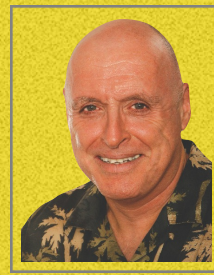


# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 1213 What is Proper Notice Before Announcing a Layoff?

Two high-profile mainland tech companies have recently announced layoffs. The two cases are somewhat different, yet we can use their examples to decide how we might handle a similar situation. I'm Jerry Roberts, and that's coming next on The Extra Point.

A week ago, CNN employees received a memo from CEO Chris Licht, saying the company would start conducting layoffs. Anyone who was losing their job would be informed the next day.

A week before, Elon Musk fired half of the staff at newly-acquired Twitter. The other half got an email with an ultimatum to accept Musk's new vision of working at Twitter, or they would be given a severance package on their way out the door.

Two somewhat similar situations. CNN's Licht received mild criticism for making his announcement, while Musk was blasted by liberal media for his — even though he gave employees an option to stay.

Aside from the clear media bias against Musk, let's focus on the issue of one-day and same-day notice prior to the actual layoff.

Should it have been more, or would it have been better to give no notice at all? I began thinking about it, from the standpoint of the workers directly impacted, plus that of the organization. Let's break it down.

First, from the employees' perspective. I'm sure most workers would say they would want as much notice as possible in advance of any such announcement. However, when you look closer, I wonder if that's beneficial.

Let's say that your employer announces that there will be layoffs where you work; and that specifics as to who will be impacted will come in a day, or by the "middle of next week." What are you going to do, assuming your big boss hasn't whispered in your ear that you're safe?

Will you wait to see how things shake out, or would you be inclined to make some calls to see what other opportunities are available?

You don't want to wait to check out other jobs if indeed you're going to be let go...but, at this point, you don't know that for certain. What if you jump at another job, one for a bit less in compensation, and then you find out you're not being laid off?

Wouldn't it be better to know immediately if your position was being eliminated? If it was me, that would be my choice. Tell me now, so I can make plans. If I'm still here, that's great. If not, thanks for having me, best wishes, see ya.

Let's consider the employer's position. Licht said the info would come a day later, while Musk demanded that employees decide to stay or go within 24 hours. The decision was in their hands with nothing to wait on. Here's your choice, what are you going to do?

Frankly, unless there's some perception that waiting a day before lowering the boom is in some way kinder and gains you more respect, I don't see any advantage.

Giving immediate notice eliminates the anxiety. Sorry, we can't keep you, and here's your severance package. By the way, we've hired specialists for three months to help you find a new job. Again, if it's me and I'm the employer, that's what I want to do.

I need to control costs and eliminate jobs. I want to help the people affected, who worked with us as a valued part of our team. Let's get them on to their next career stop, and let's get us positioned for our next stage.

Why even wait a day? Get your ducks in order and deliver the news. If your objective is to be compassionate and transparent, to help your workers, that's the way to go.

(Con't.)

HR experts disagreed on the value of Licht's one-day notice, some applauding it and some agreeing with me that it was unnecessary.

Licht received criticism for not being specific in who was being laid off, and that caused a lot of hand-wringing and gnashing of teeth all through the hallways of CNN.

The bottom line is that there is no perfect way to handle the announcement of layoffs. For me, I'd want to put myself in the impacted person's shoes, and handle the business how I hope it would be handled if it was me.

That's the Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

###

For information on training and consulting services with Jerry Roberts, please click this link: [guamtraining.com](http://guamtraining.com)

