Working through a large scale workforce reduction is always a challenging process, one that can be equally difficult from a business perspective, but also a challenge from an emotional standpoint. The first step would be to try and develop a list of the folks who are going to be selected to be laid off. If HR was not provided a list, I would look through the current workforce roster and identify the high performing folks, the ones who fit the culture, have potential for upward mobility and long term growth organization. In addition, I would obviously look avoid selecting people whose roles may be are critical preventing business disruptions. I would also, take an inventory of the folks who may be within EEOC’s designated protected class group. “Any protected class that may have a disproportionately larger percentage affected by the layoff (e.g., employees reaching retirement age) will need to be evaluated and substantiated” (SHRM, 2016, para. 3). Another important consideration would be to review the Federal and State Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (1988). Being that this is a larger organization, with a large scale layoff of 100 workers, the organization must, “notify each employee-or the employee’s union representative – in writing 60 days before you close the site or lay off the employees. You must also send written notice to the state’s dislocated worker unit and the chief elected officer of the municipality where the closing or layoff will take place” (Steingold, 2015, p. 265). I would then have discussions with management regarding severance packages, services and options we could explore to assist those that would be subject to this layoff. Perhaps we could bring in career coaches/counselors to help folks search for a new position. Another idea would be to bring in mental health professionals in to present to the workforce, and help to alleviate the stress and anxiety that is associated with being laid off. I would also explore the possibility compensation reduction, across the board, so that we could retain some of the staff members who are under consideration of being let go. Perhaps we could also explore the possibility of part time employees until the business turns around when folks could be either increased back to a full time status or rehired if they were fully laid off. When it came time to conduct the layoff sessions, I would personally opt to do them on an individual basis versus a group session, due to the sensitive nature of the discussions. Regardless of which direction the company chooses to go with, layoffs are a stressful and emotionally difficult situation for all parties involved, and as such, the process should be handled with tact, respect and care. As for how I would message this to the remaining workforce I would choose to be as transparent as possible. I would inform all members of the company of the difficult financial state we are in, and extreme measures were needed to keep the business afloat and that if anyone had questions or concerns they could speak with any member of the senior management team or member of human resources. Transparency and honesty are essential to eliminate fear and anxiety for those who remain with the company. “Notifying the remaining workforce of the layoffs that were conducted will help squelch potential rumors. The employer may also want to communicate the company’s financial position and its commitment to meeting company goals and objectives going forward with the current workforce” (SHRM, 2016, para.9)

Reference

How to Conduct a Layoff or Reduction in Force. (2016, October 26). Retrieved June 6, 2017, from https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tools-and-samples/how-to-guides/pages/conductlayofforrif.aspx

Steingold, F.S. (2015). The Employer’s Legal Handbook: manager your employees & workplace effectively (12th edition). Berkeley, CA: NOLO.