As businesses are increasingly faced with reorganisation and redundancy, here are my top tips for dealing with the process:

1. Establish a genuine redundancy situation. You must have a factual basis for redundancy which commonly presents itself in one of the following scenarios:
   a) the business in which the employee is employed is closing
   b) the particular site where the employee is employed is closing
   c) the need for the employee to carry out work of a particular kind has reduced

2. Communicate your ‘Proposals’. In the first instance, a redundancy announcement and process must be submitted as a ‘proposal’ which is subject to consultation with affected employees. Implementation of the process can only take place once all employees or their representative bodies have had a chance to consult with you as their employer.

3. Ensure complete clarity for your workforce. Whether the redundancy is large or small scale, a general announcement must be made to all affected staff clearly outlining the nature of your proposal including details of the business need, who and how many are affected, the timeframe and options open to employees.

4. Check your numbers and the procedures required. Review and establish how many redundancies you will need to make. If you are making 20 redundancies or more, the consultation process is more complicated. Seek legal advice to make sure you are fully aware of the required procedure.

5. Apply careful thought to the pools of affected staff and selection methods. Redundancy is relatively straightforward if there is just one post at risk that only one individual undertakes. It gets more complex when jobs are at risk in areas where a number of employees perform a similar role. In these instances, objective criteria need to
be applied to determine who should be selected for redundancy. Again, the criteria and proposed process must be issued to the affected individuals for consultation.

6. Allow feedback on the proposed selection criteria. An affected employee must be given an opportunity to review and feedback on any proposed selection process before it is applied.

7. Use voluntary redundancy. This can be an excellent means of avoiding compulsory redundancies.

8. Ensure alternatives are offered. Where possible, you must ensure that anyone at risk of redundancy has an opportunity to consider and be considered for any alternative vacancies available within your organisation.

9. Insolvency. If you are at risk of insolvency, seek advice. In some situations the Redundancy Payments Office can assist you when employee salary and redundancy payments genuinely cannot be met.

10. Appeal. Always allow employees a right to appeal your decision.


About the Author

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