

## **Trends and Issues: "Employees Need to Know About Firings"**

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Let's say you've just fired an employee. Telling him was hard enough. Now you've got to tell his co-workers. Human resource expert Valerie Frederickson says it's important not to leave co-workers out of the loop.

As soon as the employee leaves the building, gather together his co-workers and explain that the employee was fired. Make it clear that their jobs are not in danger and that it wasn't related to job cuts or belt tightening.

"What the manager needs to do is make himself or herself available to employees \_ hang out with them, spend time with them, eat lunch with them," says Frederickson, president of the Valerie Frederickson & Co., Menlo Park, Calif. Employees are curious, she says, but their questions are "related to their own fears of their job security."

When people ask specific questions about the fired employee, defer answering and explain that you need to respect that person's privacy, Frederickson said.

There are two reasons for doing this, Frederickson said. First, the other employees are going to talk to the fired guy and tell him exactly what you said. If you violated his confidentiality, he may sue.

Also, the other employees are going to be watching to see how you handle the situation, she said. If you bad-mouth the terminated employee, they, too, will remember it and no longer trust or like you.

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