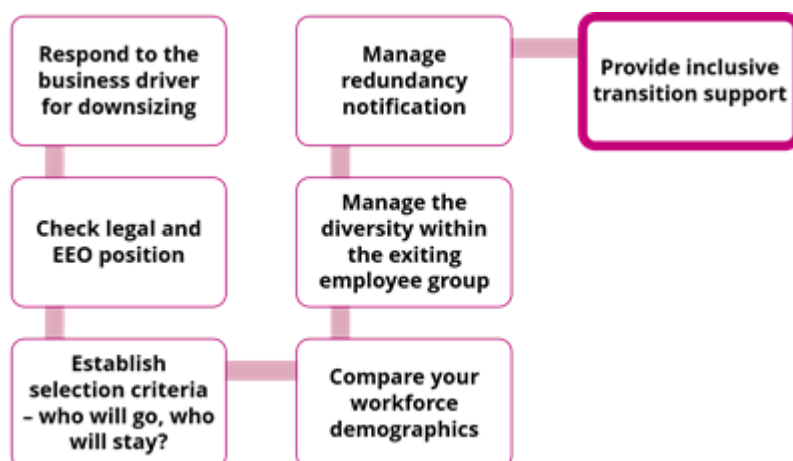


The art of diversity in transition

A thought leadership article

All organisations experience changes like redundancies, retirement and leadership change. Most employees experience significant transitions in their working lives. Progressive organisations have diversity and inclusion policies which underpin their approach to attraction, recruitment and training. But what happens when you apply the diversity and inclusion lens to how employees exit the organisation or significantly change their role? How can you adapt to all ages and stages and how will it benefit the bottom line?

Below is a model that identifies seven key stages which organisations typically go through when downsizing and planning redundancies. Most organisations face redundancy activity at some point. HR professionals need to be adept at influencing the way redundancies are managed from the outset. It's an unfortunate, but inevitable part of business management and therefore, even more important to uphold the company values and commitments to inclusion at the point of exit.



Our challenge is to apply the diversity lens and check for inclusion at each stage:

1. Respond to the business driver for downsizing - why are we doing this?

Geographical relocation? Business performance? Downturn of a market? Rightsizing? It is at this point that the organisation leaders need to be absolutely certain of the 'why'. But more importantly, explore all solutions. Can you apply more flexible working practices to allow people to stay employed but at reduced hours? Is there a group of employees who may take unpaid leave for any reason? Sometimes, we only think of one solution - but there is an opportunity to present a diversity of options that may benefit the business in the long run.

2. Check legal and EEO position

Ensure you are on the right foot and have crossed all Ts and dotted all Is. Think about employee contracts, your diversity profile and who may be disadvantaged. Do you have employees on parental leave for instance?

3. Establish selection criteria – who will go, who will stay?

How will you decide who will go and who will stay? Does the selection committee represent the diversity in your organisation? Restructures should be based on the reduction or cessation of specific operations within the organisation – however, it is well known that restructures provide opportunities to manage poor performance or to refresh a workforce.

4. Compare your workforce demographics.

What are your current workforce demographics eg age, gender, ethnicity. Can you keep the ratios the same or improve diversity?

5. Manage the diversity within the exiting employee group.

What is each person's individual situation? Do they need only job search help? Pre-retirement coaching? New opportunities? Do your women need particular coaching around salary negotiation? How might they specifically be disadvantaged?

6. Manage redundancy notification.

Do your key messages support the values of the company? Are your managers trained to cope with the diversity of responses in notification meetings? It is often at this point that employees will reveal what else is going on for them – money, health, relationships. Redundancies are about much more than the role. Employers must be prepared for this.

7. Provide inclusive transition support.

Inclusive transition support is essential for the exiting employee. It is not just about finding another job, but making the transition a positive and productive one. How will your provider respond to age, gender, ethnic background, health and mental wellness? How does your provider address the more holistic aspects of identity, health, relationships, finances and exploring future careers?



The simple act of asking the 'inclusion' questions at every stage can make or break the impact of redundancy and transition in your organisation.+

Want to know more?

Sageco are specialists in the art of transition – supporting people through organisational change. Our programs help those facing a new future due to redeployment, redundancy, retirement, role change or leadership change.

Get in touch to explore how we can partner with you to create your future.

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+Sageco was pleased to collaborate with PeopleCorp. HR Recruitment Specialists. www.peoplecorp.com.au to first present this information to a roundtable of HR professionals.