# Graphic designer’s viral layoff call exposes growing employee assertiveness on TikTok



A video featuring a woman confronting her boss during a layoff call has captured the attention of millions on TikTok, showcasing a new wave of employee assertiveness in the workplace. Karson Bree, a graphic designer, recorded her turbulent departure from a local magazine after less than three months on the job. Her video, now viewed over 2.3 million times, illustrates not only her immediate response to being dismissed but also highlights a growing cultural trend where employees are increasingly vocal about their treatment in the corporate world.

During the Zoom call, which included two senior staff members and an HR representative, Bree received the startling news that her position was being terminated "effective immediately." When she sought clarity on the reasons behind the decision, the room fell into an awkward silence for nearly ten seconds, ultimately leading to a vague explanation about the publication’s delays and design issues. Bree, however, did not let this pass unchallenged. She pointed out the managerial shortcomings that contributed to the situation, directly addressing her superior, Julie, and insisting that delays in her work were largely due to a lack of support and feedback from her leadership.

In her response, Bree candidly outlined the challenges she faced, including insufficient access to necessary resources and unreturned messages from her manager. "I received very little feedback from you," she stated, further asserting that her commitment to the role was undermined by the unprofessional conduct of her leadership.

The impact of her comments resonated widely, prompting reactions that ranged from admiration to empathic sharing of similar experiences. Many viewers praised Bree for her professionalism and the bravery she demonstrated in advocating for herself during such a distressing moment. As one user remarked, “You handled yourself like a leader on this call - your former leadership evidently did not.”

This incident parallels a larger trend that has emerged over recent years, particularly among younger employees. In January 2024, a surge of workers began sharing their layoff experiences on social media platforms like TikTok and LinkedIn. This cultural shift represents a departure from the traditional corporate ethos of private handling of layoffs in favour of transparency and public accountability. TikTok has become a stage for not just expressing frustrations but also for seeking solidarity and new opportunities, creating a community of support among those facing similar challenges.

However, while sharing such experiences can foster a sense of community, it carries inherent risks. Experts caution that exposing one's professional vulnerabilities online may impact future employment opportunities and personal privacy. Nonetheless, the trend reflects an evolution in workplace dynamics as employees increasingly assert their rights and challenge incompetent leadership.

Bree's refusal to accept her dismissal quietly illustrates a deeper discontent within corporate cultures that often undervalue individual contributions. Her direct confrontation culminated in a pointed final remark directed at her boss before ending the call: “It's been lovely working with you, Kendall. I cannot say the same for you, Julie. Have a great day.” This exchange not only encapsulated her personal experience but also resonated with numerous others who feel similarly trapped in unfulfilling work environments.

As discussions around corporate culture evolve, Bree's TikTok moment serves as a microcosm of a larger conversation about leadership accountability, employee well-being, and the courage to speak out against workplace injustices. The increase in awareness surrounding these issues indicates that the corporate world may need to adapt more swiftly to the demands for transparency and respect from its workforce.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-14744353/employee-boss-speechless-scathing-response-laid-job.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.businessinsider.com/laid-off-tiktok-employees-company-reorganization-bytedance-layoffs-social-media-2024-5)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-14744353/employee-boss-speechless-scathing-response-laid-job.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://www.axios.com/2024/01/29/layoffs-videos-tiktok-remote-work)
* Paragraph 3 – [[4]](https://www.wired.com/story/the-stark-realities-of-posting-your-layoff-on-tiktok/), [[6]](https://www.bustle.com/life/hate-jobs-tiktok-quitting)
* Paragraph 4 – [[5]](https://www.upworthy.com/tag/corporate-culture), [[7]](https://www.aeen.org/tiktok-layoff-videos-pose-risks-for-posters-and-employers/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-14744353/employee-boss-speechless-scathing-response-laid-job.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://www.axios.com/2024/01/29/layoffs-videos-tiktok-remote-work)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-14744353/employee-boss-speechless-scathing-response-laid-job.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.businessinsider.com/laid-off-tiktok-employees-company-reorganization-bytedance-layoffs-social-media-2024-5> - In May 2024, TikTok began laying off employees across its operations and marketing teams. Some impacted staffers felt blindsided by the sudden dismissals, describing the experience as a 'very chaotic ride.' The layoffs affected at least 150 staffers globally, with employees in the US, UK, Brazil, and France being impacted. The company's plan to trim staff had leaked prior to the official announcement, leading to speculation about the reasons behind the cuts, including potential cost-saving measures in response to regulatory challenges.
3. <https://www.axios.com/2024/01/29/layoffs-videos-tiktok-remote-work> - In January 2024, a trend emerged where employees, particularly younger ones, began sharing their layoff experiences on platforms like TikTok, LinkedIn, and X. This shift reflects a change in work culture, with workers openly sharing feelings, posting videos of the actual moment they receive the news, and seeking support and new opportunities by going public. The trend underscores a desire for greater transparency and a move away from the traditional private handling of layoffs.
4. <https://www.wired.com/story/the-stark-realities-of-posting-your-layoff-on-tiktok/> - WIRED's article delves into the implications of employees posting their layoff experiences on TikTok. It highlights instances like Brittany Pietsch's viral video of her firing from Cloudflare, which prompted the company's CEO to respond. The trend speaks to younger workers' pushback against corporate demands but also underscores the personal sacrifices made in exchange for views. The article discusses the balance between transparency and privacy, and the potential risks and rewards of sharing such personal experiences online.
5. <https://www.upworthy.com/tag/corporate-culture> - Upworthy's collection of articles on corporate culture explores various aspects of workplace dynamics, including employee experiences, company policies, and the broader implications of corporate decisions. The content provides insights into how corporate culture shapes employee satisfaction, productivity, and overall company success. It also examines the evolving nature of work environments and the importance of fostering positive and inclusive cultures within organizations.
6. <https://www.bustle.com/life/hate-jobs-tiktok-quitting> - Bustle's article discusses the trend of employees airing grievances about their jobs on TikTok. It highlights how individuals are using the platform to share their frustrations with corporate life, with hashtags like #HateMyJob and #9to5IsNotForMe gaining traction. The piece examines the motivations behind this trend, the potential risks involved, and the broader cultural shift towards greater transparency and authenticity in discussing workplace issues.
7. <https://www.aeen.org/tiktok-layoff-videos-pose-risks-for-posters-and-employers/> - The AEEN article examines the risks associated with employees posting layoff videos on TikTok. It discusses how such videos reflect a shift towards greater transparency and a desire to share personal stories in a digital world. The piece also highlights the potential emotional and professional impacts of corporate decisions on individuals and the broader implications for employer-employee relationships.