

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

HR Speaks Out about Best Termination Practices

“There is nothing worse than being escorted from your place of work,

a place where you have come day after day and given your time and your blood. You missed your kid's soccer games to be there, and now they are saying to you, 'You are so dangerous that you must be escorted from this place. We paid you a salary, we gave you a 401K contribution, we gave you health benefits, we gave you vacation and now today, all of a sudden, you are so awful that we have to remove you as if you were a criminal.'

“Escorting someone out should be reserved for situations in which, if you did not escort the person out, you would be placing the rest of your staff in jeopardy. The circumstances are so rare in which you would need to do that. If an employee threatens to kill people, *that's* the one who needs to be escorted out.”

— Denise Z. Kaback, Director, Human Resources,
at the law firm Schulte Roth & Zabel LLP



Mr. Ron Thomas

former VP, Organizational
Development, Martha Stewart
Living Omnimedia
HR HERO OF THE YEAR
for outstanding compassion
and decency to employees.

“I thank The Five O'Clock Club because you put together great programs where HR professionals can get together to hear the latest on important topics. I think HR is becoming much more respected because of the quality of work we are doing and the impact we are making on companies. Whether it be leadership development, the on-boarding process, or talent management, the future of HR is *strategic* and we will all move in that direction in order to be successful. By having these sessions, it allows us to get together, share ideas and pick up new techniques to move forward. Thank you.”

Ron Thomas' comments on receiving the HR Hero of the Year Award

In this issue

- ◆ **Best Practices in Handling Downsizings as Well as Individual Terminations**
- ◆ **Eight Signs That Say It's Time to Change Jobs**
- ◆ **How to Have a Successful Job Search**

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. Many HR people 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 employees even if they decide to do consulting work for a while, **lose the next job,** or need help handling the political situation in a new job — even for months! And this package costs far less than what the employer would pay for a three-month program at an old-fashioned outplacement firm.

Advise Managers to Say a Kind Word to Departing Employees

We 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 remaining employees, and increase the chance of lawsuits. One HR person in Ohio said that *she* 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 dislocated 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 page 13 of this magazine. HR professionals can give their managers the handout on pages 14 and 15, 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. She can get on with her life or she can sue, but she can't do both effectively.

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Address all comments, questions & suggestions:

KATE WENDLETON
The Five O'Clock News
300 East 40th Street, 6L
New York, NY 10016

Kate Wendleton, President, Editor-in-Chief
David Madison, Associate Editor

Call 212-286-4500 for information on becoming a member and subscribing to *The Five O'Clock News.*

E-mail: Info@FiveOClockClub.com

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HR Speaks Out about Best Termination Practices (and a Lawyer Offers a Few Tips as Well)

The articles on termination practices in this issue are based on a panel presentation at The HR Network Breakfast held on September 7, 2007. These breakfast seminars are sponsored by The Five O'Clock Club. The HR Network is a vendor-free venue for HR professionals to meet informally and hear discussions of important issues of the day.

The panelists on this occasion were Lindsey Cotter, Director, Human Resources, and Robert Defendorf, Human Resources Manager at Scholastic Inc., the children's publishing, education, and media company; Denise Kaback, Director, Human Resources, at the law firm Schulte Roth & Zabel, LLP; Alan L. Sklover, Partner, Sklover & Donath, LLC, a law firm that represents and counsels executives on how to negotiate with their employers.

The Inevitable Trauma

According to the cliché, death and taxes are the only certainties in life. For most working men and women, however, getting fired at least once during a 30- or 40-year career is almost a certainty as well—and most of us have our tales to tell about the pink-slip experi-

ence. While some folks do manage to escape this fate, job loss probably qualifies as one of life's most profound traumas, ranking along with divorce, bereavement—and an IRS audit.

For most working men and women, getting fired at least once during a long career is almost a certainty.

Maybe money is the primary worry: getting fired prompts fears that money will run out, especially for those who live from paycheck to paycheck. Even a decent severance payout doesn't eliminate this fear, because we rarely can see the future clearly enough to know when regular paychecks will resume — and will the paycheck be less than it was? Getting fired means being separated from a known routine, and usually involves a wrenching separation from colleagues whom one may have seen daily for years. Self esteem may take a battering as well: no matter how you try

to position it to friends and relatives, it's hard to say, "I lost my job." Those who are inclined to feel that "I am what I do" may feel especially damaged.

Thus when an organization puts employees through this traumatic experience, it is so very important for HR to do it in such a way that the least harm is done: In just a few moments, it is possible to inflict incredible hurt, and leave scars that endure for a lifetime. The guiding principle for HR should be to **proceed with caution, care and compassion.** While it may sound like mission impossible, the goal of HR should be not just avoiding harm, but handling the pink-slip experience in such a way that employees remain whole and feel cared for. Terminated employees can brood about how it was done for years following the fateful day of job loss. It's up to HR to minimize the trauma and not create bad memories that will haunt people for years.

Our four panelists offered suggestions to help HR professionals navigate the treacherous termination waters, and a Five O'Clock Clubber reported on how he was handled (well) by HR. ●



Almost 200 HR executives listened intently to the panel on the best — and worst — termination practices.

Even When It's Not a Surprise

Handling Individual Terminations

by Denise Z. Kaback, Director, Human Resources,
at the law firm Schulte Roth & Zabel LLP
with David Madison, Ph.D.



Denise Kaback stepped the audience through how to handle individual terminations.

In 1980, when it was my responsibility—for the first time—to fire an employee, the prospect weighed heavily upon me. I was physically sick. My stomach was in knots. I didn't sleep all night. I said to my boss, "I know that I am new at this, but when does it get easier?" She looked at me and said, "Hopefully, never." After 25 years in various HR roles I find that it remains an ordeal—and, quite frankly, *it ought to be*. After all these years, separating people, even when we do it for performance or behavior, is a very difficult thing to do. It is not easy and it shouldn't be. If it is easy for you, you should probably find another line of work.

But we *can* structure the termination process in ways to reduce the pain and stress for everyone involved. Of course, we enjoy *hiring* employees, and much time and care are devoted to bringing people on board. Typically, the exit process doesn't get the same attention, but it should. You should certainly give separation at least as much thought as hiring. You want to set protocols for termination that are dignified and respectful—and that are followed consistently.

I'm going to focus primarily here

on the one-off terminations for performance. Of course, there will always be multiple layoffs in the wake of reorganizations or mergers; and there are people who will be fired for egregious or illegal behavior—and their departure from the organization might have to be arranged with little warning.

The performance improvement plan should include measurable benchmarks, outcomes and deliverables.

"Do You Know That Your Job Is in Jeopardy?"

What about individuals who just aren't measuring up? These are people who have been counseled, and, hopefully, you have tried to bring them along. But eventually, separation is the only alternative that remains. Our goal is to enable employees to leave remaining whole and with their dignity intact. It is unlikely that this can happen if the employee is taken by surprise. In other words, the endangered employee can't be the last one of find out that he or she is in trouble.

As soon as performance has slipped seriously below expectations, the role of HR is to deal honestly with the employee. Unless, of course, the hiring of the employee originally was simply a huge mistake—there is serious skill deficiency—we can suppose that the situation may be redeemable, and everyone in good faith wants to make things work. The first step in the process that *may* (or *may not*) result in termination is the creation of a **performance improvement plan**. You owe it to the employee to be candid. It is appropriate to say, "Do you know that your job is in jeopardy?" I use those words. By

being organized and specific, you allow the employee to carry something away that allows him to say, "I need to accomplish this, this and that—or I'm going to be out of a job."

My key point here is that, if termination is the outcome, the person should have been involved in the process for weeks, if not months, before you separate. He or she should have been given an opportunity to improve and correct. Naturally, the manager and supervisor have been involved as well, because sometimes we find that individual failures are not really individual failures. There are organizational failures, and people who are in charge of a group need to be held accountable, in some measure, for employees who don't succeed within their group.

The performance improvement plan should include measurable benchmarks, outcomes and deliverables. This will help you know, sooner rather than later, if somebody can't measure up, and is, in fact, beyond rehabilitation. You have tried, you have conferred with and coached, you have cajoled and done everything you can think of—and the employee is not going to meet expectations. You need to be able to recognize the signs of that as soon as possible.

When this kind of evaluation process has been followed, you will be able to justify the separation decision. You want to be sure that you are comfortable with the decision. This doesn't mean that you feel good about it, but, at the end of the day, when you review all the factors, it was the right thing to do for the employee and the organization.

Doing It by the Book

Earlier I mentioned having the protocols in place for handling terminations. This means that the managers

have been trained in the protocols, especially what to say and what not to say. Under what circumstances will employees be allowed to remain on the job for a period of time? What kind of releases do you need? Will you offer outplacement? Remember the importance of consistency.

Managers who are in charge of a group need to be held accountable for employees who don't succeed.

When you actually conduct the termination meeting, be sure that all the paperwork is in order, and that the manager or supervisor knows what's happening. Have your plan in place with regard to the person's email, voice mail and client list. Review your script, but you don't want your remarks to sound canned; don't patronize and say shallow things:

- "This is harder for me than it is for you." No, it isn't.
- "I know how hard this is for you."

No, you don't. Even if you've been fired once or twice yourself, you have no way of knowing everything that may be going on in the person's life.

- "You shouldn't be out of work for that long." How do you know that?
- "Look at this as an opportunity." The person really *can't* do that in the moment—so don't even think about saying it. You need to be empathetic and let people know that you realize this is impacting their lives seriously.
- It's okay to say you're sorry—if you really mean it. And you should mean it. Remember that you are in the power position and the person being fired is painfully aware of that. Don't worry that the person will mistake kindness for weakness—I assure you he or she will not.

At the point of termination, it could be that the employee may have already rejected the job emotionally, or abandoned it completely. However, that doesn't mean the trauma is diminished.

Any HR professional, in the wake of a firing, needs to ponder if the organization contributed to the problem. Like all relationships, the one between employer and employee is always a two-way street. Your workplace may not have been terrific to the employee—and he or she may not have responded in a positive manner. The vortex of emotions, feelings and realities that swirl around any firing situation should be enough to give anybody pause—and put a check on smugness or self-righteousness.



"I thought you said you didn't mind the employees listening to music at work?"

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. ●

Taking Care of Everyone During a Downsizing

by David Madison, Ph.D.

The Five O’Clock Club has worked with hundreds of organizations that have asked us to help the employees they have let go. Some ask for our help with a specific individual, or four or five people a year. Others are involved in significant downsizings. Some companies handle the downsizings better than others. Last year, Radio Shack gained notoriety by firing 400 employees *via email*. What were they thinking?

When a downsizing is handled well, employees may be sad about leaving, but they are rarely angry. These employees are not escorted out and are given plenty of time to say good-bye. When possible, they are given many weeks’ notice and often are allowed to continue working while they start their job searches with the help of an out-placement service. Of course, there are situations in which employees must leave right away, such as in high-security operations, but then all employees are treated the same and they understand that it’s not personal.

How a termination is handled is an indication of the professionalism of human resources and the caring they show to fellow employees.

All moves are planned and scripted with as much precision as possible.

If your organization is about to go through a major downsizing, how can you prepare for a major shock to the system? If, at the beginning of a quarter, you know that there will be 20, 30 or 50 fewer people in your workforce by the end of that quarter, how do you deal with that? How do you pull it off so that there will be minimal upheaval

and pain for all the people involved and the organization?

Precisely because there is so much potential for damage, there can be no such thing as “taking it a day at a time.” The consequences of every step and action must be weighed. Nothing can be left to chance: All moves must be planned and scripted with as much precision as possible.

Once the decision has been made to reduce the headcount in a division, department or location—and by how much—HR works with the division head to determine which positions are to be eliminated. It is important to develop the rationale—the sound business reason—for each cut to be made. You want to make the impact as equitable as possible. The draft list of proposed jobs for elimination is then reviewed with legal counsel and adjusted if need be. Then HR, working with the business heads, should establish a timeline and the communication plan: Everything needs to be choreographed down to the last day of the last employee to be affected by the downsizing.

If possible, allow the employees to go home to process the shock, but then come back the next day to work out more details, such as the actual end date.

Breaking the News

Naturally, the most painful part in this cycle of events is breaking the news to people that they’re losing their jobs. Hence, HR can’t let managers wing it—nor can HR assume that individual managers are ready for this role, especially if they have had very little experi-

ence letting people go. Ask managers to assess their own emotional and physical well-being, and let HR know if they feel up to the task of helping people through this very rough time. Managers should be encouraged to ask HR for guidance or even get help from external resources such as an Employee Assistance Program. But HR must remain on top of the situation, even to extent of excusing managers who clearly cannot be entrusted with this kind of communication—for whatever reason. It may be appropriate to ask a more-senior-level officer to break the news. Remember, in The Five O’Clock Club survey of displaced employees, many thought the termination would have gone better if HR had been more involved.

Whether the manager or someone up the chain of command is given the responsibility, training for the task is imperative. HR should walk the managers through the dos and don’ts:

- Be sure to have a private office or conference room scheduled.
- Have the time set—with the follow-up meeting with HR about a half-hour later.
- Follow the script and avoid a lengthy conversation.
- Don’t get into a debate and stay away from discussions of performance (the script will help with this).

And the use of scripts is important. Since almost everyone is going to be at a loss for words in this situation, the scripts are usually welcomed. Expect managers to review the script thoroughly, but not to memorize it. It is helpful to *internalize* it, then speak its message in their own voice, but stay on the basic path provided by the script. It is not good to fill silences with babble: less is more in terms of conveying this kind of message. Advise managers to avoid the standard clichés

that normally come to mind in such stressful situations (“I know how you feel”), but always encourage managers to be respectful and really do try to be sensitive to the employee’s feelings in the moment (commonly shock, fear, panic).

The benefits to the company far outweigh the risks of allowing the employee to stick around.

Being ready to handle the common employee responses should also be part of the training. Here are a few examples:

- “My supervisor has just told me that I have been doing a great job—in fact, I have lots of performance appraisals right here that say I am excellent performer.”

Response: “While we value the contributions you have made, we have assessed all of the positions in the department and, unfortunately, your position was selected to be eliminated.”

- “After so many years with the company, can’t you find anything else for me? I will do anything.”

Response: “I want you to know that, before this decision was finalized, a good faith effort was made to explore other appropriate alternatives.”

- “I want to talk to your boss or the president and/or I am going to call my attorney.”

Response: “I am sorry you feel that way. I want to assure you that the decision was reviewed and is supported by senior management.”

Provide training as well on how to respond to emotional responses, including shock, disbelief, crying, anger—and how best to handle such reactions. Also include in the script information about job-search support that the company is offering:

“I want to emphasize that the company is committed to helping you reestablish yourself in a new position as quickly as possible. Outplacement serv-

ices have been arranged for you through The Five O’Clock Club, and HR will go over this with you in detail in a few minutes.”

Even at this point the organization is letting them know that they are not being abandoned, that they are going to have support and can get help immediately for moving forward—although, in the moment, they are probably not hearing a whole lot. But at least the message is conveyed and will be reiterated by HR.

After Breaking the News: Next Steps

As indicated earlier, downsized employees move from the meeting with the manager to the meeting with HR. When they get to HR, they commonly want to vent—but they also want to know what happens next. Have a packet of information for them to take home, because much of what has been said will go in one ear and out the other—because of the stress of the moment. But they will have questions about severance, 401K and a lot of other options they may have.

Those who remain with the company need to be told what has happened and why.

If possible, allow them to go home if they wish to process the shock, but then come back the next day to work out more details, such as the actual end date. Will it be two weeks out, or even a month? “When do you think your last day will be?”—you want to work with them on the transition. Is there a risk to the company in allowing people to stick around? Of course, there may be a risk (but usually, the paranoia of the company runs far too high in this situation), but the benefits to the company commonly outweigh the risks.

Also give the contact information about the downsized employees to The Five O’Clock Club, so that they may be

reached immediately (within one-half hour) and become engaged in the process of moving forward. Don’t give employees the option of taking a few extra weeks of severance pay instead of outplacement. That’s like saying, “I’ll pay you a few thousand dollars if you don’t take outplacement.” The employee will always take the money. But is it in the employee’s best interests?

Outplacement helps the employee and the organization to move forward. The coaching, The Five O’Clock Club small-group meetings, and the books and CDs are the best way to get employees thinking about tomorrow and moving on with their lives. It makes them grateful for the help they are getting, rather than feeling wronged.

There is yet another script to mention. Yes, you must take care of the departing employees and the managers who must communicate the bad news. What about the surviving employees? Those who remain behind need to know from management what has happened and the business reasons for the downsizing. The script you have for survivors should acknowledge that this is a difficult time for everyone, and that everyone who remains should be helpful and supportive of those whose positions have been eliminated. Furthermore, the survivors are the workforce now charged with moving the business forward, and managers need to show appreciation to them. People will feel good when they are respected and if they are dealt with in a forthright manner.

Everyone—those who are left behind, those who are leaving—wants to be handled decently. We have all heard the horror stories about bad firings. All of the good feelings that a person may have had toward his employer—even for many years—can go right out the window because of a botched action that lasted just 45 minutes or an hour. So if you can do it the right way and treat people with respect, in the long run the organization benefits and the employees benefit. ●



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

For just sort of 25 years now I have been representing individual executives only in matters of their employment, compensation and severance. Severance is most of my practice, so clearly I work a lot with people who have been fired or downsized. HR professionals, on the other hand, obviously have other clients. Your clients are senior management and the board at your organizations. But while we have different clients, I think that our interests are fundamentally the same, especially in the matter of termination.

Small things — the continuation of perks such as tuition assistance and baseball passes — mean a lot to people who have to explain things to their families.

The best termination practices are those that, in fact, encourage and support your own HR goals, namely the goals of acquiring, motivating and retaining the very best human capital. The worst termination practices detract from these goals—and, in fact, they run the risk of bringing wider damage with respect to the three primary interests in business. Believe it or not, the least important of these interests is revenue. More important than revenue are rela-

Moving Towards Best Practices

by Alan L. Sklover, Esq.

tionships. It is through relationships that our companies make their revenues. But the most important interest in business—and the one that bad termination practices can hurt the most—is reputation, both externally and internally.

Popular Worst Practices

Based on my experience over the years, I can assure you that HR commonly fails to use some of the best termination practices, and routinely indulges in some of the worst practices. One of the most common complaints I hear from executives is, “It wasn’t what they did to me, it was *how* they did it.”

Consider carefully the path you follow. **When you fire someone who has given 25 years of service and do not allow the person to say goodbye to staff and colleagues, you have done one of the worst things that can be done.** If you want to drive a stake into the heart of someone who cared about your company, do that. Yet that is the path followed by so many HR officers who handle terminations. Do you ask a 19-year old to sign a non-compete? Do you tell a 49-year old executive that she’ll get severance only if she agrees not to work in the industry for two years? These things happen all the time. I ask HR to think these things through: are they truly in the company’s best interest? In fact, take a leadership role and try to educate your senior management and your board that such things are not good practices.

A two-year non-compete request is, from the employee’s perspective, a bid to deprive the person of his or her livelihood. Try very hard to see how the termination impacts the employee and his/her family, and how you can build goodwill. I have never heard an employer say, “We are concerned how your children will feel about this.” Nor

have I ever heard, “Tuition assistance will continue at least through the end of the school year” or “The baseball passes you get free from the company will continue for another six months or a year.” Such things—even small items—can mean a lot to people who have to explain a job loss to their families. These fall into the category of best practices, and they are among the most effective steps to take in reducing the leverage that I look for, when, as the attorney, I look to negotiate and litigate.

It is through *relationships* that companies make their revenue. Poor termination practices hurt your reputation.

The Fear Factor

After all these years, I am convinced that the worst practices derive from fear. Of course, as a responsible HR officer, you do have to address your fears about the risk, for example, if you don’t escort an employee from the building. Yes, if you allow someone to stay to say goodbye to colleagues, the person may act out. It may happen and you may be criticized for it. But is the risk really to the core interest of the company or to yourself (you will feel stressed)? Assuredly, removing an employee promptly from the building is a worst practice. What do we do to the very worst criminals in society? We put them in isolation—that that is what escorting someone out of the building amounts to. I can and frequently do go to the board of directors and say, “Look what your HR people have done.” The board does care if the company’s reputation is imperiled. The best practices are those that do not threaten this primary business interest.

Generally speaking, there are two key steps that can be taken to move in the direction of adopting best practices—and eschewing the worst. First of all, *walk in the other person's shoes*. Really try to understand what the terminated employee is experiencing, even the nuances that can be overlooked in the emotionally overcharged situation. Secondly, consider your own accountability. What if the terminated employee were asked to submit a questionnaire to the board of directors, rating how the firing was handled? Would you have the courage to hold yourself accountable in such a way? Are your practices the best or the worst?

**Take a leadership role.
Educate your senior
management and board that
these are *not* good practices.**

“Do You Know How that Made Me Feel?”

I have no doubt that most HR professionals want to act in good faith, and that, for the most part, they mean well. But termination is probably the scariest part of the job, and, when the crunch comes, they get a little nervous. Best practices do need to become established policy, so that everyone knows the protocols to follow when facing the scariest part of the job. The impact on people is usually permanent—and is rarely forgotten. There is an old saying that applies here: “People will never remember everything you said, they will rarely remember everything you did, but they will remember forever how you made them feel. That never goes away.” ●

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Eight Signs That Say It's Time to Change Jobs

It's a new year and it's time to take a look at your career. The average American has been in his or her job for only four years. Many leave voluntarily: The economy is good and it's time to see what's out there. Most who leave involuntarily don't lose their jobs overnight — unless they've been caught stealing, giving away company secrets or in an compromising position with a subordinate. Even if your company's been bought, sold or reorganized, a layoff is not immediately in the cards for everyone. It takes time for top executives to determine how they want to handle downsizing and redeployment. But, if your company is in the news for a period of time, it's likely there are problems that can't be resolved.

According to Richard Bayer, Chief Operating Officer of The Five O'Clock Club, “There are eight additional signals—from bosses and co-workers—that let you know your job is in jeopardy. If you have noticed three or more of these warning signs, it's time to update your résumé and begin mounting a job-search campaign.”

1. You don't fit in. Your values don't match the company's. If your colleagues are “dishonest and focused on getting ahead regardless of legal or moral barriers,” Bayer says, it's time to quit before an Enron-style scandal sinks the ship.

2. Your boss doesn't like you and you don't like him or her. If your boss never asks your opinion, and never wants to chat or have lunch with you, and if you disagree with her agenda and dislike her style, your days are numbered. And if you've ever done something that undermined your boss, you might as well get out now.

3. Your peers don't like you. Feeling isolated, gossiped about, and excluded from the inner workings of the organization is a very bad sign, as is feeling

that you're not part of the team and wouldn't socialize with your colleagues even if they asked you.

4. You don't get assignments that demonstrate the full range of your abilities. “Watching all the good assignments go to others, while you're given the ones that play to your weaknesses or are beneath your professional level, should tell you something,” says Bayer. Likewise, if it seems the boss doesn't trust your judgment, you're in trouble.

5. You always get called upon to do the “grunt work.” Everybody has to take on a dull or routine task now and then, but if you are constantly being singled out to do the work no one else wants, alarm bells should ring.

6. You are excluded from meetings your peers are invited to. Sound familiar? If it's painfully clear that your ideas aren't valued, why stick around?

7. Everyone on your level has an office. You have a cubicle in the hallway. Bayer notes that, whatever your title, your digs can speak volumes about your real status in the organization. If your peers have offices with windows and you're asked to move into a broom closet—no matter what the official explanation—start cleaning out your desk.

8. You dread going to work and feel like you're developing an ulcer. Ah, here's yet another of your symptoms, and a particularly nasty one at that.

“If the idea of going to the office makes you anxious or physically sick, and you're counting the hours from the time you arrive until the second you can leave, it's time to move on,” says Bayer. “Do it before you do serious damage to your health, or get so demoralized that you can't be upbeat in job interviews, or both.” ●

A Successful Job Hunter Reports

The new President of The People's Choice Awards

Fred Nelson addressed the almost 200 human resource executives who attended The Five O'Clock Club's HR Network breakfast on September 7th. Fred is a funny guy and definitely belongs in show business. He had the audience roaring, while he told the true story of his job elimination and his job search with the help of The Five O'Clock Club.

I spent a decade at *Entertainment Weekly*, which is part of Time, Inc. In December 2005, several of the most talented and well-respected Time, Inc. senior executives were job-eliminated. My boss got a package, as did my mentor, the guy who brought me into the company. Those of us who remained saw the writing on the wall and knew that we should consider other options. I set a goal for myself: As VP of Digital Media, I wanted to see EW.com through its re-launch. The new site was successfully launched on January 4, 2007, and my position was eliminated on January 5th. Be careful what you wish for.

Even when you know it's a possibility, job elimination does a number on your self-esteem. **I must say, however, that the experience for me was**



oddly pleasant. My HR counterpart, a wonderful woman with whom I had worked for years, walked me through the whole process. She was very human about it and that made a huge difference. She presented outplacement options, including the more traditional formula of going to an office, having a phone and working on your résumé—or being coached by The Five O'Clock Club. One of the reasons I chose the Five O'Clock Club was because it was outside my comfort zone. To be honest, I thought it sounded a little weird. I thought it was going to be really touchy-feely and we'd have to do group hugs and trust falls and maybe sit around naked in a sweat lodge. Thankfully, the naked thing was totally optional. [Note to Readers: Fred was kidding, of course, and got a great laugh. The naked thing is not an option at the Club.]

My Five O'Clock Club coach made all the difference in the world.

I signed up for the Club and the first thing I did was to meet with my coach, Jim Borland. That made all the difference in the world. I sat down with Jim one-on-one and went through my career path and my résumé and what I wanted to do. Jim was extremely positive and encouraging and said, "You have an incredible background and you're going to get snapped up like that." Although deep down I knew that I had a great track record, excellent experience and solid reputation, I didn't realize at the time how much I needed to hear those words from an objective source. Jim's support empowered me to walk away



Fred Nelson, former Time Inc. executive and Five O'Clock Club member, told a packed audience of HR executives how well his former employer treated him — and how he got his new job.

saying, "I am smart and pretty and I am going to get another great job."

Attending meetings at the Club was a really great way to meet peers who had been through a similar experience. Several of them were from Time, Inc. After meeting a wide range of new people who have had all sorts of professional adventures you realize that there are a lot of really cool jobs out there. I love movies, music and TV, and I was determined to stay within the world of Pop Culture. At *Entertainment Weekly* I got to work in all of those arenas and I realized that it could be a tall order to find another gig where I got to dabble in all three. I sent a "here's my new e-mail address" note to my database; one of my contacts responded immediately and said, "I have the perfect job for you." It turns out that his organization was looking for somebody to be the President of the People's Choice Awards. I met with them and landed the job.

I get to run an annual awards show and build an online community of entertainment enthusiasts. The show honors fan favorites in music, movies and TV. (Be sure to tune in on January 8 at 9:00 EST on CBS.) The people I work with are really smart and pretty. Everyone I know who had been through a job elimination told me that I would ultimately regard this experience as the best thing that ever happened to me. It turns out they were right. ●

Three Career Coaches Tell You How to Have a Successful Search

Not the Prettiest Race, but One of the Bravest

By Ruth Robbins

Rebecca is a bright, articulate, and enthusiastic political scientist and social policy professional. She joined The Five O'Clock Club and was assigned to my group as she was completing her doctorate at a college in New York. She had a strong academic background and wanted a career in a not-for profit or government organization.

Rebecca was well prepared—as was her natural inclination: she had done her homework by reading The Five O'Clock Club books. She had a decent résumé and had already landed interviews with such agencies as Planned Parenthood and a few NGOs (Non-Government Organizations) involved in resettlement and economic development. Although she was interviewing fairly consistently and was buoyed up by the strong response her résumé was getting, her approach was too scattered.

She needed to apply The Five O'Clock Club concept of organized targets. We altered her basic résumé only slightly, since it was reaping good results, but created a strong targeted positioning statement. She worked on creating a new targeted campaign so that her efforts could be more focused.

Now she targeted positions such as policy analyst, program manager, and development / fund-raising specialist. She aimed for a variety of New York organizations, including women's reproductive-rights agencies and foundations, children's services and NGOs focused on third-world economic development. Her energy was unflagging, and her bright confidence was a delight to the group. She cemented a good relationship with a job buddy in the group with a very different profile from hers—an



Ruth Robbins,
Five O'Clock Club
Career Coach.

engineer with an MBA—and it was fun to see how well they complimented and encouraged each other.

Rebecca found jobs posted on idealist.org and philanthropist.org. She networked intensively looking for information and leads. She attended profes-

sional and academic meetings, exchanged cards, and e-mailed people with whom she had met. She made direct contacts. Now she was being called in for second and third interviews, but for several months nothing came to fruition. Finally, there was a payoff: in the summer of 2004 she got two job offers: one from a well-known refugee resettlement organization and one from a start-up social-policy think tank. She decided to accept the former because it wasn't a start-up, and it offered more money. The organization liked Rebecca so much that one of the senior directors called from a cell phone to make the offer. Unfortunately, the happy ending didn't last long. Within a week, due to internal snags, the offer was rescinded. Rebecca called the think tank, but they had already hired their backup candidate.

Somewhat angry and disappointed, but not devastated, Rebecca returned to the Club and to the structured personal marketing plan that we had worked on. She once again renewed old contacts, wrote more direct contact letters, answered numerous ads, and got more things going. She did not despair but moved on with renewed determination.

Two months later she landed a good job with a major international policy organization. She is able to apply her astute political, analytical, and writing skills and does some occasional international travel.

Rebecca's resilience and confidence in the face of adversity recall a line from one of my favorite movies, *Chariots of Fire*. When a coach sees the front-runner stumble and fall, but then pick himself up and, against all odds, come in first, he observes, "Not the prettiest race I've ever seen, but certainly one of the bravest." Rebecca's job search was more painful than most, but in light of her grace, confidence, and determination, it was certainly the bravest I'd ever seen.

That's one of the great things about our weekly groups: peer pressure!

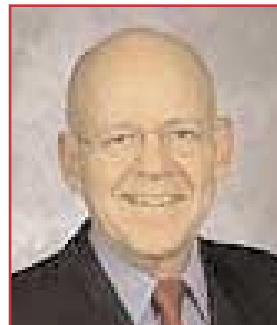
Don't Assume Anything

By Bill Belknap

Sometimes dream clients have blind spots. Maxine, a seasoned Wall Street executive and one of the participants in the weekly telephone group that I lead, followed The Five O'Clock Club methodology religiously. She joined the call every week and was a consistent contributor; she worked at least 40 hours a week on her job search.

She took networking very seriously and did it very well. However, there was one important networking resource that I had great difficulty in convincing her to use. She balked at calling her alumni office. This, by the way, is a common failing of many executives. Some surveys show as many as 70 percent don't bother to contact their alumni offices.

What was Maxine's excuse—or,



Bill Belknap
Five O'Clock Club
Career Coach.

more kindly put—her rationale? She had graduated from Wesleyan, and she assured me that “most Wesleyan grads go into the arts.” I reminded her that she had made the transition to the world of finance! Surely she was not the only one. To nudge her along, I decided we would discuss the alumni office approach on the next telephone strategy meeting; everyone agreed she needed to network with alumni. That’s one of the great things about our weekly groups: peer pressure!

She finally agreed that it wouldn’t hurt to call. Guess what? The alumni office gave her the names of 125 grads who worked in New York City in financial services. She was thrilled and went on a campaign to contact every person on the list. And, yes, through one of her alumni contacts, she landed a terrific six-figure job at a major investment bank.

Like 58% of those who attend the Club, Susan wanted to change careers.



Anita Attridge,
Five O’Clock Club
Career Coach.

Working Hard to Become an Insider: The Key to Career Change

By Anita Attridge

Susan had worked in the publishing field for eight years. Although she liked many aspects of her job, it was not her desired field. She

really wanted to become a librarian.

Susan knew she would need to go back to school to obtain a degree in library science, and she was willing to do that. Her job target was to be a trainee in a library. Although she knew this would be a challenge—after all, most trainees don’t have eight-year work histories—she set out on a dual track to achieve her goal. She began informational interviews with the librarians in her town and surrounding areas. She also completed her application to obtain a master’s degree in library science. As Susan continued to conduct informational interviews, she was able to network into most of the libraries, share her résumé with librarians, and tell them about her application for a master’s degree in library science. Susan was accepted into the library science program.

Susan was now at a point where she wanted to move on to another job, even if it had to be in publishing. So she developed her targets in this area. She would spend two more weeks focused on the library

positions; however, at the end of two weeks, she would shift to finding a position in the publishing field and would obtain her library science degree at night.

Since Susan was a persistent networker, she contacted each of the librarians she had met, told them of her acceptance into the library science program, and reiterated her desire to work in a library. One of the librarians called her to inform her of a librarian-in-training position that would be opening shortly. Susan contacted the hiring librarian, using the name of her networking contact, and was invited in for an interview.

During the interview, Susan used the consultant approach to learn the needs of the library and how the librarian-in-training would work with the staff. She wrote a compelling influencing letter stating how her current skills and the skills she would be learning would enable her to meet the job requirements discussed. Susan was offered the position.

Later she learned that her networking contact had been a strong supporter. Because of the networking meetings, continuous follow-up, and her acceptance in the library science program, her networking contact saw Susan as a person who clearly understood her goals, was dedicated to achieving them, and had the skills to be a strong contributor in the library field. ●



"I'm sorry, but Mr. Roberts no longer takes meetings, phone calls, cell calls, faxes, snail mail, e-mail, messages, notes or appointments. Is there anything else we can do for you?"



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.
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.	69% of employees said they would "not" or "definitely not" recommend the organization.
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."
How were long timers treated? 24% of employees fired had 5 to 25 years tenure.	HR said that 11% received a positive word about their performance. 89% received a negative or neutral word about their performance.	

Firing an Employee Has More Negative Effects Than You May Think...

Bruising Layoffs Leave Long-Term Scars

Our survey conducted among job seekers shows that supervisors are mishandling the termination process. The striking facts show that, across an entire spectrum of industries, workers are very unhappy with the way they're treated:

82% of the time, employees received no positive feedback about their time at the company, even those workers that had been with the company for five years—or more!

69% of workers said that they would not recommend the organization to other job seekers, based solely on how they were treated during the exit interview.

74% of workers said that, in their estimation, they could have been treated more equitably and kindly during their exit interview.

According to Richard Bayer, Chief Operating Officer of The Five O'Clock Club, "The termination process is very bruising to the employee. It destroys self-esteem, and makes it difficult to pick up the pieces and move forward.

Managers often forget to have a human touch—feedback about performance, both positive and negative, and are unable to say a kind word. If you have to terminate an employee, why not leave their dignity intact?"

If a manager says a kind word to employees during dismissal, employees are much more likely to be positive about the organization, recommend the organization to job seekers, and recommend the company's products or services.

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



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 25 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's 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.

Will you Get the Right Kind of Outplacement?

Forget the desk and phone. There's a myth in outplacement circles that a terminated employee just needs a desk, a phone and minimal career counseling. Our experience clearly shows that downsized workers need qualified, reliable counseling more than anything else.

Most traditional outplacement packages last only 1 to 3 months, and the average job hunter gets office space and 5 hours of career coaching during that time. The cost to your employer: about \$5,000. Yet the service job hunters need most is the career coaching itself—not a desk and a phone.

Most professionals, managers and executives are right in the thick of negotiations with prospective employers at the 3-month mark. Yet that is precisely when traditional outplacement ends, leaving job hunters stranded and sometimes ruining deals.

It is astonishing how often job hunters and employers alike are impressed by databases of "job postings" at outplacement firms. Yet fewer than 10% of all jobs are filled through ads and 10% are filled through search firms. Instead, direct contact and networking—done The Five O'Clock Club way—are more effective for most searches.

Opt for 100% Coaching

In the past, providing space was important. But today, most professionals, managers and executives have home computers and faxes. They no longer need outplacement firms for those office services, even though many firms still focus on

them. More than anything else, job hunters need qualified, reliable coaching that does not end when it's needed the most.

You Get a Safety Net

Imagine getting a package that protects you for a full year. Imagine knowing you can come back if your new job doesn't work out — even months later. Imagine trying consulting work if you like. If you

later decide it's not for you, you can come back.

We can offer you a safety net of *one full year's career coaching* because The Five O'Clock Club method is so effective that few people will actually need that much of it. But *you're* protected individually.

You'll Job Search with Those Who Are Employed! How Novel!

Let's face it. It can be depressing to spend your days at a place where everyone is unemployed. At The Five O'Clock Club, half of the attendees are working, and this makes the atmosphere cheerier and helps to move your search along.

What's more, you'll be in a small group of your peers, all of whom are using The Five O'Clock Club method. Our research proves that those who attend the small group regularly, *and use The Five O'Clock Club method*, get jobs faster and at higher rates of pay than those who only work privately with a career coach throughout their searches.

So Many Poor Attempts

Nothing is sadder than to meet someone who has already been getting "help" with their search, but the wrong help. They've used traditional outplacement and have learned the traditional techniques that are no longer so effective. Or they've spent thousands for mailing services or career coaching firms. Most have poor résumés and inappropriate targets, and don't know how to turn job interviews into offers.

Over 25 Years of Research

As an employee advocacy organization, The Five O'Clock Club focuses on providing the services and information that the job hunter needs most.

The Five O'Clock Club was started in 1978 as a research-based organization. Job hunters tried various techniques and reported their results back to the group. We developed a variety of guidelines so job hunters could choose the techniques that were best for them.

The methodology was tested and

refined on professionals, managers and executives (and those aspiring to be)—from all occupations and economic levels. Salaries ranged from \$25,000 up to \$400,000; 50% were employed and 50% were unemployed.

Ever since the beginning, The Five O'Clock Club has tracked trends. Over time, our advice has changed as the job market has changed. What worked in the past is insufficient for today's job market. Today's Five O'Clock Club promotes all our relevant old strategies—and so much more.

You'll Get Quite a Package!

The Five O'Clock Club's *premium* package costs your employer only \$5,000. You get 14 hours of private coaching—not 5. (You may want to use a few hours *after* you start your new job.) And you get up to one full year of small-group career coaching. In addition, you get books, CDs, and other helpful materials. The other packages can be reviewed at www.FiveOClockClub.com.

To Get Started

Many employers *will* allow you to choose your outplacement firm. **We can speak with your Human Resources manager on your behalf** to ask for The Five O'Clock Club service. Or we can give you an outplacement invoice to pass on to HR. **Call** 212-286-4500 or **e-mail** Info@FiveOClockClub.com. When we get a verbal approval, we will immediately ship you the books, CDs, and other materials, and assign you to a private coach, as well as to a small group.

Then we'll monitor your search. Frankly, we care about you—and not about your employer. If your employer cares about you, they'll be glad we feel this way because they'll know that you'll be taken care of. ●

Save this for later
or pass it on to
a friend who may
be losing a job.

"Landed ideal job"

"The Five O'Clock Club product is much better, far more useful than my outplacement package." —Senior executive and Five O'Clock Club member

"Kept juices flowing"

"The Club kept the juices flowing. You're told what to do, what not to do. There were fresh ideas. I went through an outplacement service that, frankly, did not help. If they had done as much as The Five O'Clock Club did, I would have landed sooner." —Another member

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

Five O'Clock Club Outplacement The Ethical Choice

Often imitated; Never successfully



Our Mantra

“We always do what is in the best interests
of the job hunter”
– while saving money for HR.

The Five O'Clock Club Advantage – for Human Resources

- Show fairness and concern for those being let go.
- Give employees the support they need.
- **Immediate engagement**
 - Employee contacted within ½ hour of our receiving the assignment.
 - Employee focuses on the future. Better job search.
 - Private coach makes courtesy phone call before sundown that day!
 - We FEDEX books, CDs and other materials that day.
- **Low overhead.**
Lowest prices for you.
- **Monthly reporting** with a human touch.
No computer-generated reports.
- **Materials for managers:**
– to help with the exit process.
- **HR Network breakfasts**
– to help you with *your* career.

The Five O'Clock Club Advantage – for Employees

- **A research-based, high-impact methodology**
 - Average professional, manager and executive has a new job or is in the negotiating stage in just 10 to 12 weeks!
 - Yet all programs are for one year or more (costing less than a 3-month program at other firms).
- **Provides downside protection to employees:**
 - Can work at a consulting assignment for months and still use our services.
 - Get help with challenges in a new job—for months.
 - **If they lose that next job, they can come back to us.**
 - Time can be put on hold to return to school, do consulting work or handle personal issues. Up to two years.
- **The only research-based program:**
 - Over 25 years of research: Who gets the best jobs and how.
 - Powerful assessment process with private coach.
 - **58% decide to change careers** (industries / fields).
 - Try new field while still working with us.
 - The best materials (books, CDs, etc.) on the market.
 - The best coaches are attracted to us:
 - Work intensively with clients over long period.
 - Paid handsomely – but only for time spent with your employees.
 - A customer service department:
 - To keep you informed.
 - To keep your employees engaged in the process.

**We don't declare “success”
– or push job hunters out the door –
when a person simply decides to try a new field,
lands a consulting assignment,
or decides to return to school!**

**The emphasis is on *career development*,
not just job search.**

- **Weekly small-group strategy sessions**
 - Individual strategic analysis in a group of their peers with a senior coach.
 - Healthy environment:
Half of the attendees are employed!
 - Meet with the same small group every week.
 - They get jobs faster and at higher rates of pay.
 - Provides accountability, innovation and camaraderie.

The Five O'Clock Club Job-Search Series for Professionals, Managers and Executives



We'll take you through your entire career. 1. Start by understanding yourself and what you want in **Targeting a Great Career**. 2. **Package Yourself with a Targeted Résumé** done The Five O'Clock Club Way. 3. Then **Shortcut Your Job Search** by following our techniques for Getting Meetings. 4. Turn those interviews into offers with **Mastering the Job Interview and Winning the Money Game**. 5. Finally, learn from successful job hunters and their coaches in their **Report from the Front Lines**.

- Figure out what to do with your life and your career
- Develop a résumé that separates you from your competitors
- Shortcut your search by using the Internet and other techniques *properly*
- Learn how to turn those job interviews into job offers
- Use our Four-Step Salary Negotiation Method to get what you deserve
- Learn from others: Be inspired and save time in your search.

The Five O'Clock Club has enabled thousands of professionals, managers, and executives to correct their job-search mistakes. Most who attend regularly and read our books—even those unemployed up to two years—have a new job within only ten weekly sessions.

Most people conduct a passive job search. Their approach is ordinary, non-directed, fragmented, and ineffective. The Five O'Clock Club methodology was tested and refined on professionals, managers, and executives (and those aspiring to be) —from all occupations and economic levels.

The members who do best read and re-read the books, mark them up and take notes. Do the same and you will do better in your search.

Advanced Concepts:



For Executives Only
Applying Business Techniques to Your Job Search
978-0-944054-12-3; \$12.95
Five O'Clock Books



Your Great Business Idea
The Truth about Making It Happen
978-0-944054-13-0; \$14.95
Five O'Clock Books



Achieving the Good Life After 50
Tools and Resources for Making It Happen
978-0-944054-14-7; \$12.95
Five O'Clock Books

Doing Well in Your Present Job:

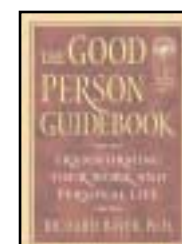


Work Smarts
Be a Winner on the Job
How to build relationships at work and achieve result.
978-0-944054-15-4; \$14.95
Five O'Clock Books (2008)



Navigating Your Career
Develop Your Plan. Manage Your Boss. Get Another Job Inside
1-4180-1501-6; \$12.95
Thomson Delmar Learning

Becoming a Better Person:



The Good Person Guidebook
Transforming Your Personal Life
New edition available
March, 2008

For Students / Recent Grads:



Launching the Right Career
Students, recent grads, and those who want a career instead of a job.
1-4180-1505-9; \$12.95
Thomson Delmar Learning

Additional Search Help:



Job Search Workbook
8.5 x 11 format
1-4180-4050-9; \$12.95
Thomson Delmar Learning



At major bookstores or through www.fiveoclockclub.com
or Amazon.com or call 1-800-686-7742.
For bulk orders, call The Five O'Clock Club at 1-800-538-6645



**When employees
are given a choice,
they choose The Five O'Clock Club
for their outplacement program.**

“The Five O’Clock Club program is far more effective than conventional outplacement. Selecting The Five O’Clock Club was one of my best decisions this year.”
SVP, HR, consumer products company

Old-Fashioned Outplacement:

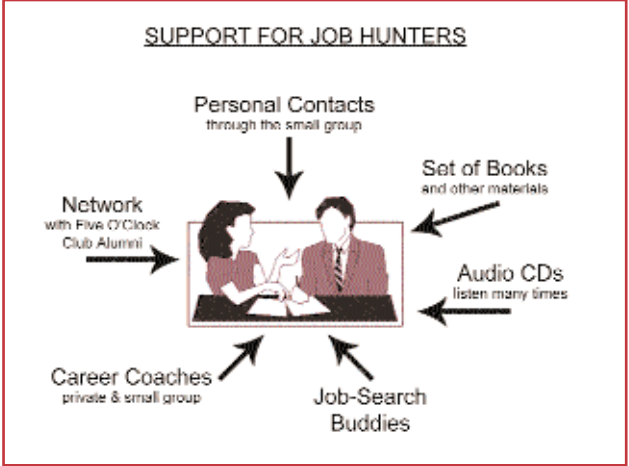
- Saddled with real estate costs.
- Very limited one-on-one career coaching.
- Overburdened coaches.
- Vanilla career coaching methods developed in the 1970s.

Five O’Clock Club Outplacement:

- **One year of outplacement** — even if employee loses next job, decides to do consulting work for a while, or needs help handling the political situation in a new job!
- **Guaranteed number of hours of private coaching** coupled with weekly small-group strategy sessions headed by a senior coach.
- **Method based on over 25 years of research.** Not vanilla job-search coaching.

Five O’Clock Club Outplacement Prices

	Price	Private Hours
Senior Executives earning over \$200,000 / yr		
Tailored Program (2-year coaching program & office space, administrative services, etc.)	\$25,000 --- \$20,000	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 / 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



The Best Job-Search Materials Anywhere

Each job hunter gets:

- The set of 4 books.
- Boxed set of sixteen 38-minute lectures on audio CDs.
- 2-year subscription to our monthly magazine, *The Five O'Clock News*.





Ten Tips for Changing Careers

by Kate Wendleton, President, The Five O'Clock Club

Most people intuitively know that it's easier to get another job doing what they've been doing rather than try to change careers. Hence, people who need to job search may continue on the same unhappy path. That's what happened during the 2001-2003 recession.

However, fully 58% of the people who came through The Five O'Clock Club in 2006 ended up changing careers — that is, they found new jobs in completely different fields or industries. A high school science teacher in Canada became a pharmaceutical sales person in the U.S. A banker got a job with a political organization, his dream. Job hunters went from transportation to not-for-profit, from banking to publishing, from insurance to government, from utilities to banking, and you name it.

They were not necessarily targeting growth industries or the hot industries and fields of the moment, but generally went after what they thought they would enjoy while maintaining their standard of living.

In fact, the average American has been in his or her job for only four years. And the average American can expect to have to five different careers — that's not five different jobs, but five different careers! The average professional, manager or executive who attends The Five O'Clock Club makes a career change in only ten weekly sessions. How do they do it? Here are a few steps to follow:

1. Decide what you want to do. Using our book, *Targeting a Great Career*, pick a career direction: What are the things you enjoy doing and also do well? Which industries interest you? Where do you see yourself in 15 years?

2. If possible, pick growth fields. Better to go into healthcare or secondary education rather than farming or manual inventory management.

3. Explore them. Check out your target fields on the Internet—as a quick pass—just to see if they still interest you. Find

out the prognosis for the field. Is it growing? Stagnant?

4. Meet with people in your target fields and industries. See if it is what you imagined it to be. You may think you're interested in the pharmaceutical industry, financial services or the art world until you actually have a few meetings. Do you *really* want to be a lawyer or nurse? A lot of lawyers and nurses are unhappy because they did not explore the field first.

5. Reposition yourself on your résumé. Use buzz-words from the new industry rather than your old one. For example, a bank operations manager wanted to work in hospital operations. He had to change all the mentions of “check processing” on his résumé to “transaction processing.” Hospitals process a lot of transactions, but not that many checks. (See our book, *Packaging Yourself: The Targeted Resume*.)

6. Consider making a half step. A tax accountant wanted to get into technology sales. First, he took a job as a tax accountant in a technology company. Then he moved to sales. Total time for the complete change: 13 months.

7. Become an insider. Outsiders never get hired; only insiders do. A senior executive in bank marketing became the head of marketing in a hospital. He met with lots of hospital marketing executives, read hospital marketing trade journals and attended hospital marketing association meetings. He uncovered the industry issues and was able to speak knowledgeably about them. On his eighth interview at a major hospital, the president said to him, “Are you sure you never worked in a hospital before?” He got the job.

8. Offer proof of your interest and competence. Get a few offers from inferior companies—those who would consider themselves lucky to have someone like you. THEN make yourself more desirable by telling your primary target that you are talking to a lot of other companies, and in fact, have a few offers.

9. Do not think that you will have to take a pay cut. This is a great job market and it's a good chance that your skills are transferable to the new field or industry. Don't sell yourself short!

10. Attend your small group regularly. At The Five O'Clock Club meetings, you will see how others are doing it and be inspired to do the right things and push ahead.

You, too, can get into the job of your dreams, but you first have to find out what your dreams are. We can help you get there. ●

Kate Wendleton,
President



"I'm going to try to be a pro hockey player. So, if I don't return, you'll know I made it, and you can take charge of the marketing department."

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR THE FIVE O'CLOCK CLUB



Professional, Managerial, Executive and Career Starter Job-Hunt Groups

Meetings are held weekly via teleconference or at various physical locations.

- Hear one lecture per week at a physical branch or via one of 16 lectures on CDs by Kate Wendleton. (The boxed lecture set: \$150 or FREE with the purchase of 10 "Insider" sessions.)
- ☎ Join the weekly small group discussion with a senior Five O'Clock Club career consultant (for the "Insider" program: via teleconference from the convenience of your home, or anywhere else).
- 📄 Enjoy The Five O'Clock Club website. Download worksheets from the Members Only section.

Prices: Insider Program

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. 24- Jan. 4	HOLIDAYS -No Sessions Scheduled
Jan. 7-11	Advanced Interviewing Techniques
Jan. 14-18	Keys to Effective Networking
Jan. 21-25	HOLIDAY WEEK -No Sessions Scheduled
Jan. 28-Feb. 1	Two-Minute Pitch: Keystone of Your Search
Feb. 4-8	Beat the Odds with Search Firms & Ads
Feb. 11-5	Shortcut Your Search: Internet & Other Research
Feb. 18-22	HOLIDAY WEEK -No Sessions Scheduled
Feb. 25-29	Developing New Momentum in Your Campaign
Mar. 3-7	Getting the Most Out of Your Contacts
Mar. 10-14	Getting Interviews: Direct & Targeted Mail
Mar. 17-21	SPRING BREAK -No Sessions Scheduled
Mar. 24-28	The 5OCC Approach to Interviewing
Mar. 31-Apr.4	Handling Difficult Interview Questions
Apr. 7-11	The Five O'Clock Club Approach to Job Search
Apr. 14-18	How to Turn Job Interviews into Offers
Apr. 21-25	Developing New Targets for Your Search
Apr. 28-May 2	Four-Step Salary Negotiation Method
May 5-9	HOLIDAYS -No Sessions Scheduled
May 12-16	Advanced Interviewing Techniques
May 19-23	Keys to Effective Networking
May 26-30	HOLIDAY WEEK -No Sessions Scheduled
June 2-6	Two-Minute Pitch: Keystone of Your Search
June 9-13	Beat the Odds with Search Firms & Ads

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.

The Five O'Clock Club®

Over 40 groups meet nationwide. Below is a sampling, or visit us at www.FiveOClockClub.com

Branches

THE POPULAR INSIDER PROGRAM

You are near a meeting of The Five O'Clock Club — with **over 40 groups** meeting weekly. To join the "Insider," a weekly small-group teleconference, call 212-286-4500. Below are a sample of the groups.

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 DiSclafani

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

Do your friends a favor ...
Tell them about us.

Join



Reading *The Five O'Clock News* will save you valuable time in keeping up with the trends and ideas affecting your career and quality of life.

The Five O'Clock News fills a unique niche for busy, career-minded people who want to live full, balanced lives.

Subscribe Online: www.FiveOClockClub.com

Keep your life—and career—on track!

Yes! I want to receive a Beginner's Kit, a membership card, *The Five O'Clock News* (10 issues per year), have access to the *Members Only* Bulletin Boards and become an official member of The Five O'Clock Club.

\$75 for 2 years \$49 for 1 year

MC VISA AMEX (You may fax to: 212-286-9571)

Card #: _____ Exp: _____

Signature: _____

Enclosed is my check in the amount: _____

Please make checks payable to: The Five O'Clock Club
and send to: The Five O'Clock Club, 300 East 40th Street. #6L, NY, NY 10016

First Name _____

Last Name _____

Address _____ Apt.# _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ Home# _____ Bus.# _____

E-mail address: _____

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.	<u>1 year, exclusively career coaching.</u>
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	<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.
Senior Executives earning over \$200,000 per year			
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)	<u>\$10,000</u>	<u>28</u>	
Standard	\$7,500	18	
Executives earning \$100,000 to \$200,000 per year			
Premium	<u>\$5,000</u>	<u>14</u>	
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	<u>\$3,000</u>	<u>8</u>	
Bare-bones	\$2,000	3	
Clerical, factory, other hourly	\$1,000	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 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

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



Kate Wendleton, President of The Five O'Clock Club, proudly presents the **HR HERO OF THE YEAR AWARD** to **Ron Thomas**, the former VP of Organizational Development at Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia. Each year, the Club's HR network presents the award to someone who has shown outstanding dignity and decency to employees. The Five O'Clock Club has worked with Ron for *years*. When we walked around Martha Stewart with him, we could hardly get a word in! Every one of those 500 employees said hello to Ron, and that's part of Ron's method — management by walking around. At Martha Stewart, he started many new programs, such as the first ever Management Training Program for all levels of management, the "The leadership institute" for senior managers, and the first online Performance Evaluation System. And Ron introduced outplacement services to Martha Stewart, starting with one test-case with The Five O'Clock Club and convincing management to provide it to even more displaced employees.

Those are just a few highlights of Ron's almost 8 years at Martha Stewart. Ron is taking a brief sabbatical before deciding the next chapter in his career. After all, everyone loves a hero! Ron might as well take advantage of it. ●



THE FIVE O'CLOCK NEWS

The Five O'Clock Club
300 East 40th Street — Suite 6L
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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HR Speaks Out: Best Termination Practices • When It's Time to Change Jobs • Compassion

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ENCLOSED

