

Notification Meetings

Best Practice Planning Guide

Letting someone go is never an easy decision or conversation.

Whether you've gone through the experience before, or it's your first time notifying an employee of job loss, there's a lot to think about to make sure the notification goes smoothly. Proper planning can help ensure the exiting employee leaves the organization with their dignity intact.

This guide provides general tips and checklists to help you plan for an upcoming notification meeting. For additional support or to learn more about Career Transition services connect with one of our career consultants.

Objectives of Notification Meeting

- A process that is thoughtfully planned and skillfully conducted.
- Employee is treated with care and respect, retains dignity.
- Employee understands next steps and gets home safely.
- Company's internal and external brand is preserved.
- Company's legal and ethical responsibilities are fulfilled.


Steps for Planning a Notifications


1. Contact People First HR for support
2. Understand the meeting objectives
3. Complete pre-notification checklist
4. Review notification meeting recommendations
5. Hold notification meeting
6. Complete post-notification checklist



People First HR Services offers Career Transition support packages for terminations of all sizes.

Connect with a Career Consultant

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Pre-Notification Meeting Checklist

- Finalize severance package and supporting documents.
- Seek advice of legal counsel.
- Determine final pay and benefits coverage.
- Select time / location of meeting:
 - Never on a Friday
 - Choose a time that allows privacy and is appropriate for the employee (ie. not end of day if employee picks kids up from daycare).
 - Avoid significant dates (birthdays, anniversary of start date, etc.).
 - Book a private meeting room.
- Arrange for two company representatives to attend the meeting.
- Contact People First to review logistics and arrange for a career transition consultant to be present on notification day (virtual or in-person).
- Plan how the employee will be invited to the meeting.
- Write meeting notes and rehearse.
- Anticipate employee's reactions (anger, shock, denial, sadness) and plan responses.
- Identify the employee's access to company files, client contact lists, social media, etc.
- Plan how the employee's work devices and access will be recalled/cut off.
- Notify key individuals in advance (i.e. senior management).
- Decide how departure from building will be handled.



Meeting Recommendations

Avoid small talk. Get to the point immediately regarding the decision to dismiss. The meeting should not last more than 5 - 10 minutes.

- Concisely explain the reason for termination, allowing time for the employee to react or ask questions.
- Do not react to any challenges, defend or justify the decision. Just repeat the decision has been made, and it is final.
- Hand severance package and supporting documents to the employee and briefly explain terms of severance, if any.
- Emphasize the support being provided, if any (financial support, career transition consulting, cooperation on references).
- Clarify who the employee's contact person is for further questions.
- Advise how employee's computer access / voicemail will be handled. Gather keys, security access cards, etc., or arrange to have the People First HR career transition consultant collect these items.
- Discuss how personal belongings can be collected (gathered after meeting / sent to home / arranged to pick up).
- Try to end the meeting on a positive note. Shake hands and wish the person well before bringing in and introducing the People First HR career transition consultant to the employee.

Meeting key messages

1. We have a very difficult message to deliver.
2. Your employment is being terminated effective today. Today is your last day.
3. This decision has been made after careful consideration and is final.

If you have provided Career Transition support, be sure to let employees know that the individual will have a Career Consultant working with them as they move forward.

Value of Onsite Support

Onsite support provides notifying managers, departing employees, and retained employees assistance through the notification process.

Benefits include:

- An expert partner in planning the logistics of the notification meeting.
- Immediate counsel provided to departing employee to protect the organization's brand.
- Departing employee is connected to a People First HR career consultant to start new beginning.
- Retained employees reassured of the organization's commitment to its people.

Tips for Virtual Onsites

- Have a backup plan in case you experience technology issues.
- Consider who is being included on the meeting invite as this may tip off the employee.
- Send a separate invitation to the consultant to join the meeting.
- Send the employee's personal phone number and email to the career consultant prior to the meeting.
- Introduce the People First HR career consultant as the employee's contact who is there to support them as they move forward.

Post-Notifications Checklist

- Debrief with human resource leadership.
- Place the documented discussion (your message and the employee's reaction) in the individual's personnel file. The written record may be required if any legal action occurs.
- Cancel computer access, building access and/or other types of access when appropriate.
- After the employee has left the premises, meet with immediate co-workers who will be directly affected. Advise other co-workers later that day if possible, but no later than the day after the termination of employment.
- Do not explain reasons to co-workers - simply advise that the person is no longer with the organization and how the work, calls, etc. should be handled in the interim.
- Communicate with external contacts as appropriate - notify reception on how to handle incoming calls.
- File Record of Employment within five days of termination.



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