

Unlocking Employee Engagement

In recognising and acknowledging the wave of emotion that is “survivor syndrome” you can harness positive feelings and reengage employees who will waiver between being glad they have a job, to feeling guilty that they have been relatively unaffected by this spiral.

This is not as simple as “start with the end in mind”, although, this is a key step. As executives in organisations, we must ensure we support our leaders, and our middle management teams who are the “line of sight” the personality of the organisation, have the tools to make the new structure work.

Management and employees alike need to be attuned to the behaviours which manifest themselves in times of change, and be aware that if not acknowledged, and rebalanced, the organisational improvements will not be achieved.

Key Deliverables

- Clearer communication from management which encourages deeper understanding from employees
- Working through the guilt and fear which is part of “survivor syndrome” in order to purge and start again
- Rebuilding morale by replacing feelings of powerlessness with influencing strategies
- Respecting the loss, and start rebuilding your social network at work
- Limiting brand damage, maintaining your customers, improving your result
- Consultation with management to review and revise performance management, talent management policies, and support “back-to-basics” management practices.

Why Does this Programme Work?

To fully understand why this programme works, we must understand the dynamics of employment relationships. When we make the decision to join an organisation, it is akin to the dating game which culminates in marriage.

First we **flirt** – either through an agency, advertisement, or a cheeky speculative phonecall/cv.

Then we **date** – we attend intimate interviews where we are treated like royalty over bottles of sparkling water.

Then, on the promise of a brighter future, we **commit**. Just like getting married, most people join organisations to build a career, for lifestyle reasons, or at the very least until they leave at a time of **their choosing**. Even if our employees say, “this will do me for a few years until I get my expertise/find my dream job/save enough money...” whatever the motivation, we do not consider that we will not be in control of the decision to leave.

In the same way as most couples do not get married for the short term, they do not hope it will end in separation or **divorce**; redundancy, and the possibility of managing through redundancies hasn’t been part of the Irish psyche for quite some time.

Written by Caroline Hughes, Head of HR Consulting, To Be Training and Development

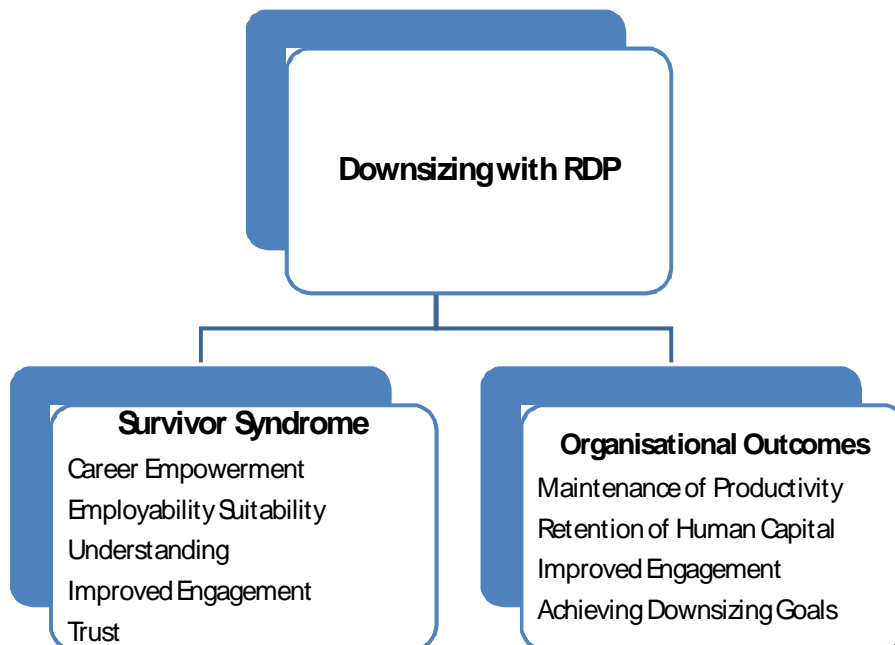
However, as with all relationships, separation or divorce does not come out of the blue, there are signs, which if we read, cause us to behave differently. Like a couple where **trust** is broken, (or there are suspicions of mistrust creeping in), we check credit card bills for confirmation of indiscretions, take note of the time the other party is coming and going, ...employees are more attuned to long management meetings and the perceived topics under discussion, and start talking about their names appearing on mysterious "lists". And yet, in the spiral, this is hard to control.

There is a generation of middle and senior management who have been promoted for excellence, and without the investment in people skills they require to really drive accountability; build morale; and ultimately build high performing teams who are motivated, and can deliver.

Certainly, they know how to motivate through reward, but without the carrot, they find themselves beating themselves up with the stick, and floundering to cope with this new reality.

Who Can Avail?

- Organisations who want to do the right thing! If you've already cut jobs, you may be too late. This is most successful if part of your overall rightsizing strategy or "Realistic Downsizing Preview" as the Institute of Employment Studies [Motivation, Well-being and Retention](#) Research Network model suggests.



- Organisations who really care and place value in the Psychological Contract. Show you care about your organisation and its people who will deliver your results. Listen, and give space to come to terms will be a much wiser investment that trying to carry on regardless and wonder why things are not getting done!

What Does It Look Like?

It's never been a better time to be in HR, and this is a programme that can help foster a people agenda for real! Tailored your organisation size, structure, and its needs this can be delivered to wide or small groups, or as a 1-2-1 intervention:

- **HR Professionals** – as a series of Executive Coaching Sessions
- **Executive Teams** – as a framework for success, either as a group or 1-2-1 executive coaching
- **Middle Management** – as a training intervention using forum theatre and realistic scenarios to support managers in delivering the message, managing the fallout, motivating through the aftermath.
- **General Staff** – as a training intervention to help change gears. To recognise that even though they still have a job, their reality has changed and the organisation is different as a result, they will be required to do things differently, or to do different things.