

MANAGEMENT  
ENGLISH

# 管理英语

## 案例精选

赵 亮 黄海英 等 编著

**21**  
世纪商务英语》》



中国水利水电出版社  
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### 内容提要

本书是“21 世纪商务英语”丛书之一。全书选取了公司管理、经营理论、经济环境、互联网及兼并与收购五个方面的多篇文章。每篇文章后附有词汇解释及中文译文。通过阅读这些文章,读者不仅可以提高自己的商业英语水平,掌握管理英语方面的专业知识,而且对企业的运营管理,各种如兼并与收购、投资互联网等企业活动都会有更好了解。

本书适用于商务工作者及欲想进一步提高英语水平的读者,也可供高校相关专业的学生使用。

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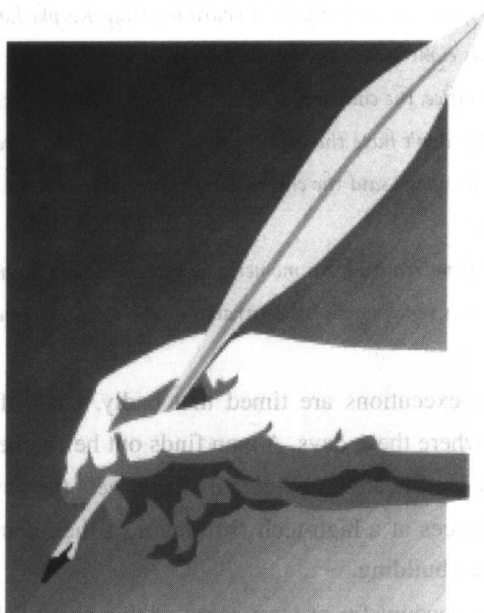
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# Chapter 1 How to Fire People and

## Stay Sleep at Night (1)

### —— 公司管理 ——

## Part One Corporate Management



# Chapter 1 How to Fire People and Still Sleep at Night (1)

**S**hedding employees is something almost every manager dreads. But if you don't think hard about the process, you and your company could be headed straight for a world of woes.

*John Koepke, now 56, didn't want to leave his wife, Pat, home alone that horrible day in 1991. Just hours earlier she had been diagnosed with malignant breast cancer. But she insisted he go to the offices of his Illinois graphics company for a board meeting. Koepke had served as the company's president for the previous eight years, and his absence would be noticed.*

*When he got to the office, the chairman pulled him aside. "How's Pat?" the boss asked. "Not too well," replied Koepke. "We don't have the details yet, except that the cancer's malignant." "Too bad — this isn't a good day for you," said the chairman. "We're making some changes around here, and you're no longer needed."*

*Koepke dissociated from reality for a moment; he prayed he was having a bad dream. Later he found out the company was reneging on his contractual severance agreement.*

While few corporate executions are timed that badly, tales of thoughtlessness and even outright cruelty are everywhere these days. A man finds out he has been let go when a restaurant won't accept his company credit card. A woman manager gets the news via a note placed on her chair during lunch. Employees at a high-tech firm learn of their security codes no longer open the front door of their office building.

Sheer numbness may account for at least some of this nasty behavior. The great corporate restructuring fever has held pitch for over a decade now—some 400 000 hapless folks got the boot during 1995 alone, and some executioners may be too desensitized by now to stand on ceremony. But any company that ignores the human wreckage involved, that halts people's careers and threatens their financial security carelessly, is taking foolish risks. Lawsuits are the most obvious threat; high-six-figure awards for wrongful dismissal or discrimination are ever more common.

Harder to measure, but at least as corrosive to any organization, is the effect on survivors of a mindless corporate purge. Any mass layoff somehow tarnishes a company, and the damage can be permanent if the deed is done without care. Says Jim MacLachlan, director of change



management operations at the Deloitte & Touche Consulting Group, "One thing is certain: If you treat people like pieces of meat, it will come back to haunt you."

### 1. To Fire—or Not

The experts—human resources executives, outplacement specialists, corporate hit persons themselves—all agree that managers ought to question their own motives hard before they institute layoffs. The stakes, human and otherwise, are just too high. "Don't pull the trigger," they say, "if you are simply trying to cover up for your own management lapses." Frederick Reichheld, a director at the Bain Management Consulting Firm and author of *The Loyalty Effect*, says, "Too often a layoff is viewed as some sort of virile gesture, a way of saying that senior management is hard-minded and serious."

Nor should top corporate brass view restructuring as a quick fix for a slumping stock price. True, Wall Street has often responded nicely to layoff announcements. But companies have gone to that well too often; security analysts and investors now grouse that repeated restructuring, resulting in supposedly nonrecurring charges, have thoroughly muddied earnings at giants like AT&T, IBM, General Signal, and many others.

It's also becoming clear that investors' ardor for stripped-down payrolls fades quickly. A recent study of Mercer Management Consulting Firm 1 000 of the largest U.S. companies found that the compound annual growth rate of market capitalization for downsizers was about 11% from 1988 to 1994. For the companies that concentrated instead on revenue growth, the figure was 15%.

Top managers would also do well to consider the multiple costs involved in firing people, say the experts. That's true even if just a single individual is involved. Boston outplacement specialist Laurence Stybel estimates that the average US company spends at least \$25 000 to replace an executive getting a \$70 000 salary. Far better, he argues, to find ways to improve a faltering employee's performance. "Rehabilitation is better than replacement," says Stybel.

He cites one client, a large hospital, that contemplated axing a director of radiology who had become increasingly rude to co-workers. Instead of firing him, the hospital's managers put him on probation and assigned him a consultant who counseled him on interpersonal relations. To everyone's surprise, the doctor appeared delighted to tone down his act. Result: The hospital saved the slew of money and effort it would have taken to replace him.

Then there are the human costs to consider. The toll on people losing their jobs is obvious enough. "These are wounded people, often battered by exactly what they had been loyal to," says Richard Levin, a Massachusetts psychologist who works with corporate executives who fire people. For purely practical reasons, top managers might consider even more the potential pain and guilt survivors of a big layoff suffer; they are, after all, the people who would have to carry the ball forward. Almost everyone is likely to be affected in some way, but the managers who do the actual firing are often hurt the most. Alan Downs, a confessed corporate assassin for years

before turning to human resources consulting, recalls the hideous feeling of walking into a headquarters building the day after a round of layoffs had begun. This was his greeting from a survivor, “Are we clubbing baby seals again today?”

## 2. Being There

The hard truth is that, despite whatever soul-searching senior managers can muster, some firings are inevitable. There will always be individuals who don't hack it. And increasingly, there will be companies that are forced to restructure to stay competitive. When an AT&T deconstructs into three smaller companies, there are bound to be casualties. When banks or utilities are deregulated, employee rosters are all but certain to shrink.

But whenever heads roll, particularly during a large layoff, top management has to be an active and visible presence. Among the worst things corporate leaders can commit during a restructuring is a Pontius Pilate maneuver—placing the job with outside consultants or their own personnel department and then washing their hands off it. Ralph Johnson, who trains managers in proper firing techniques for the American Management Association, recalls an East Coast manufacturer who sent a low-level human resources executive around to announce a series of plant closings. Workers started hurling spools of thread at her. And she completed her tour accompanied by security guards.

Top management's proper role before a restructuring is, first and most important, to develop and disseminate a rational explanation for what's taking place and where the company is headed. Those who are leaving are far less likely to be angry (and litigious) if they understand why their company is changing. Those who stay are more likely to pitch in with a full heart if they believe they are working for a more competitive organization. Says Jim MacLachlan of Deloitte & Touche, “If you can get into the hearts and minds of employees, they will buy the truth. Dialogue is the oxygen of change.”

Management, working with the legal department, should also draft a profile of the new work force—one that matches its vision of the company's future. The idea is to take a close look at your total labor group—age, sex, competencies, length of service. There will eventually be legal issues to consider. Your lawyers won't let you even think of wiping out most minority workers or employees over age 40.

But the most important at this stage is to hold your labor force up against the precise future needs of the company. Says Eileen Canty, an organizational psychologist who labored through layoff battles at ITT during the 1980s and now works as a consultant with William & Mercer Inc., “It sounds simple, but you'd be amazed how often people screw it up.” You have to ask yourself two questions: what are the skills you need to run the business at the end of this tunnel, and what are the skills you won't need?

This is definitely not the moment to settle old scores or weed out employees with attitude problems. Ralph Johnson of the American Management Association recalls the chaos that ensued

at the now defunct Eastern Airlines in the late 1980s when supervisors singled out workers they didn't like during layoffs, regardless of whether their skills would be needed. "It was sort of a textbook on how not to draw up a new work force," says Johnson, "It was all about emotion."

### 3. Get Serious

Once management has a clear grasp of its future labor needs, the next step in the layoff process is preparing the troops for the coming storms. Top management should issue clear, repeated warnings that a downsizing is possible, informal advice from line managers can help too. The employee who has been tipped not to take on a big financial burden—a new house, say—will be grateful to have been warned when the ax falls.

Actions, however, rattle way more cages than words. Workers all over the US have been living with the threat of downsizing, and they are unlikely to take verbal warnings seriously, unless they are backed up by concrete changes in the status. The best methods serve two purposes. First, they proclaim, loudly and clearly, that change is inevitable. Second, they demonstrate that involuntary layoffs, when they occur, is a last result.

Reduced overtime, shortened workweeks, pay cuts, unpaid vacations—they all make it obvious that particular ship is changing course. One of the trickiest moments in the cruise comes when management contemplates asking for volunteers to walk the plank. Since you've promised to offer a package to anyone who steps forward during a voluntary layoff, there's always a danger that too many people will leap at the chance. This could make it appear that the ship is sinking, or cause a lot of those employees you'd rather keep on board to go ashore. Still, say the experts, if management has communicated its vision of the future properly, voluntary layoffs are the proper initial step. "You take your chances," says Jim MacLachlan. "If you are selling a good business plan, most of the good people won't leave."

There's nothing wrong, of course, with trying out special inducements to get more people to walk out voluntarily. Smart managers, those with close links to their work force, sweeten severance packages to match the tastes of each particular employee. "You never know what buttons you have to push unless you are in touch with your people," says Eileen Canty of William & Mercer Inc. She worked with one company that helped persuade a number of older workers to retire voluntarily by promising them membership in a 25-year club, even though they were a couple of months short of the requirement. Another company got the body waned by allowing departing employees to remain in the corporate gun club for an extended period.

When deciding who's going to stay, it's crucial to receive feedback from employees. At AT&T the decision this winter to eliminate some 40 000 jobs took place only after months of furious planning and internal communication. Management first defined the core competency of each of the company's three new businesses, then polled supervisors to gather information on each worker's skills. Employees were asked to fill out a highly structured resume including job preferences and geographical limitations. No one was left in the dark about how the old work

force would fit into the new streamlined company.

The final decision about who would go was left up to a team of supervisors and HR staff; each employee was evaluated for specific posts needed to be filled. And there were no unilateral decisions. Says Linda Villa, the vice president of AT&T Human Resources Department who led the team that masterminded the company's recent layoffs, "It was of utmost importance to us that everyone was treated with dignity and respect."

### New Words and Expressions 生词和词组

shed /ʃed/ *vt.* 脱去, 摆脱

malignant /mə'liɡnənt/ *adj.* 恶性的

dissociate from 与……分离, 与……无关

renege /ri'ni:ɡ/ *vi.* 违背诺言

numbness /nʌmnɪs/ *n.* 失去知觉, 麻木

account for 解释, 说明

hapless /'hæplɪs/ *adj.* 不幸的

get the boot 被开除, 被解雇

desensitize /,di:'sensitaɪz/ *vt.* 使不敏感

stand on ceremony 极注意礼节

lawsuit /'lɔ:su:t, 'lɔ:sju:t/ *n.* 诉讼

corrosive /kə'reʊsɪv/ *n.* 腐蚀性的物质

purge /pɜ:dʒ/ *v.* 清除, 肃清

tarnish /'tɑ:nɪʃ/ *v.* 失去光泽

haunt /haʊnt/ *v.* 经常出没

trigger /'trɪɡə/ *n.* (枪支的) 扳机

lapse /læps/ *n.* 言行上的失误, 差错

grouse /ɡraʊs/ *vi.* 抱怨

ardor(for)/a:də(r)/ *n.* 热情, 热心

multiple/'mʌltɪpl/ *adj.* 复合的, 多样的

faltering/'fɔ:ltərɪŋ/ *adj.* 摇摆不定的

probation/prə'beɪʃən *n.* 试用, 缓刑

tone down 缓和, 减轻

toll/təʊl/ *n.* 代价, 牺牲, 损失

assassin/ə'sæsin/ *n.* 刺客, 暗杀者

muster/'mʌstə/ *v.* 集中, 集合

hack/ hæk/ *v.* 砍, 劈

casualty/'kæʒuəlti/ *n.* 意外灾祸, 灾祸中的伤亡

heads roll 某些人被解雇或失宠

**maneuver**(*manoeuvre*)/mə'nu:və/ *n.* 策略, 计划

**disseminate** /di'semineit/ *v.* 传播, 散布

**litigious**/li'tidʒəs/ *adj.* 爱打官司的

**minority**/mai'nɔ:riti/ *n.* 少数民族

**weed out** 挑出, 除去, 淘汰

**ensue**/in'sju:/ *vi.* 继而发生

**defunct**/di'fʌŋkt/ *adj.* 死的, 废绝的

**single out** 挑选

## 参考译文

## 解雇的艺术(1)

解雇职员是令几乎每位管理者头疼的事。如果对整个解雇过程你没有谨慎考虑,你和你的公司可能会一头陷进灾难之中。

56岁的约翰·魁伯克,在1991年那可怕的一天,他并不想把他的妻子珀特独自一人留在家中,就在几小时前,珀特被诊断为恶性乳腺癌。但珀特坚持让他赶回伊利诺图形公司去参加一个董事会议。魁伯克已经连续8年担任这家公司的总经理,他的缺席会十分引人注目。

当魁伯克到达办公室时,董事会主席把他叫到一旁。他问道:“珀特怎么样?”“不太好,”魁伯克回答,“我们还没有得到进一步的证实,只知道是恶性的。”“太糟了——这对你来说真是不幸的一天。”主席说道,“我们这儿正在作一些调整,我们不再需要你了。”

魁伯克有一会儿没有反应过来,他希望他正在做一场噩梦。后来他意识到,公司正在违背他的契约性买断雇佣协议,他被解雇了。

虽然很少有公司选择如此不合时宜的解雇时机,但现在毫无顾忌的、自私的,甚至是粗鲁残忍的行为却到处都是。有一位雇员是在一家旅馆不接受他的公司信用卡时才知道自己被解雇了。有一位女经理是通过在她去吃午餐时贴在她座椅上的小便条得到解雇通知的。有一家高技术企业的雇员们,当他们的密码不再能开启办公楼大门时才知道自己噩运的到来。

至少一些这样卑鄙的行径是由纯粹的麻木不仁所引起的。大规模的精简机构已持续了10年之久,仅1995年一年,就有大约40万不幸的人被裁减了。一些执行解雇的人有点麻木不仁以致毫不注意礼节。但任何公司如果忽视人们受到的伤害,中断人们的职业而且威胁到他们的财务安全,那么这些公司都是在冒险。最明显的危险就是可能引起法律诉讼,高达6位数的错误解雇和种族歧视判罚是非常普遍的。

毫无顾忌的公司清理行为对幸存者的影响难以精确衡量,但至少对任何机构都会起腐蚀作用。任何大规模的裁员都会使公司蒙上一层阴影,而且鲁莽的行为所造成的危害可能是永久性的。德鲁特—托齐咨询集团管理经营变动部门主任,简·麦克兰齐指出:“有一件事是确定无疑的:如果你把人们当作一碟小菜而随心所欲,这必将反过来使你陷入无休止的烦恼中。”

### 1. 解雇还是不解雇

人力资源经理、就业安置专家以及公司决策人士们,这些专家都一致认为,在进行机构精简前,管理人员应该对自己的动机和目的进行再三的审视。裁减行动的赌注、人力资源和别的损失,实在是太高了。他们指出:“如果你仅仅是为了弥补自己管理的失误,决不

要扣动裁员的扳机。”贝恩管理咨询公司的主管、《忠诚效应》一文的作者福洛德瑞克·瑞其黑德说道：“过于频繁的裁员行动是某种有力的标志，说明高层管理是严厉而苛刻的。”

高层决策人士不应该把改组视为阻止股价暴跌的一个便捷方法。确实，华尔街往往对精简裁员的决定作出良好的反应。但许多公司这样已经干得太多了，证券分析专家和投资者现在开始抱怨，导致虚幻的、暂时性收益的重复改组，已经把一些巨型公司的收益情况搅得一团混乱，比如美国电报电话公司（以下简称 AT&T）、IBM 公司、通用信号以及其他大公司。

投资者对大幅裁员这种举动的热情已经越来越淡漠了，这一点已经变得很清楚了。墨克管理咨询公司最近调查了 1000 家美国最大的公司，结果发现投向精简机构者的市场资本的综合年增长率在 1988~1994 年间为 11%。而对那些关注营业收入增长的公司，其数字是 15%。

专家们告诫，高级管理者应该认真考虑涉及解雇职员的多方面成本，即使是仅仅涉及一个人时也是这样。波士顿就业安置专家罗润斯·斯特贝尔估计，美国公司在替换一名拿 7 万美元年薪的行政官时平均至少花费 2.5 万美元。他指出，寻找办法以提高有缺陷雇员的业绩水平要好得多。“修复比替换要强得多。”

斯特贝尔引用了他的一位客户的案例，一家大医院考虑开除他的放射科主任，因为他对同事变得越来越粗鲁。但医院不是轻易地下了开除的决定，而是决定将其留用考察一段时间，还给他指定了一名顾问以指导他调整同事间的人际关系。出乎每个人的意料，这位医生逐渐改正了自己的行为。结果，这家医院节省下了替换这位医生本要花的一大笔金钱和精力。

还有，人力资源成本也是应该考虑的。对于那些失去职位的雇员，其损失是很明显的。“这是一些受到伤害的人，他们受到的打击往往是来自那些他们曾一贯忠实的公司。”理查德·莱温说道。莱温是马萨诸塞州的一位心理学家，他与那些负责解雇工作的董事经理共事。为了纯粹事实上的缘由，高层决策者应该更多的考虑到那些在大裁员中幸存下来的职员所承受的潜在的痛苦和罪恶感。毕竟，他们是那些不得不传达“死刑命令”的人。几乎每个人都会不同程度受到影响，但那些执行解雇行动的管理者往往受到的伤害最重。阿兰·道斯，在转为人力资源顾问之前，曾做过多年自嘲为企业刽子手的工作。他回忆起在一轮大裁员行动开始后的某一天，他走进公司总部大楼时那令人难堪的一幕。一位幸存者向他打招呼，并问：“今天我们还得继续盖那可恶的印章吗？”

## 2. 亲自处理

严酷的事实是，无论高级管理者如何尽力，一些解雇行为是无法避免的。总是有不愿精简的个人，总是有数量不断增长的、被迫改组以保持竞争能力的公司。当 AT&T 分化为三家较小的公司时，有人必定会受到损害。既然银行业和公用事业是公司所无力支配的，那么削减员工就是顺理成章之举了。

但是无论何时执行裁员计划，特别是在大规模裁员期间，高层管理人员应该以积极的态度出席裁员的现场。企业领导人在改组期间容易犯的最坏的失误之一就是采取邦蒂斯·皮累特策略——把这项工作交给外边的顾问或公司的人事部门去做，并对此不闻不问。为美国管理协会提供管理人员适宜解雇技巧培训的罗佛·约翰逊讲述了一个案例，一家东海岸制造公司派遣一名低级别的人力资源部官员去宣布一系列的工厂关闭计划。不满的工

人向她投掷电缆线圈，她是在保安的陪同下才完成了她的整个旅程。

在改组前，高层管理人员的首要而且最重要的职责是，找到并宣传关于公司现状和发展目标的合理解释。如果了解到公司为什么正在作出变化，那些离去的人会有少得多的怨言（和提起诉讼的倾向）。而那些留下来的人，他们相信正为一个更加有竞争实力的组织工作，因此会全身心地投入工作。在德鲁特—托齐咨询公司工作的简·麦克兰齐指出：“如果你能够打动雇员的心灵和思想，他们是会接受事实的。对话是变革的催化剂。”

管理层应该与法律部门一起拟订一个新的劳动力使用草案，这份草案应该和公司未来的发展相匹配。这有助于对你的整个人力资源配置作一个深刻的审视——年龄、性别、能力、服务年限等。当然许多必要的法律问题也必须考虑到，你的法律顾问会提醒你不要精简掉大量的少数民族雇员或 40 岁以上的雇员。

但这个阶段最重要的是把握你的人力资源，不对公司的确切未来需要构成阻碍。伊伦·卡特是一位组织心理学家，他参与了 ITT 公司在 20 世纪 80 年代的裁员战，现为威廉姆—墨克公司的一位顾问，他指出：“这听起来很简单，但你会吃惊地看到许多时候人们并没有处理好这一点。”你必须问自己两个问题：结束精简后发展业务所需要的技能是什么？什么又是你所不需要的？

毫无疑问，一家公司不能够仅以员工过去的成绩，或依照员工态度来决定淘汰与否。美国管理协会的罗佛·约翰逊提到了在 20 世纪 80 年代后期，现在已不存在了的东方航空公司所发生的混乱状况，当时管理人员在裁员期间裁掉那些他们不喜欢的工人，而不考虑他们的技能是否是公司所需要的。约翰逊说：“这是制订新的人力资源计划的一个教训，完全是感情用事。”

### 3. 保持严谨作风

一旦管理层对自己未来的人力资源需求有了清楚的把握，裁员程序的下一步就是为即将来临的暴风雨作准备。高层管理人员应该清楚地、不断地传送出可能进行精简的信息，基层管理者非正式的建议也是有益的。那些已经被暗示不要去承担大的财务负担——如购买新房——的雇员，当裁减之斧落下来时，会因曾受到的提醒而心存感激。

然而，行动比喋喋不休的言辞更有效。全美国的工人总是处在失业威胁的压力之下，他们不愿意把言辞上的提醒看得很严重，除非这些流传的消息被局势具体的变化所证实。最佳的方法有两个目的：首先，应大声且清楚地宣称，变动是不可避免的；其次，必须表明，当裁员发生时，非自愿的离职是最终的结局。

削减加班时间，减少工作日，紧缩支付，无薪假期——所有这些会使人明显地感到公司正在作出某些变动。当高层管理者考虑要求员工自愿离职时，公司运行最困难的时期就到来了。由于你允诺在自愿离职期间为每位自愿离去的人提供优惠待遇，这样总是会出现太多的职员利用这个机会跳槽的危险。这可能会使公司这艘船正在下沉的情况暴露出来，或者会导致大批你本想留下的雇员流失掉。然而，专家们指出，如果管理层已经充分并适当地明确了公司的未来前景，自愿离职不失为适宜的起步行动。简·麦克兰说：“你可以把握你自己的机遇，如果你能够展示一个良好的商业发展计划，大多数的优秀人才是不会流失的。”



当然，为了让更多的人自愿离职而尝试一些吸引手段并没有什么错。那些与其雇员联系密切的聪明管理者，为不同的雇员提供适合各自口味的解雇优惠条件。威廉姆—墨克公司的伊伦·卡特说：“除非你接触你的雇员，否则你不知道要按下哪个按钮。”她为一家公司服务，帮助劝说一批老雇员自愿退休。公司向这些职员许诺为他们保留一家俱乐部 25 年的会员资格，即使他们自己只有几个月的短暂要求。另一家公司考虑延长那些离职的员工保留公司枪支俱乐部会员资格的时间。

当高层管理人员决定谁将留下来时，收集来自员工的反馈信息十分关键。在 AT&T，今年冬天削减大约 4 万个职位的决定是在经过几个月的详细计划和内部交流后产生的。管理层首先确定公司三大新业务的核心职能，然后通过民意调查方式让管理人员收集每位员工技能信息。职员们被要求填写一份设计详细的履历表，包括各自的工作偏好和地域限制。每个人都了解老职员怎样才适合新的高效的公司。

关于谁将离职的最终决定是由管理人员小组和人力资源部门共同作出的。每位雇员都要根据需要填充的具体职位进行评估。这里没有片面的决定。领导 AT&T 公司裁员工作项目组的人力资源部副经理琳达·维拉说：“对我们来说最重要的，是让每个人受到尊敬的对待，每个人都保持自己的尊严。”