



4 Principles on Business Planning for hires, fires, and layoffs

By Chris Pehura

Going through a massive layoff is scary. You hear the announcement late in the day. You see the guy across the hall or in the next cubicle packing up their desk. Sometimes there's an armed escort. And sometimes a large number of people just disappear.

For big business I've never seen a layoff handled well. The mere mention of one pulls productivity down into the toilet, key people jump ship, and then are those one-on-one or group meetings where they "break the news".

We seem to handle growth and sustainment much better than layoffs; mainly because layoffs tend to be surprises bunched up with uncertainty. And uncertainty leads to fear, rumors, and attrition. Layoffs are a problem because we can't strategically plan and schedule them well in advance. Or can we?

The bigger businesses get, the harder is it to do deeper business planning. Too much people, too much politics, and too much structure are involved. That is, too much for us to handle if we did it all manually. We are now in the age where we can automate our business planning end-to-end to better manage our growth, sustainment, and layoffs.

But to get to this point, we don't just get a turn-key system. An effective business planning capability and competency needs to be developed. This development takes time. Everyone has their own position on business planning, what they invest in, and how they do business execution. To wrangle everyone to one vision, mission, and direction, we need to setup a common set up principles to better guide our business planning efforts.

Here are four principles.

Principle #1 - Long term business planning. Forecast and plan out for the next ten years for growth, sustainment, and expected layoffs.

Principle #2 - Data and Big Data directly support and automate the heavy lifting for business planning strategically, operationally, and tactically. Big Data is more than analytics or large data sets. Leverage Big Data to communicate and automate the course corrections.

Principle #3 - Human Resources are not treated as costs but as Human Capital during business planning. Level of investment varies based on key producers, leaders, and supporting talent.

Principle #4 - Reduce the uncertainty in layoffs through communiques and training. Reduce the rumors with transparency. Acknowledge that layoffs are scary and that it's a difficult time for all of us. Demonstrate compassion.

While layoffs are scary, we as leaders do not need to be.

About the Author



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Chris is a management consultant with a data emphasis helping Fortune 100/1000 companies strategically evolve and reinvent their businesses to maximize their revenue growth. Through realignment, to overhauls, to rebuilding things from the top down and ground up, he integrates and solidifies leaders, strategies, and solutions into all aspects of the organization. As practice director for [C-SUITE DATA](#), a Canadian based consulting firm specializing in data and Big Data, Chris serves as a coach, trainer, and the voice for how data is the new capital that drives, multiplies, and maximizes revenue growth.



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