

How to Support Employees After a Layoff: A CMP Leader's Guide

When layoffs happen, the employees who remain face a different kind of challenge. They may feel uncertain, overwhelmed, or even guilty. Your leadership in these moments matters more than ever. With clarity, compassion, and thoughtful action, you can help rebuild trust, morale, and a sense of direction.

Here's how to support your team—step by step.

1. Communicate Openly and Honestly

Clear, transparent communication helps reduce fear and builds trust.

Three things you can do:

- **Hold a team meeting as soon as possible.**
Acknowledge what's happened, share what you know, and explain why the decision was made.
- **Be honest about what you don't know.**
It's okay to say, "I don't have that answer yet, but I'll find out." Follow up promptly.
- **Invite questions and emotions.**
Create space for team members to ask questions or express concerns, even if they're hard to hear.

2. Manage Workload Adjustments Responsibly

After a layoff, roles shift. Make sure you're supporting your team as responsibilities evolve.

Three things you can do:

- **Reassess workloads together.**
Sit down with team members to review what's on their plate and what can be prioritized, paused, or dropped.
- **Distribute responsibilities fairly.**
Align tasks based on strengths and capacity—not just who's available.
- **Offer meaningful incentives.**
When possible, provide retention bonuses, project stipends, or extra PTO to recognize added effort.

3. Provide Ongoing Support and Resources

Emotional and professional support helps employees feel seen, supported, and valued.

Three things you can do:

» **Promote access to support services.**

Remind employees about available counseling, EAPs, or support groups—and encourage them to use them.

» **Offer development opportunities.**

Provide training, webinars, or cross-training to help employees grow in their current or future roles.

» **Encourage flexibility.**

Offer remote work options, flexible hours, or meeting-free time blocks to ease stress and support balance.

4. Rebuild Team Cohesion and Trust

After disruption, people need connection and purpose. Intentional actions can rebuild trust and bring teams back together.

Three things you can do:

» **Create moments of connection.**

Host casual check-ins, cross-functional projects, or virtual coffee chats to encourage collaboration and support.

» **Celebrate wins—big and small.**

Publicly recognize team members for their contributions and progress. Positivity helps restore hope.

» **Re-center on your mission and values.**

Use this moment to reinforce your shared purpose. Talk about how everyone's role contributes to the bigger picture.

Your Leadership Makes the Difference

How you show up now will shape how your team moves forward. By communicating clearly, managing change responsibly, offering support, and rebuilding trust, you can help your people feel grounded—and even optimistic—about what's ahead.