AFTER THE LAYOFF · FOR SENIOR LEADERS

Laid off? Start with what you can *prove.*

For Directors and VPs who were let go, took the buyout, or can see it coming. Where the seats are now, and three moves for the next 30 days.

Maddy Viswanath
Executive Coach for Directors and VPs
20 years in HR, inside the rooms that decide

The cuts, by the *numbers.*

617,189
job cuts announced by US employers, January to October 2026

2.0 million
people out of work for 27 weeks or more, October 2026

Microsoft	VOLUNTARY BUYOUT OFFER	Offered to about 60,000 employees, roughly a quarter of the workforce. Reported October 2026.
Amazon	JOB CUTS	16,000 across the company in January 2026, after 14,000 corporate jobs in October 2025.
UPS	ATTRITION AND VOLUNTARY SEPARATION	Up to 30,000 operational positions, its finance chief said in January 2026.
Disney	LAYOFFS	As many as 1,000 roles in April, several hundred in July, around 300 in September.
Dell	HEADCOUNT REDUCTION	About 97,000 employees, down from about 108,000 a year before.
Intel	HEADCOUNT DOWN	81,100 employees in September 2026, down from 88,400 a year before.
Salesforce	LAYOFFS	Fewer than 1,000 roles in February 2026.

Counts are what each employer announced or filed, or what news outlets reported. Sources on the last page.

In my HR years I sat in rooms where managers were asked to *save money.*

The year-end review was usually where it started. My own position was eliminated just like this, for cost savings.

121,401

job cuts this year had AI named as the reason. About 1 in 5. Employers named market and economic conditions more often.

58%

of 1,500 US hiring managers surveyed use AI to screen resumes and applications, up from 35% in 2025.

> *Are you sending internal and external signals that could bring recruiters and the right hiring managers to you?*

The problem is almost never capability. It is signal. The work is real, the results are real, and the profile reports a person two seats smaller.

Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Nov 5, 2026. Resume Genius survey of 1,500 US hiring managers, June 2026.

The industry that let you go is not the *only one hiring.*

+70,000

JOBS ADDED IN OCTOBER

Professional and business services

+42,000

JOBS ADDED IN OCTOBER

Health care. Hospitals added 16,000 of them.

+19,000

JOBS ADDED IN OCTOBER

Manufacturing

Health systems are increasingly appointing their HR chiefs from outside health care. Russell Reynolds says boards want “operators of scale” in that seat. What it names as transferable:

01 **Managing complex multi-site workforces**

02 **Large, unionized or consumer workforces**

03 **Digital HR architectures and AI-enabled talent analytics**

> *No one, including me, thought I would survive something totally different. I was able to reposition myself.*

US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Nov 6, 2026. Russell Reynolds Associates, Jan 26, 2026.

Before any room decides anything about you, it reads your *first three lines.*

Your headline. Your opening line. The role it names. Put your story into your digital presence before a recruiter looks you up.

01

Does the first line name an altitude, or a title?

Titles describe the seat you sit in. Altitude describes the seat you own.

02

Does it name an outcome you own, or tasks you perform?

Task words say you do the work. Altitude words say you own the result.

03

Is it written for the role you want, or the role you have?

If you are moving to a new industry, write it in words that industry uses.

The three-line test, from The First Three Lines.

Rewrite your headline and first line *today.*

Lead with what you are at altitude, then the outcome you own, then the proof of scale.

THE SWAP

BEFORE	Director of Engineering | Cloud | DevOps | Agile Delivery
AFTER	**Engineering executive. I turn platform bets into revenue lines. Built and led orgs of 30.**

THE ALTITUDE-WORD SWAP

Managed	›	**Built and led**
Responsible for	›	**Owned**
Worked on	›	**Drove**
Helped deliver	›	**Shipped**
Supported	›	**Set the direction for**

THE 90-SECOND MOVE

Delete your current headline. Write one line at the altitude you want to be read at. Add the single outcome you most own, with a number.

Page one of your evidence journal

Your results, in numbers a new decision maker can read. **One win. One number. One date.**

01

What the voice says

Write the sentence exactly as you hear it.

02

The evidence that it is true

Check. Write only what you can prove.

03

What I have accomplished

Ten minutes. One line each. Dates and numbers where you have them.

04

The first line of my story now

Tell your own story. One sentence.

Who are the people who would say your name in the *rooms you are not in?*

Start by naming the companies. Paste each prompt into the AI you already use.

FIND THEM · THE TEN-COMPANY ROOM

Here are the ten companies I would actually move for: [LIST THEM]. Build the room for each: alumni from my schools or past companies I should find, the likely recruiter search terms for my level, and the one peer-level title I should be talking to now. Then order the ten by the warmth of my current paths in, not by the brand on the door.

REACH OUT · THE REACH MESSAGE

Write my reach message to [NAME, TITLE, WHY THEM]. The formula, in order: the mutual thread that humanizes me, [THE THREAD], who I am in one line, and one easy open-ended question that takes them under thirty seconds to answer. Nothing that asks for a job, a referral, or a call. Under seventy words.

Two of the thirty prompts in the Networking Toolkit.

Three moves. *Start today.*

FIRST 24 HOURS

- [ ] Fill in page one of your evidence journal. Ten minutes.
- [ ] One win. One number. One date.

FIRST WEEK

- [ ] Run the free LinkedIn Profile Audit. Two minutes.
- [ ] Rewrite your headline and first line.
- [ ] Add one page to your evidence journal each day.

FIRST 30 DAYS

- [ ] Name the ten companies you would actually move for.
- [ ] Find three people at each one.
- [ ] Send your first reach message.

> *I decide first. The feeling follows.*

See what your three lines signal *right now.*

Run your free LinkedIn Profile Audit.

Two minutes. Free. No card.

craftyourconfidence.com/signal

GO DEEPER, FREE

Digital presence	The Room Prompts. Thirty prompts. craftyourconfidence.com/prompts
Storytelling	Page one of the evidence journal. craftyourconfidence.com/evidence-journal
Networking	The Networking Toolkit. Thirty prompts. craftyourconfidence.com/toolkit

Maddy Viswanath is an executive coach and former HR leader who helps Directors and VPs get seen and chosen for the next seat.

Every number in this guide, and where it *came from.*

617,189 job cuts; AI named in 121,401. Challenger, Gray & Christmas, job cuts report, Nov 5, 2026. Counts announcements and the reason the employer gave.

2.0 million out of work 27 weeks or more; jobs added by industry. US Bureau of Labor Statistics, The Employment Situation, October 2026, released Nov 6, 2026.

Microsoft. KUOW and Fortune, Oct 26, 2026.

Amazon. TechCrunch, Oct 28, 2025 and Jan 28, 2026.

UPS. CBS News, Jan 27, 2026, quoting the company's chief financial officer.

Disney. CNBC, Sep 29, 2026. The April figure was reported by the Wall Street Journal. The September figure comes from a person familiar with the matter. Neither is a company statement.

Dell. Fox Business, Mar 17, 2026, from the company's annual filing.

Intel. Intel third-quarter 2026 results, Oct 29, 2026.

Salesforce. Business Insider, Feb 11, 2026, from a person familiar with the matter.

58% of hiring managers use AI to screen. Resume Genius, 2026 Hiring Trends Report. 1,500 US hiring managers, June 4 to 6, 2026.

Health systems appointing HR chiefs from outside health care. Russell Reynolds Associates, Outside-In HR Leadership, Jan 26, 2026.

Figures were read on November 24, 2026. New jobs numbers are due December 4.

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