



The Annual Layoff Immunization

We received lots of comments and email about our show regarding the first rule of layoffs. While our recommendation struck some folks the wrong way - "finances rule??" - those who HAD been laid off told us we were dead solid perfect.

The fact is, we did not expect three years ago to get such positive responses to our casts and advice on careers and career management. We SHOULD have seen it, but we didn't (and you'll learn why in this week's cast). But we are listening, and thus this week's cast.

In the same way that "Finances Rule" when it comes to being laid off, PREPARATION makes the entire process so much easier. Both of these recommendations stem from a simple principle: decisions of import made under pressure are dangerous

So, this week: our Annual Layoff Immunization Guidelines.

We never did this when we were employed by others. But good judgment comes from experience, and experience comes from bad judgment. We messed up, and luckily for us, there's nothing so exhilarating as being shot at and missed.

Frankly, our experience is by definition limited, and we'd be selling our listeners short if all we did was rely on first person experience. But we have data. We've seen everything we recommend WORK repeatedly, with many managers. We've also seen the absence of these tenets cause failure, as well.

We're recommending here some basic steps that all Manager Tools managers engage in periodically to protect their careers. We're suggesting that with a little extra effort, maybe 15 minutes a day over a couple of weeks, we can reduce our career risk noticeably. We're talking about IMMUNIZATION against a layoff.

In much the same way that Finances Rule if you get laid off, preparation is so critical to handling a layoff. But we KNOW that thousands of managers basically shoot themselves in

the foot for two reasons when they're laid off. First, they don't know how LITTLE work it takes to make a HUGE difference if the axe falls on them, and secondly they don't know WHAT to do even if they did schedule the time to do so. And that's what this cast is about: the professional part of the lay off preparation equation.

We have 5 key recommendations, with metrics to go with each.

Outline

1. **Printed Contacts List**
2. **Printed Recruiters List**
3. **Home Individual Email List**
4. **Home Delivery Or Access To Business News**
5. **Current Resume**

Shownotes

1. Printed Contacts List.

Perhaps the most important word in this guidance is PRINTED. Your list being printed here is a bit like the difference between PASSIVE knowledge of a foreign language and ACTIVE knowledge or active vocabulary. It's the difference between knowing what a word is when you see it, and being able to CALL UPON THAT WORD WHEN YOU NEED IT. And folks, PASSIVE KNOWLEDGE IS IGNORANCE when it comes to the job search.

We see too many managers being lulled into a false sense of satisfaction by the contact information they have at the office. It's around and they take it for granted. We don't care how easy it is to log in from home, we don't care what kind of access you have, or think you won't be denied...You WILL be.

Even savvy folks need to THINK DIFFERENTLY about what might happen when a layoff or termination occurs. It pays to have engaged in some simple, basic actions NOW. Printing out your contacts NOW is one of them.

Let's also address a couple of other comments we hear. "Hey Mark, I don't need to do that, I have LinkedIn, with all my network or contacts there." But many people don't have their boss or coworkers in the LinkedIn network because they see them every day. It's easy for folks to think about the UNTHINKABLE possibility of a layoff and DISMISS contact

information access with the thought, "hey, lucky me, I have LinkedIn."

Lots of people store contact data in their cell phones. But some of those phones are owned by the company.

For the METRIC here, the standard is to have **ONE HUNDRED contacts. Printed. At home.** Names, physical and email addresses, phone numbers (one is required, two is the smart play), and family names as well: spouse and kids. Current within 180 days.

2. Printed Recruiters List.

In our experience, managers don't keep their recruiting firm contacts in their contact database. For some reason - we think fear, mainly - recruiters don't get captured the RIGHT way...and then when we need them most, YIKES.

Because we're talking about immunizing oneself from the pain of a layoff, we can't fail to mention one of the very best books on our recommended reading list: John Lucht's book, *Rites of Passage at \$100,000+, Second Edition*. It is the single best specialty book on our list. It is the only book we ever recommend when it comes to career changing and job searching and interviewing. It is comprehensive, it is clear...it's the book we wish we were smart enough to write.

And of course the problem with the book is that you don't want to be buying it and reading it after you've been laid off. **You want to KNOW it when you've been laid off.** Buy the book now, basically, is what we're saying.

Our metric is to have three or more recruiters' names, firm names, phone numbers, email and physical addresses, with a history of your conversations with them. PRINTED OUT AT HOME. Current within 3 months - meaning that you have spoken with each of them within the past 90 days, and you know the contact information is accurate.

3. Home Individual Email List.

The ubiquity of email is really a bane here. It's so much a part of our work lives that we've heard of offices CLOSING or everyone going HOME because email is down. You've got to understand WHERE the stuff you need IS, and how much of it is "AT" work, or tied to work assets that you don't control, even though you probably feel like you do.

The whole blurring of work and home has made this MUCH more difficult for most managers and executives we know.

So, managers, you need the email addresses of everyone you might contact printed out somewhere at home. **PRINTED AT HOME.** Not in your briefcase or backpack that you leave on your desk, to be gone through by security. Not on a thumb drive, to be taken from your desk because it could have IP on it. Not in a zipped file somewhere, ready to be emailed.

Having ONLY email addresses is ALSO a problem. You need an ADDRESS BOOK, not an EMAIL address book.

And for all you techies out there, let's address you very directly. You're thinking that NOBODY prints anything anymore. "Why do they keep talking about printing things out? Digital Media ROCK!" And you're right, so long as you have PROVENANCE over the hardware and access to the software where that digital media ARE. Just print the stuff out. You'll be good even in a power outage...which is kind of how you feel in a layoff anyway.

The metrics here are easy: **Printed. On paper. At home.**

4. Home Delivery Or Access To Business News.

This is another one of those areas that is adversely affected by the melding of work and home. You have to ask yourself how DO you get your business, industry, and trade news? Who pays for it, where is it delivered, etc.? If you read the WSJ online at work, that may be a problem for you. If your copy of the WSJ is delivered to the office...that's nice...for when you still go to your office. If it does go to the office, and you have no interest in doubling up a subscription, fine... You can subscribe to the online edition. If you've got industry or trade magazines, ask yourself if you can get them delivered at home.

Metrics in this area are these: **three sources of news, delivered to your home.** One source for general business news, one source for industry or trade news, and a source for world and national political and economic news (essentially, a local or national paper).

But there are twists here, and we're serious about them. **First**, if you choose to get your news online, that's fine, but you must have a recurring task to check it at least every 48 hours. Having a subscription to the WSJ that you never check defeats the purpose. **Second**, if you get your national news in the US from TV, you lose a point and have to supplement

your news gathering in some other way.

And **finally**, we know of several managers who use email alerts and RSS feeds provided by corporate subscriptions. Sometimes you can keep those coming to a personal email address or an RSS reader that you can get to from home. Just don't complain if it stops, and don't count that towards your metrics.

5. Current Resume.

All the rest of this stuff is just window dressing without a current resume. Your resume is your core career capture document, and failure to have an updated one, as easy as it is, is painful medicine when you need to have it ready to go for someone.

We refer you to the "Your Resume Stinks" cast, one of our most popular, rather than giving you a soapbox towards the end of the show.

But here are the metrics, as a review.

- **One page**
- **Home email address that is PROFESSIONAL**
- **Personal Unshared Cell Phone with PROFESSIONAL voicemail used for phone number**
- **Reverse Chronological format**
- **Responsibilities in prose and accomplishments as bullets for each job**
- **Accomplishments start usually with action verbs**
- **No qualifications or summary section at the top**
- **Current job entirely up to date within 48 hours of your job loss**

Wrap Up

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