few (the Dalai Lama or the Pope come to mind) compassion is a way of life and is not reserved for special cases or situations.

Perhaps we don't see as much compassion in the workplace as we might like to because the spirit of competition is so highly prized in our market economy. Products compete for consumer attention, businesses compete for market share, and employees compete for promotions and wage increases. Indeed, we often assume that corporate or personal survival is at stake if we fail to beat the competition.

How can compassion co-exist with competition? To answer this question, let's begin by looking at some of the definitions of compassion found in dictionaries:

1. Deep awareness of the suffering of another coupled with the wish to relieve it.
2. A deep awareness of and sympathy for another's suffering; the humane quality of understanding the suffering of others

and wanting to do something about it

So compassion is not incompatible with a moderate sense of competition at the workplace. Two things in particular are important, based on the definition of compassion: (1) awareness and sympathy for another; and (2) doing something about his or her distress, suffering or misfortune. Anyone who is moved by the needs of others, but doesn't do anything to bring relief, is not compassionate.

Bear in mind: We are not only competitors; we are also colleagues. It's not only realistic, but also necessary, for a spirit of compassion to prevail among colleagues. Older experienced workers show compassion when they mentor new hires until they are comfortable in their new positions. A well-run business requires people and departments to collaborate. Careers and lives can be set back or ruined by cut-throat tactics that lack compassion.

Businesses also show compassion when they donate funds or employee time to charities—and indeed thousands of charities benefit from corporate giving. This creates and demonstrates a corporate culture (or character) that makes for a more pleasant world.

What is the alternative to compassion? It is competition run wild without boundaries. People would either cease caring for others or stop acting, or cease action based on caring. Serious damage would be done, given the importance of economic life for all of us. His Holiness The Dalai Lama points out how we all depend on each other to live; some of us grow crops, some make our clothes, some build our homes, some teach our children, and on and on. Without others, our society as it is could not exist.

To sum up, in the often-dramatic world of the workplace, compassion brings us to sympathize with others and actively

intervene and help when we see suffering. This not only does much to determine our character (we have to live with ourselves!), but it also creates a constructive environment in which we spend so many of our waking hours. This is not a matter for theorizing. It's a matter of common sense. There is no denying that consideration of others is worthwhile. There is no denying that our happiness is totally woven in with the happiness of others. There is no denying that if society suffers, we suffer. And there is no denying that the more our hearts and minds are afflicted with ill will, the more miserable we become. ●

Compassion is what makes our lives meaningful. It is the source of all lasting happiness and joy. And it is the foundation of a good heart, the heart of one who acts out of a desire to help others. Through kindness, through affection, through honesty, through truth and justice toward all others we ensure our own benefit.

This is not a matter for complicated theorizing. It is a matter of common sense.

There is no denying that consideration of others is worthwhile. There is no denying that our happiness is inextricably bound up with the happiness of others. There is no denying that if society suffers we ourselves suffer. Nor is there any denying that the more our hearts and minds are afflicted with ill-will, the more miserable we become.

Thus we can reject everything else: religion, ideology, all received wisdom. But we cannot escape the necessity of love and compassion.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama,
Ethics for the New Millennium



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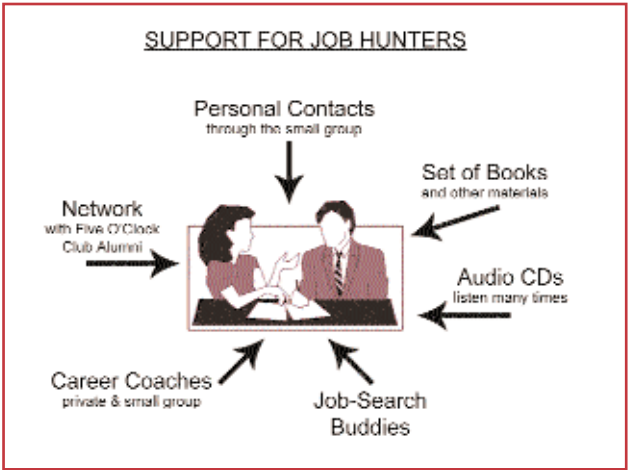
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SVP, HR, consumer products company

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- Five O’Clock Club Outplacement:**
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 - **Method based on 25 years of research.** Not vanilla job-search coaching.

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	Price	Private Hours
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Platinum (2-year program)	\$15,000	40
Premium (15-month program)	\$10,000	28
Standard	\$7,500	18
Executives earning \$100,000 to \$200,000 / yr		
Premium	\$5,000	14
Standard	\$4,000	9
Bare-bones	\$3,000	5
Professionals / managers: under \$100,000 / yr		
Long-Term Care (for long-service employees)	\$4,000	12
Premium	\$3,000	8
Bare-bones	\$2,000	3



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Because of the popularity of "Insider," our costs have decreased over time. The savings are passed on to you. Physical branches are *more* expensive. Prices are for individuals. If your employer is paying for you, please see our "outplacement" price schedule on the next page.

This is a members-only organization.

FEES: \$49 annual membership plus session fees, which are based on member's income.

	Income < \$100,000		\$100,000 +		\$200,000 +	
	Price	Per sess.	Price	Per sess.	Price	Per sess.
20 sessions	\$540	\$27	\$810	\$40.50	\$1215	\$60.75
10 sessions	\$360	\$36	\$540	\$54	\$810	\$81

Single session (one time only) for \$50 or \$70.
Fee for books: \$40

Career Starters; Students; recent grads or less than 10 yrs. out < \$40,000; others

\$490 package includes 1.5 hrs. of private coaching, 10 group sessions, book, 16 lectures on CDs, 2 years' membership.

Presentation Schedule (all locations)

Week of	Topic
Dec. 25-Jan. 5	HOLIDAY WEEKS -No Sessions Scheduled
Jan. 8-12	Keys to Effective Networking
Jan. 15-19	HOLIDAY WEEK -No Sessions Scheduled
Jan. 22-26	Two-Minute Pitch: Keystone of Your Search
Jan. 29-Feb. 2	Beat the Odds with Search Firms & Ads
Feb. 5-9	Shortcut Your Search: Internet & Other Research
Feb. 12-16	Developing New Momentum in Your Campaign
Feb. 19-23	HOLIDAY WEEK -No Sessions Scheduled
Feb. 26-Mar. 2	Getting the Most Out of Your Contacts
Mar. 5-9	Getting Interviews: Direct & Targeted Mail
Mar. 12-16	The 5OCC Approach to Interviewing
Mar. 19-23	Handling Difficult Interview Questions
Mar. 26-30	The Five O'Clock Club Approach to Job Search
Apr. 2-6	HOLIDAY WEEK -No Sessions Scheduled
Apr. 9-13	How to Turn Job Interviews into Offers
Apr. 16-20	Developing New Targets for Your Search
Apr. 23-27	Four-Step Salary Negotiation Method
Apr 30-May 4	Advanced Interviewing Techniques
May 7-12	Keys to Effective Networking
May 14-18	Two-Minute Pitch: Keystone of Your Search
May 21-25	Beat the Odds with Search Firms & Ads
May 28-June 1	HOLIDAY WEEK -No Sessions Scheduled
June 4-8	Shortcut Your Search: Internet & Other Research

Please see our website (www.FiveOClockClub.com) for the coaching staff and full offerings.

Attendance

- Reservations required.
- Unused sessions are transferable to anyone you choose or will be given to those in financial difficulty attending more than 16 sessions.
- Most branches are geared to professionals, managers, executives, and recent grads from a wide variety of industries and professions. Most earn from \$30,000 to \$500,000. Half are employed, half are unemployed.
- Attend at least 10 meetings in a row to develop momentum and perhaps land an appropriate position. Our research proves that those who attend on a regular basis get jobs faster and at higher rates of pay than those who attend sporadically, search on their own, or even only see a coach privately.
- After ten sessions, still try to attend regularly.

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Sr. Executive (\$200,000 plus)

Tuesdays, 7:00 EST
Bill Belknap

Executive (\$100,000 plus)

■ West
Wednesdays, 5:30 p.m. Pacific
Terry Pile

■ Central

Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m.
Central
Max Lorenz

■ East

Mondays, 8:00 EST
Bert Marro

Tuesdays, 7:00 p.m. EST
Phil Ronniger

Wednesdays, 8:30 p.m. Pacific
Terry Pile

Professional / Managerial

(\$30,000 to \$100,000)

■ Central

Tues. 7:30 p.m. Central
Sylvan Von Burg

■ East

Tuesdays, 7:00 p.m. EST
Anita Attridge

Tuesdays, 8:30 p.m. EST
Phyllis Rosen

Thursdays, 7:30 p.m. EST
Ciro & Louise DiScalafi

Students / Recent Grads

(less than \$40,000)

Ask for Richard Bayer -
212-286-4500

THE PHYSICAL BRANCHES

■ NEW YORK, NY

Grand Central: Mondays
Jim Borland
at Roosevelt Hotel -
Madison Avenue at 45th
212-255-6458

Madison Square Garden
Chip Conlin; Wednesdays
HQ Global Workplaces
11 Penn Plaza - 5th fl.
on 7th bet. 31 & 32
914-788-5482

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When the Employer Pays

All Five O’Clock Club *Employer-Paid* Outplacement Packages are for ONE YEAR minimum!

Comparison of an *Employer-Paid* \$5,000 Package

	Traditional Outplacement	The Five O’Clock Club
Who is the <i>Client</i> ?	The organization.	Job hunters. Attendees <i>choose</i> our services, and we <i>always</i> do what is in the best interest of job hunters.
The Clientele	All are unemployed.	Only half of our attendees are unemployed; the rest are employed. There is an upbeat atmosphere; networking is enhanced.
Length & Type of Service	3 months, primarily space.	1 year, <i>exclusively</i> career coaching.
Service Ends	After 3 months—or <i>before</i> if the job hunter lands a job or consulting assignment.	For one full year, no matter what. The clients can return if they lose their next jobs, if their assignments end, or if they need advice after starting their new jobs.
Small Group Career Coaching	Sporadic; up to 3 months. Coach usually varies.	Every week for up to 1 year; same coach.
Private Coaching	3 to 5 hours on average.	14 hours guaranteed.
Support Materials	Generic manual.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 textbooks based on 25 years of job-search research. • A set of 16 38-minute lectures on CDs. • Beginner’s Kit of Search Information. • 2-year subscription to <i>The Five O’Clock News</i>, a magazine devoted to career management articles.
Facilities	A cubicle, phone, computer access.	None. Use home phone and computer.

Chart of Five O’Clock Club Prices

	Price	Private Hours	
Senior Executives earning over \$200,000 per year			<p style="text-align: center;">All packages include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ guaranteed private coaching to determine a career direction, develop a résumé, plan salary negotiations, etc. In fact, if you need a second opinion during your search, we can arrange that, too. ◆ minimum of ONE YEAR of small-group teleconference coaching, in a group of peers, headed by a senior Five O’Clock Club career consultant. ◆ 2 years of membership ◆ the set of 4 books, and ◆ a boxed set of 16 lectures on CDs.
Executive Tailored Program (2-year coaching program plus office space, administrative services, etc.)	\$20,000 \$25,000	40+	
Platinum (2-year program)	\$15,000	40	
Premium (15-month program)	\$10,000	28	
Standard	\$7,500	18	
Executives earning \$100,000 to \$200,000 per year			
Premium	\$5,000	14	
Standard	\$4,000	9	
Bare-bones	\$3,000	5	
Professionals and managers: under \$100,000 per yr			
Long-Term Care (for long-service employees)	\$4,000	12	
Premium	\$3,000	8	
Bare-bones	\$2,000	3	
Clerical, factory, other hourly	\$1,000	3	➤ One year of small group & 1 book

- **Guaranteed private career coaching!** (Hours listed above.) For example, if the employee has a **one-year package**, and needs help in the new job or loses the next job, he or she can come back anytime within one year from the start date. Or if he wants to try consulting work and then decides not to do it, the employee can come back to us.
- **2-year membership** in The Five O’Clock Club includes a Beginner’s Kit and two-year subscription to *The Five O’Clock News*.

EMPLOYERS WHO CARE

Continued from page 2

employee within half an hour, if we are not there on hand, assign him or her to both a private, as well as a small-group coach, and FEDEX the employee a package of our books, CDs, Beginner's Kit, and other materials. The employee knows that the former employer cares. The private coach then makes a courtesy call to the employee *before sun-down that day*. (The employer does not get charged until the employee actually starts working with the coach.)

Because employees may still be in shock, we make multiple contacts to explain the package and assure them that they are in good hands with us. They are treated with concern and dignity. They are not left to fend on their own, *i.e.*, shown a cubicle and a computer database and told to dig in. They will have plenty of personal time with a coach, and not be forced to rely on webinars and other impersonal approaches.

The Five O'Clock Club approach is the *personal* approach to outplacement. Displaced employees know that their employer hired us because they *do* care what happens to them. It *is* personal. We wrap our arms around the displaced person and help him or her to move forward, and the employer knows the former employees are being taken care of. ●

Kate Wendleton,
President and Editor-in-Chief

The Job-Search Buddy System

Do you wish you had someone to talk to—fairly often and informally—about the little things? “Here’s what I’m planning to do today in my search? What are *you* planning to do? Let’s talk tomorrow to make sure we’ve done it.” You and your job-search buddy could keep each other positive and on track, and encourage each other to do what you told the small group you were going to do: Make that call, send out those letters, write that follow-up proposal, focus on the most important things that should be done—rather than (for example) spending endless hours responding to job postings on the Web.

With your buddy, practice your Two-Minute Pitch, get ready for interviews, bounce ideas off each other. Some job-search buddies talk every day. Some talk a few times a week. Most of the conversation is by phone and e-mail.

Sometimes, people match themselves up as buddies. Just pick someone you get along with in

your small group. Sometimes, your coach can match you up.

However you do it, stay away from negative people who talk about how bad it is out there. They will drag you down.

The small group changes over time: people get jobs; new people come in. If you lose one buddy who got a job, get another buddy.

Your buddy does not have to be in your field or industry. In fact, being in the same field or industry could keep you focused on the industry rather than on the *process*. But you *do* have to get along! The relationship may last only a month or two, or go on for years. Some buddies become friends.

Of course, you should see your Five O'Clock Club career coach *privately* for résumé review, target development, salary negotiation, and job interview follow-up. It's usually best to get professional coaching advice for these areas. ●



THE FIVE O'CLOCK NEWS

The Five O'Clock Club
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New York, NY 10016
Email: Info@FiveOClockClub.com

“We greatly appreciate the always high quality work that The Five O'Clock Club does for our former employees.”

Head of HR, major not-for-profit

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