# Majority of layoffs now communicated remotely, raising concerns over empathy and trust



As the global workplace evolves in the wake of the pandemic, a recent study underscores a significant transformation in how organisations communicate layoffs, a process often fraught with emotional turmoil. According to the 2025 Layoff Experience Report from career platform Zety, an alarming 57% of employees were informed of their job loss via email or phone, with traditional face-to-face conversations relegated to 30% of cases. This shift signifies a growing reliance on remote communication methods during layoffs, which critics argue may lack the necessary empathy and personal touch that such sensitive matters warrant.

The report surveyed over 1,000 individuals who had been laid off in the past two years, revealing patterns that reflect broader trends in hybrid work environments. While the efficiency of digital communication is undeniable, experts caution that these impersonal methods can erode trust between employers and employees. “Layoffs are not just operational decisions; they are deeply personal moments in an employee’s career,” stated Jasmine Escalera, a career coach associated with Zety. She emphasised that delivering life-altering news through an email or a quick phone call not only undermines the dignity of the employees but also reflects poorly on a company's values.

The study found that a startling 70% of layoffs occurred within the last six months, highlighting ongoing economic uncertainty and corporate restructuring. Nearly 20% of respondents indicated they had encountered job loss in the past month, exemplifying the rapid pace of these reductions. When asked the primary reasons behind their dismissals, most cited cost-cutting (54%), followed closely by organisational restructuring (45%) and poor financial performance (44%). Such statistics reflect not just personal loss but also the precarious state of job security across a broad range of sectors.

While companies often underestimate the emotional toll these decisions take, employee feedback suggests a pressing need for more compassionate handling of layoffs. Although 74% of respondents reported receiving a severance package they considered "fair or generous," a significant portion felt the support was inadequate. A notable 90% of respondents conveyed that they would contemplate returning to their previous employer if the layoff process had been managed with more care. This statistic highlights a critical insight: employees may understand the necessity of difficult decisions but do not forgive poor execution.

The implications of these findings resonate heavily in today’s corporate landscape. The impersonal nature of remote layoffs has been further explored in different forums, emphasising the potential negative impact on workplace morale and overall company culture. One analysis highlighted the rise of text notifications and email communications as common practices for delivering such disheartening news; while these methods may streamline operations, they can also alienate employees and undermine their loyalty. It is crucial for companies to take note, as the erosion of trust not only affects morale but also long-term employee engagement.

In light of these evolving practices, experts advocate for a shift towards more empathetic communication methods during layoffs. Strategies such as transparent dialogues, consistent updates, and genuine engagement have been identified as essential for maintaining morale and managing the complex emotions associated with workforce reductions. The call for clearer and more humane communication extends to the broader principles of organisational ethics, urging leaders to balance cost-cutting measures with the human element that underpins a successful workplace.

Ultimately, the shift to remote layoffs presents an ethical crossroads for corporate leadership. As economic pressures continue to challenge organisations, the manner in which they conduct layoffs may shape their reputation and culture long after the dust settles. As the workplace adapts to new norms, the key takeaway from this report is clear: empathy should remain a cornerstone of communication, even when the medium is predominantly digital.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://bharatspeaks.com/layoffs-go-remote-majority-of-job-cuts-now-communicated-via-email-or-phone-report-finds/), [[2]](https://www.forbes.com/sites/jackkelly/2024/12/20/layoffs-through-text-and-email-are-becoming-a-reality-for-workers/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://bharatspeaks.com/layoffs-go-remote-majority-of-job-cuts-now-communicated-via-email-or-phone-report-finds/), [[3]](https://www.forbes.com/sites/glebtsipursky/2023/02/01/impersonal-email-layoffs-spotlight-dark-side-of-remote-work/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://bharatspeaks.com/layoffs-go-remote-majority-of-job-cuts-now-communicated-via-email-or-phone-report-finds/), [[6]](https://www.forbes.com/councils/forbesbusinesscouncil/2024/04/23/the-four-bes-of-communicating-layoffs/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://bharatspeaks.com/layoffs-go-remote-majority-of-job-cuts-now-communicated-via-email-or-phone-report-finds/), [[6]](https://www.forbes.com/councils/forbesbusinesscouncil/2024/04/23/the-four-bes-of-communicating-layoffs/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://bharatspeaks.com/layoffs-go-remote-majority-of-job-cuts-now-communicated-via-email-or-phone-report-finds/), [[4]](https://www.shrm.org/mena/enterprise-solutions/insights/preserving-workplace-harmony-amid-layoffs-rto), [[7]](https://www.dice.com/recruiting/navigating-hr-communication-during-layoffs)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://bharatspeaks.com/layoffs-go-remote-majority-of-job-cuts-now-communicated-via-email-or-phone-report-finds/), [[5]](https://www.hr-communication.net/blog/effective-hr-communication-during-workforce-reductions), [[6]](https://www.forbes.com/councils/forbesbusinesscouncil/2024/04/23/the-four-bes-of-communicating-layoffs/)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://bharatspeaks.com/layoffs-go-remote-majority-of-job-cuts-now-communicated-via-email-or-phone-report-finds/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://bharatspeaks.com/layoffs-go-remote-majority-of-job-cuts-now-communicated-via-email-or-phone-report-finds/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jackkelly/2024/12/20/layoffs-through-text-and-email-are-becoming-a-reality-for-workers/> - This article discusses the increasing trend of companies using text messages and emails to inform employees about layoffs, highlighting the impersonal nature of such communications and the potential impact on employee morale and trust. It provides examples of companies adopting these methods and explores the broader implications for workplace culture and employee engagement.
3. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/glebtsipursky/2023/02/01/impersonal-email-layoffs-spotlight-dark-side-of-remote-work/> - The piece examines the drawbacks of conducting layoffs via impersonal email communications, emphasizing the lack of personal connection and the negative effects on employee morale and company culture. It argues for more compassionate and direct communication methods during layoffs to maintain trust and respect within the organisation.
4. <https://www.shrm.org/mena/enterprise-solutions/insights/preserving-workplace-harmony-amid-layoffs-rto> - This article addresses the challenges organisations face in maintaining workplace harmony during layoffs and return-to-office mandates. It highlights the rise in workplace incivility associated with these changes and suggests strategies for HR leaders to navigate workforce transitions while preserving a respectful and engaged culture.
5. <https://www.hr-communication.net/blog/effective-hr-communication-during-workforce-reductions> - The blog post provides guidance on crafting transparent communication plans during workforce reductions. It emphasizes the importance of honest dialogue, clear messaging, and consistent updates to foster trust among employees and manage the spread of misinformation during layoffs.
6. <https://www.forbes.com/councils/forbesbusinesscouncil/2024/04/23/the-four-bes-of-communicating-layoffs/> - This article outlines four key principles—Be Transparent, Be Consistent, Be Empathetic, and Be Proactive—for effectively communicating layoffs. It offers practical advice for leaders to manage the messaging around workforce reductions to maintain trust and minimise confusion among employees.
7. <https://www.dice.com/recruiting/navigating-hr-communication-during-layoffs> - The piece discusses the importance of transparent and empathetic communication during layoffs. It highlights the need for HR leaders to provide regular updates, engage in honest discussions about the company's financial situation, and offer support to affected employees to maintain morale and trust.