

Casebook:
**Strategies for
Leading Change
and Enhancing
People Effectiveness**

2nd Edition, 2008



**Integrated People
Management Solutions (IPMS)**

15 YEARS OF PARTNERSHIP IN PEOPLE MANAGEMENT



HUMAN DYNAMIC
Global Partner for People Effectiveness

About Human dynamic

Human Dynamic Asia Pacific is a leader in Integrated People Management Solutions (IPMS). It offers a well-rounded suite of services ranging from People Management Consulting, Executive Coaching, Learning and Development, Work Life Coaching™ (EAP), Healthy Work Life, Outplacement Consulting, Relocation Assignment Consulting, to Critical Incident Management.

Originally founded in 1993, Human Dynamic offers effective people management solutions for businesses that undergo the effects of globalization and organizational change. The group's mission is to help corporate clients transform their organization culture, enhance people management effectiveness, and build a joyful, healthy, & productive workforce in Asia Pacific and beyond.

Human Dynamic's professional team includes people management consultants, HR professionals, psychologists, counsellors, lawyers, accountants, work life coaches and wellness consultants. As preferred business partners for more than 75 global companies spread over 17 countries, Human Dynamic has offices in China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan and Vietnam, as well as an extensive affiliate network in Australia, Philippines, and Indonesia, to cater to the unique local community and diverse individual needs in each location. We now cover more than half a million lives in the region.

Human Dynamic is committed to providing comprehensive services to help corporations manage change, build successful teams, and develop employee effectiveness. By ensuring that every level of our partner organization is well-supported, Human Dynamic sustains happy and productive workforces that contribute to the 21st Century's global enterprise.



FROM THE CHAIRMAN & CEO, HUMAN DYNAMIC

Human Dynamic first started as a local EAP company in Hong Kong in 1993; fifteen years on and with 17 direct offices across the region, we are now the leading Integrated People Management Solution provider in Asia Pacific.

The changing business needs of our customers has been the impetus for the continuing upgrading of our strategies and products, as we strive to fulfill our mission of transforming organizations, enhancing people effectiveness and building a joyful, healthy and productive workforce. As our services continue to expand rapidly with our geographical coverage, we have endeavored to maintain our deeply-rooted corporate identity as a people management and change management consulting company, targeting both corporate and individual clients. The launching of our core solutions, namely: People Management Consulting (PMC), Executive Coaching Program (ECP), Learning & Development (L&D), Work Life Coaching (EAP), Outplacement Consulting Service (OCS), Healthy Work Life (HWL), Relocation Assignment Consulting (RAC) and Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM), firmly attests to our commitment to becoming a “Global Partner for People Effectiveness”.

This Integrated People Management Solution Casebook records our transformation and learning process with our strategic business partners, and in particular, with DuPont, over the past fifteen years. We hope that this Casebook will serve to encapsulate our global message, and provide the stimulus for further learning and professional exchange amongst our fellow practitioners and customers.

I would like to thank Paul Heck and his EAP team at DuPont for their continuous support in partnering us over the past 15 years, and we look forward to many more productive and fulfilling years of our special business alliance.

Eric Kung

MESSAGE FROM THE GLOBAL MANAGER, EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE & WORK LIFE SERVICES, DUPONT

DuPont EAP salutes Eric Kung and his team at Human Dynamic for the leadership and innovation they have shown in the EAP field for Asia over the last 15 years. This collection of case studies is in celebration of their 15th anniversary. I want to take this opportunity to thank Eric and the staff of Human Dynamic for the help and assistance they have provided to the people of DuPont Greater China during our long partnership.

DuPont began the first corporate program to assist alcoholics in 1942, a program that was quickly adopted by most major employers in the USA and many other countries. These early “alcoholism programs” evolved over the years to become what is known today as employee assistance programs. In 2007 DuPont celebrated 65 years of caring for employees and dependents through its EAP services. DuPont’s EAP has grown to cover 70,000 employees in 41 countries located in Asia, Europe, Middle East, Africa, Latin America and North America.

In 2002 Human Dynamic and DuPont collected and published a series of case studies accumulated by a global team of employee assistance professionals to showcase how an integrated employee assistance program (EAP) operates within organizations at both individual and organizational levels. It was our belief then, and remains so today, that EAP service providers can be valuable partners with human resource and operations leaders in achieving the highest possible levels of health and productivity within their organizations. Furthermore, a firmly integrated EAP with multiple levels of service and products is a testament to the employer’s value and respect for its people. Providing a safe, confidential and competent resource to assist a valued employee during difficult personal or professional challenges is powerful evidence that an employer truly cares for people.

This updated collection of case studies is intended to show how the profession has evolved over the last 6 years and we hope it offers new and helpful insights into how valuable this competency is for any organization, public, private, for profit or not-for-profit, in meeting key performance objectives. Eric Kung and his team at Human Dynamic have been very successful during the 15 years since Eric first launched his company. That success is due to the innovation and leadership Eric has demonstrated, the quality of his people and programs and, finally, to the reality that employers in Asia face business and operational challenges regarding human performance. People have problems, problems impact performance, so EAP is now a key tool for managers in Asia and, of course, all over the world.

So, once again, congratulations to Human Dynamic on their 15 year anniversary! They remain an innovative and committed group of professionals and I am sure that their contribution to the growth of this competency in Asia will continue. I expect that they will remain a valued business partner for DuPont and all of their customers for many years to come.

Paul W. Heck

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** These cases were published in 2002 in the first Edition of the Casebook.
They have been reproduced here without alteration.*

The identities of the organizations and individuals discussed in this casebook have been masked to safeguard confidentiality and privacy.

INTRODUCTION

The first edition of the Casebook in 2002 was a collaborative effort between DuPont and Human Dynamic. With the support of EA consultants and service providers, a rich collection of case studies documenting Employee Assistance Program (EAP) experiences accumulated by an international team was collected, presenting the organizational interventions performed in several countries throughout the region. We continue to be grateful to all those who made the first Casebook a reality.

To mark our 15th Anniversary this year, Human Dynamic is again privileged to have the opportunity to present new people management cases arising from our partnerships with esteemed organizations. In addition to the cases published in 2002, readers will be able to peruse an anthology of case studies from across the Asia Pacific realm.

The EAP industry has evolved rapidly in the past decade, and we foresee that an Integrated People Management approach will continue to be a vital management tool. We believe that service providers can, and should, be valuable partners with HR and organizational leaders.

Service providers are strategic partners in managing and influencing the environment of work. As the case studies here will demonstrate, we can make qualitative differences to the lives of organizations and their employees. We have structured the Casebook to illustrate how an integrated people management approach can have an impact on organizations at various levels – individuals, teams, and the company as a whole. Rather than being restricted to the assessment/referral models of 'standard' EAP practice, programs and initiatives should be more effectively harnessed in cultivating workplaces where organizations and people both thrive. Only then can every leader, team and talent in the organization make a contribution to the company's mission and vision.

A blossoming new era for the EAP industry beckons as we at Human Dynamic continue to forge new ways to meet the demands of the contemporary business environment. We remain deeply committed to all our business partners, as we remain true to our goal to transform organizations, enhance people effectiveness, and build a healthy, joyful and productive workforce. It is our fervent hope that over the next fifteen years and beyond, we will continue to make a difference, touching lives in unique ways, and walking side-by-side with our partners every step of the way.

On Behalf of Human Dynamic and the Editorial Team,
Laura L. Lee
Director – Global Strategic Marketing
Psychologist

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We wish to thank all EA Consultants, the DuPont Global EAP Team, and especially Paul Heck for the unwavering support they have provided the Management. To each Human Dynamic Team member and Affiliate Partner across the globe, we are immensely grateful for the excellent work that you have been doing.

We would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the following individuals and colleagues, without whom our work and this Casebook would not have been possible.

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SECTION ONE: ENHANCING ORGANIZATIONAL & PEOPLE EFFECTIVENESS

Times change, and we change with the times. But in our truly Darwinian economy, the pressure to change has been rising exponentially – technological advancements, financial scandals, globalization, restructuring, downsizing, mergers, new management, legislation... And as we all know, the process of change is anything but easy – it makes considerable demands on leaders, managers, and so on down to entry level staff.

Everything seems to be interconnected in this day and age – in keeping pace with change, talent retention and management, employee engagement, work life balance, and coping with a modern workforce of Generations X and Y, we also need to consider the current economic climate, political trends, rapidly-evolving consumer demands, management policy and structure, employment and educational levels, financial standings, and manpower. Cases 1-4 describe how people management services become essential in dealing with some of these contemporary issues in the workplace.

About 10 years ago, the American Management Association found that up to 84% of US companies were in the process of at least one major change initiative, and 46% had three or more change initiatives/programs in progress. These numbers have continued to rise, and have demonstrated that organizations that do not respond to these forces of change have lost out.

The truth is that most initiatives fail, and the number one reason, according to Deloitte and Touche, is simply resistance to change. The wide-ranging impact of change can be so intense that the literature has compared organizational change to traumatic events such as death and grief. And the individual is not the only 'victim'; even families of affected workers are not spared. This phenomenon of an all-pervasive transformation that has resulted in a backlash on employers, employees and their families, is illustrated in Cases 5-11.

Just as we are vulnerable to forces beyond our control, organizations and its people are susceptible to random and unforeseeable events, decisions, crises and catastrophes. How can organizational losses be minimized in the face of this uncertainty? How can business continuity be ensured, and how can the interests of employees and their families be protected? Cases 12-17 underscore the importance of prevention, planning, preparation, and ensuring damage control.

⌘ CASE 1 ⌘

Staff Retention: Partnership among Business Leaders, HR and EA Consultant

Background/Presenting Problem

A rapidly growing business unit within a US multinational corporation required mid-career specialists to act as the primary consultants to outside customers seeking specialized knowledge and expertise in safety, health and process management. The cost of recruiting highly experienced professionals who met the key customer criteria for language, expertise, education and availability was very high. The company paid very competitive salaries and the additional incentives for continued employment were equal to or greater than most competitors, yet there was a high turnover rate in these consulting positions that was having a serious impact on the ability to grow the business. There was also a concern that an ongoing turnover problem would hurt the company's credibility in the region and result in lost business opportunities in the future.

Senior HR and business leaders in the unit requested consultation from the EAP manager to determine what workplace attitudes were and if specific work environment concerns could be identified and targeted for intervention.

Purpose

The business unit leaders determined that the following issues were contributing to the turnover rates:

1. High levels of stress and performance demand both for individual employees and the entire business unit in terms of its profit objectives for the business year.
2. Constantly changing work demands and customer requests, including new business being won before staffing and service questions had been resolved.
3. Leadership practices and messages that were disjointed and confusing.
4. Difficult assignments that frequently required extended periods of travel away from home and family.

The purpose of the EAP consultation was, therefore, to develop a workshop, project or process that could inform management regarding the steps needed for short-term resolution as well as assist in a strategic alignment plan to create long-term solutions.

Process

Due to business sensitivity to involvement of outside resources, the global EAP leader for the company agreed to work directly with the key business unit managers. Interviews with the global business HR leader and senior account managers representing the largest accounts and multiple countries were conducted. Also, exit interview summaries from former employees who had resigned in the last year were reviewed. Because of the urgency involved in several key accounts a one-day workshop for HR leaders, senior account leaders and business unit management was planned within 3 weeks of first contact. The workshop location selected was a key Asian city which was easily reached from several countries to maximize the in person participation. A simultaneous web meeting was also planned so that an additional number of participants would be able to join remotely but see the slides and presentation materials in real time.

Through phone interviews and email exchanges, the EAP leader created a workshop that had 4 primary goals.

As a result of their participation the business leaders would:

1. Gain knowledge of individual and organizational stress reactions and learn management techniques that can foster innovation and creativity during times of change and ambiguity.
2. Understand the conscious and unconscious motivations that drive human emotion and behavior in times of stress and change so that they can better prepare themselves and their organizations for recognizing and proactively managing ambiguous work demands.
3. Evaluate current leadership practices and consider the messages and lessons being communicated to employees in various stages of their employment cycle.
4. Develop additional tools for addressing retention, productivity and stress within the business unit.

Impact on people

Workshop participants rated the experience as highly useful. A common opinion was that the insights gained regarding normal stress reactions and the discussion of conscious and unconscious motivations in people were of particular relevance to the immediate concerns of the management team. A plan to address key steps that could be quickly accomplished in the leadership team was developed at the end of the formal presentation and shared with the entire leadership team of the business unit, up to the vice president level, the following week.

Relationships with the senior account representatives (the employee group causing the most turnover concern) improved quickly. One example was the realization that many account representatives were traveling great distances to customer locations on Sunday evenings to be available at the start of the business day on Monday, then staying until the close of business on Fridays. This meant time at home was frequently limited to only 24 hours per week. A customer survey by the management team showed that most customers were comfortable with having consultants on site just 4 days a week or less, so that more time with family was easy to achieve. This intervention was conducted so recently that turnover rate comparison is not yet available but the immediate focus on Work/Life balance and alignment of management practices and communications have shown early improvements in employee attitude, engagement and morale.

⌘ CASE 2 ⌘

Linking HR Processes with the Emotional Environment of Work

Presenting Problem

The leader of a country HR organization contacted the Global Manager of EAP requesting consultation to his HR leadership team in developing a new Vision/Mission statement.

Background/Purpose

Further discussions with the HR leader and key staff members found that they wanted to formalize the idea of linking HR processes with the emotional environment of work. They felt that traditional HR practices did not do enough to encourage the development of a respectful workplace that also recognized the realities of balancing career and personal demands. Their problem was that they did not feel informed enough to design a new Vision/Mission that would incorporate their views.

Intervention/Process

After several long teleconferences the EAP manager agreed to create a training program for the HR team to add to their knowledge about the impact of emotional issues at work. They agreed to provide a small team from their HR group to act as advisors to the EAP manager. After several drafts a final one-day training program was designed and agreed to by all parties.

Implementation Strategies

The entire HR team was called to the home location and the EAP manager flew in to conduct the one-day training. The program combined the teaching elements of lecture, case study, small group work and individual work. At the conclusion of the formal program the HR leader took over and invited the country president to attend the processing discussion. The group accepted the principles introduced in the training program and a work group was formed to begin development of a new Vision/Mission. Two months after the workshop the final document was approved by the country leadership and is currently in use.

Key Learning

An HR organization concluded that the socio-cultural issues prevalent in today's work world were not adequately addressed in the document used to guide their work. They also knew that the competency necessary to craft a new document was not available within their group. The call to EAP was not because they thought of them as the resource for this work but simply because they thought the EAP might know who could help. As it turned out, the EAP was able to make a major contribution to this effort. EAP needs to consider how it is perceived in its host organization and, when necessary, supplement current understanding with additional information about the scope of its potential services.

⌘ CASE 3 ⌘

Retaining Talents in a Hong Kong Company: Stress Assessment and Intervention

Background/Presenting Problem

HR specialists of a company (which did not have an EAP in place) contacted Human Dynamic, requesting training workshops on Stress Management. They were interested in specific psychometric assessments that would identify employees' individual stress levels and stressors. Further discussions with the HR Director and Training Manager revealed a high staff turnover rate in the past year. The company was keen to understand more about the sources of job stress that the staff were facing and wanted to learn more about improving employees' work-life balance to reduce turnover.

Challenges

The company recognized that it had insufficient manpower for the heavy workload and that it was not feasible to increase the headcount in the short-run. However, it was necessary to help staff to manage stress effectively in order to retain good staff and ensure productivity.

Objectives

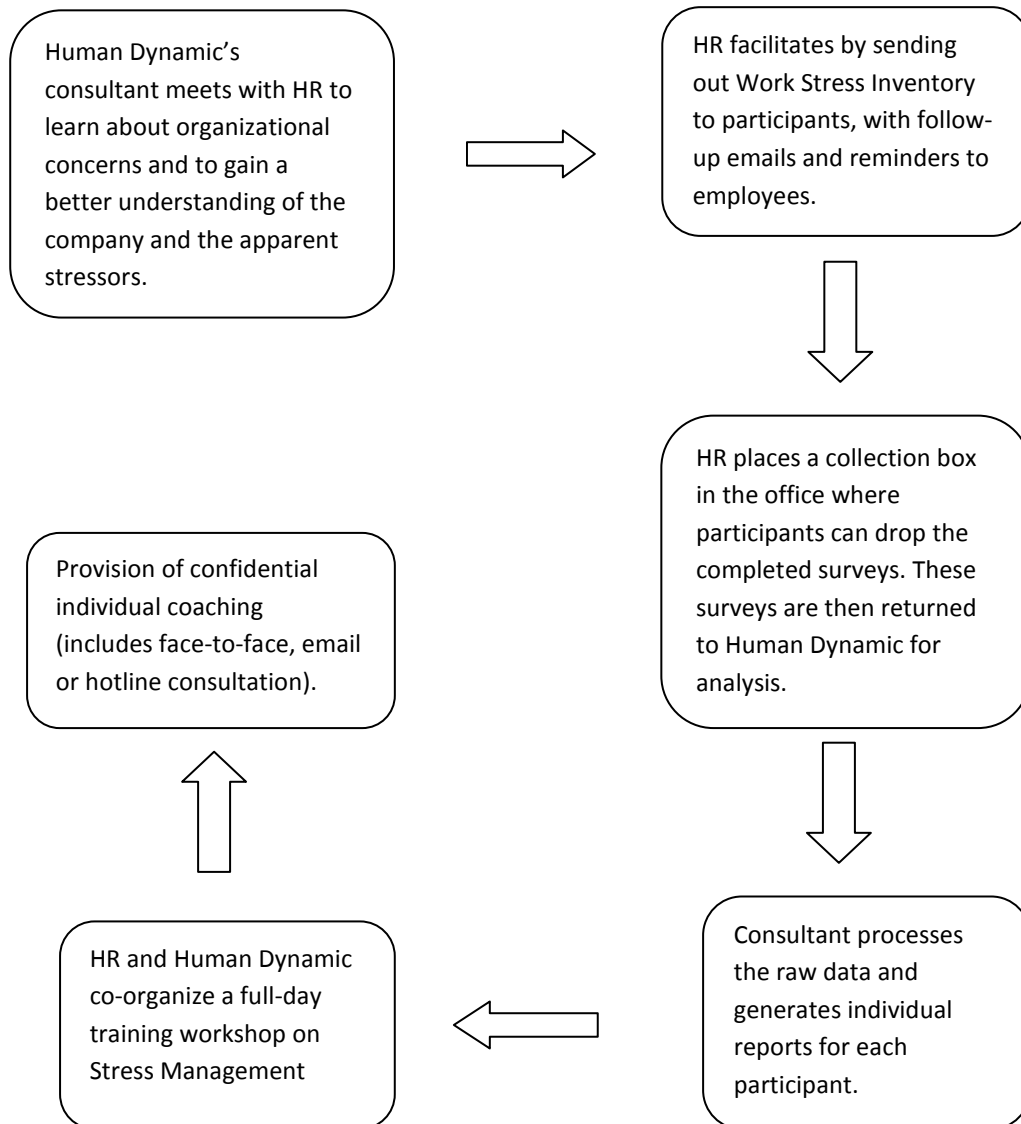
After thorough discussion with the HR director, it was agreed that a few immediate interventions would help identify real concerns from the staff's perspective. Consequently, a Work Stress Inventory Survey was developed and distributed to the company's two major units: A & B. All employees were asked to complete an individual questionnaire and return it to the Human Dynamic consultant for individual assessment. Each participant was given a personal report on their responses to the Work Stress Inventory as well as recommendations and advice indicating how they could improve on managing their individual stress effectively. A full-day Stress Management Workshop was organized at a hotel; staff were invited to join the workshop as a department training function off-site. This was followed by an option for each employee to attend a 1-hour Work Life Coaching session with the Human Dynamic consultant. For employees who were keen, HR (with the permission of the management) allowed the provision of 5 additional sessions of Work Life Coaching (in these cases the employees' identity were kept confidential; participants were permitted to contact a Human Dynamic consultant directly and the consultant was responsible for informing HR of the need/request for more consultations).

The objective of the Stress Inventory was to help each participant:

- identify their own stress levels and stressors in order to seek appropriate remedies accordingly;
- acquire relaxation skills to manage stress effectively and to maintain a good work-life balance;
- gain new insights about how they could have a healthy life-style in the demanding work environment;
- individually, with coaching provided to those interested in seeking consultation on stress management or work life coaching

The process also allowed the company to identify the stressors at work, organizational and management issues. HR was able to use the data collected from the two units to implement an intervention to relieve employee stress and address their concerns.

Intervention/Process



Impact on People

The two individual training workshops for unit A and B provided a good platform for discussion. As both groups of participants had different points of view on work stress, they could discuss issues and share their perspectives in an interactive, non-threatening environment. Through opportunities created by these workshops, employees from both the management and the operational levels could express and hear out each other's concerns. Participants were also able to discuss the obstacles they faced in trying to achieve a healthy work-life balance.

The individual Work Stress Inventory reports surfaced some important areas that were affecting the employees' stress levels and work-life balance negatively. These areas included the participants' lifestyle patterns, how they regarded themselves in the specific job role, as well as their own competency, factors relating to the work environment, etc.

Having understood the organizational issues, gaining in-depth knowledge of team concerns, and individual participant's stressors, the Consultant was able to provide strategic recommendations that were relevant for the group. Practical advice was given in various areas in which individuals and teams could work on, e.g. assertiveness, time management skills, communication skills, lifestyle patterns.

Key Learning

By assessing the factors contributing to employee stress, and addressing these stressors at different levels, organizations are able to examine new growth potentials in the company, whether infrastructural, or in terms of talent management. A well-rounded analysis can augment initiatives put in place to enhance organizational development, talent retention, work-life balance, team competency, etc. An additional level of support was provided in this case, where individual work life coaching sessions were extended to those who requested it. It allowed HR and the management to convey the message that the company truly cares and wants to help alleviate the difficult situations they were experiencing. Through multiple levels of intervention – from gaining insight of the real ills that the employees were facing to the implementation of work-life issues – the company and its people were well on their way to achieving a better and healthier work-life balance.

⌘ CASE 4 ⌘

Understanding Turnover through a Third Party Exit Interview in Thailand

Background/Presenting Problem

The Management and Head of HR for a multinational organization in Thailand were concerned about high staff turnover; the annual turnover rate had exceeded 20%. The reasons for this had been unclear and there was now a pressing need to better understand the situation, as organizational performance, employee satisfaction and talent retention were at stake. Prior to contacting Human Dynamic, the company's HR department attempted to conduct several internal exit interviews. However, they were not well supported by the exiting and ex-employees. Some failed to return the exit interview forms, while others did not provide sufficient or clear information.

When Human Dynamic was contacted by the Head of HR, a third party exit interview program was designed to help uncover the reasons for the high rate of resignation. The ultimate aim was to recommend further action that would help the organization manage the brain drain and reduce the turnover rate.

Challenges

Human Dynamic approached ex-employees to participate in a one-hour interview session. Some of them had changed their contact details and could not be reached, while others declined to be interviewed. With the remaining targeted respondents, Human Dynamic consultants informed interviewees that they would be assured of their anonymity.

Objective/Process

Over a period of one month, Human Dynamic consultants were to interview the targeted group of ex-employees listed by the company and prepare an anonymous report documenting reasons for their resignation. The report was to also include a recommended action plan suggesting what could be done to mitigate the situation.

Once the framework for the program was discussed and the targeted respondents identified,

1. the Head of HR and Human Dynamic's consultants agreed on the sample size needed for accurate interviewing and reporting, and
2. an open-ended interview questionnaire was designed in consultation with the Head of HR and the project leader.

The Questionnaire is reproduced here.

Questionnaire

1. Have you got a new job? What do you find in your new job that is better than your job at ...?
2. What are your primary reasons for leaving?
3. What did you find most satisfying about your job?
4. What did you find most frustrating about your job?
5. Were there any company policies or procedures that made your work more difficult?
6. In your perception, how would you see your supervisor's leadership style? What about his/her job skills?
7. In your perception, how good is your team? How good is their performance?
8. Is there anything the company could have done to prevent you from leaving?
9. Would you consider returning to this company in the future? Why?
10. Would you recommend this company to a friend as a good place to work? Why?
11. Other comments from the interviewee and the interviewer?

3. The list of interviewees and their contact and employment details were provided to Human Dynamic. Interview sessions were arranged with each participant.
4. Interviews were conducted by telephone, and respondents were asked to answer the questions prepared in Questionnaire above.
5. An anonymous report presenting the results of the interview was submitted to the Head of HR.
6. An additional report, analyzed by function, was prepared for the organization at the request of the Head of HR. To protect the confidentiality of the participants, each report was completed by collapsing the response from 5 to 16 interviewees.
7. The Head of HR and the project leader subsequently presented the reports to the management and sent a copy to the Regional HR Team.

Effectiveness/Result

Consultants successfully interviewed 58% of the targeted respondents. The remaining 42% were either unreachable or declined to be interviewed. The Exit Interviews revealed that the ex-employees left for four main reasons. They were dissatisfied with:

1. Management and Leadership Style

For example,

- o conflicts with the boss,
- o little or no work delegation,
- o non-compliance with the chain of command, etc

2. Company policies and procedure

- o policies were being changed too often
- o policies were unclear
- o no job descriptions in place
- o no performance management system
- o no clear work systems or guidance, etc

3. Job role of the interviewees

- o job roles and job content were unclear
- o excessive work pressure, etc

4. Organizational culture

- o current employees do not look upon new staff positively
- o each department worked independently, and employees were unhelpful and uncooperative, etc

Key Learning

Results from the reports revealed that there had been underlying problems at many levels of the organization, resulting in high staff turnover. With information collected from ex-employees' interviews and further analyses, the organization had identified key areas to work on: organizational culture, leadership capabilities, staff communication, job processes, job roles, performance management system, teambuilding, coaching and mentoring, etc. As soon as they had a finger on the pulse of the fundamental issues, the organization was able to implement strategies that could potentially reduce the turnover challenge. For instance, a follow-up "Coping with Change" training workshop was developed by Human Dynamic and conducted for employees after the completion of the exit interview project. Overall, the partnership between the leaders, HR and Human Dynamic made a significant impact on the program and was well-received.

⌘ CASE 5 ⌘

Training for Leading Change of a Public Utility Company in Hong Kong

Background/Presenting Problem

A Staff Attitude Survey of the Finance Division of a public utility company in Hong Kong revealed strong staff dissatisfaction with work and the division's working environment. Staff reported very high stress levels and low morale in reaction to company-wide organizational changes. In response to these findings, Management expressed a desire to understand the problems experienced by the Division. Importantly, it wished to support its managers as they sought to deal with the people management issues brought on by the organizational changes.

Purpose:

Management sought the expertise of the Employee Assistance Consultant (EAC) on the following:

- Assessment of the sources of job stress and challenges faced by 60 senior managerial staff
- Equipping managerial staff to lead organizational change efforts, inculcate new mindsets and manage career development within a changing business environment
- Coaching managerial staff to deal effectively with a range of people management issues evoked by organizational change processes.

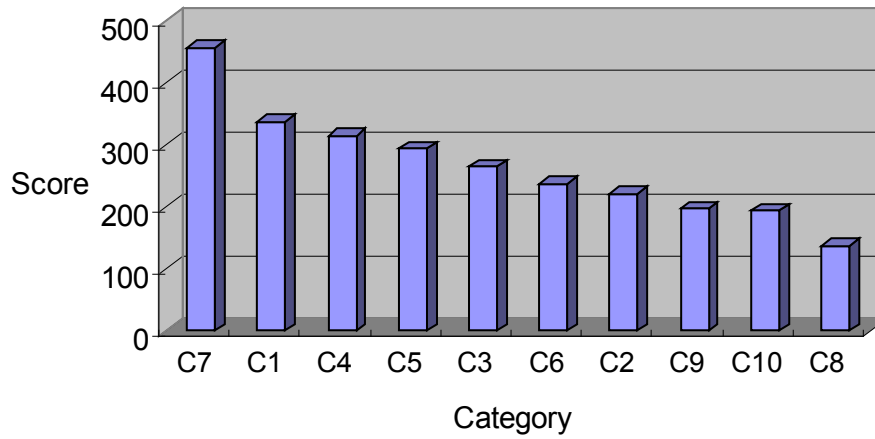
The ultimate purpose of the project was to improve staff morale within the Finance Division and build a more joyful, healthy and productive management team.

Process:

A Sources of Job Stress questionnaire was administered to managerial staff to assess the nature of stressors encountered. The questionnaire had open-ended questions aimed at getting specific details on the challenges faced in leading organizational changes efforts. Participants completed the questionnaire in small groups and simply dropped their answers anonymously into a large envelope.

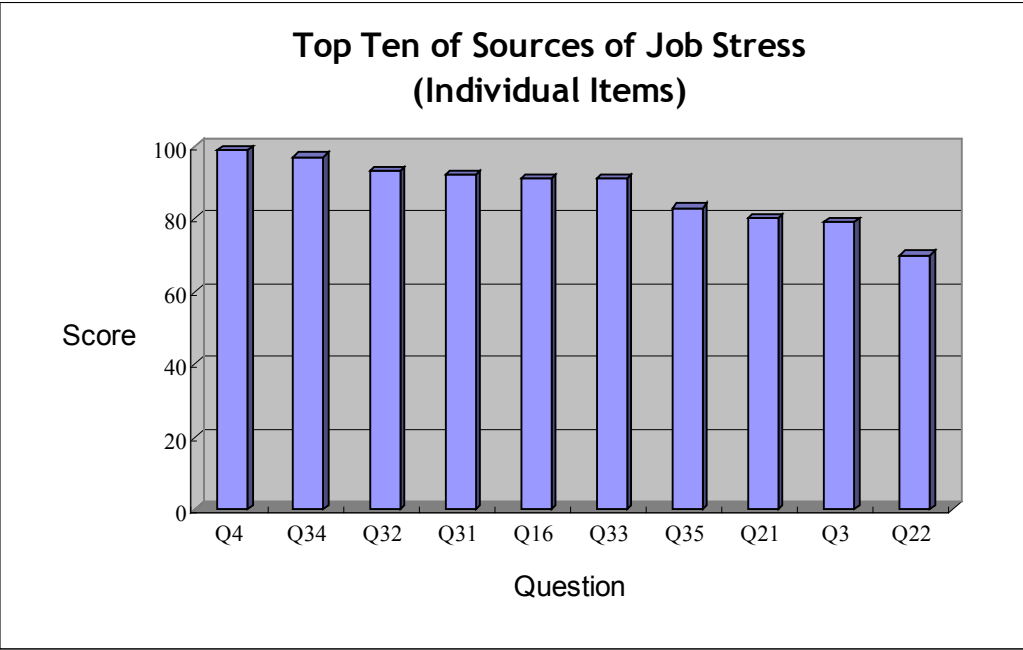
Responses were analyzed and presented to a focus group of 10 managers to further explore job stress issues. Based on these inputs, the EAC then developed relevant case studies for a two-day Leading Change workshop delivered to a group comprising 60 senior managers.

Ranking of Sources of Job Stress (Category)



Keys:

C7	Overload
C1	Lack of Control
C4	Conflict
C5	Blocked Career
C3	Cause & Effect
C6	Alienation
C2	Information Gap
C9	Environment
C10	Value Conflict
C8	Under-load



Keys:

Q.4	There are a lot of requirements that get in the way of my doing certain tasks.
Q.34	I must work on my own time (during breaks, lunch, at home, and so on).
Q.32	I take on new responsibilities without letting go of any of the old ones.
Q.31	I have too much to do and too little time in which to do it.
Q.16	I am expected to satisfy conflicting needs.
Q.33	My job seems to interfere with my personal life.
Q.35	The size of my workload interferes with how well I do it.
Q.21	I feel pessimistic about opportunities for advancement or growth in my job.
Q.3	I am unable to influence decisions that affect me.
Q.22	My manager is critical.

A month after each workshop, all participants had the opportunity to meet the trainer individually at their office for a private coaching session. These one-to-one sessions allowed participants to seek consultation on specific areas of people management that they were still not confident in.

Top Management in the Division subsequently underwent a briefing session on the workshop to familiarize themselves with key concepts and encourage the development of a common language and culture within the Division.

Impact on People

Participants reported finding the training program very timely to the challenges faced in the Division. Level of satisfaction for the workshop registered 5.8 on a 7-point scale. Significantly, feedback from the one-to-one coaching sessions revealed that the training program helped participants re-think work-life balance issues in addition to learning new skills in managing organizational and career changes. Several participants also reported improvements in office morale and in relationships between senior managers and other staff. Many of the senior managers recommended that managers and general grade staff undergo the same training to similarly benefit from the learning experience. Another round of workshops was subsequently held for another 90 management staff in the Division.

⌘ CASE 6 ⌘

Riding the Waves of Change: Helping Managers of an IT Company in India Confront Adversity

Background/Presenting Problem

Human Dynamic was approached by the HR Director of an IT Company in India which had undergone an ownership transition. The senior management executives of this company were involved earlier on in the planning stage of the transition; they did not know that they would also be given the 'golden handshake'. There was now a great deal of discomfort and resentment amongst them.

Challenges/Objective

The HR Director was the point person in discussion with Human Dynamic to arrange for the provision of consultation sessions. The sessions were to be incorporated as part of the compensation package for employees who were being outplaced. One of the challenges that Human Dynamic faced at that point was how to assist in reframing the mindsets of the affected individuals, address their emotions, and energize them to take control of their work life. Once managers were equipped with the right attitude, confidence and skills, they could then face the challenges of looking for a new job.

Process

Affected managers contacted Human Dynamic consultants to arrange for private consultation sessions. The first session focused on how managers could deal with their emotional reactions arising from the news and anticipated change. Most of them had in fact thought that they would not be affected. Consequently, when they were informed of the outplacement, they felt betrayed by the owners of the Company. Consultation sessions also coached managers to:

- o look at their situation from different perspectives
- o objectively reflect on facts, instead of fixating on their adversity
- o come to terms with the true reasons for transition
- o regain a sense of self-worth and self-respect
- o accept the change and move on
- o overcome their fears when they attended job interviews
- o communicate effectively with their potential new employers

Impact on People / Key Learning

Intervention was well-received. An email from the HR Director who was in charge of the transition and outplacement process revealed that most of the separated employees benefited from the program: "This is a great start. My touch points with the people who have gone thru counseling indicate that all except 1 have found this useful. Many thanks once again for all the support".

The news of losing one's job can be devastating, and the emotional roller coaster ride may impair a person's ability to judge, no matter how senior or mature the person is. In light of this, trained third party professionals should be engaged to help organizations and HR put things in perspective for the affected employees. When job loss is reframed positively, a half empty cup becomes half full. A graceful send-off to the affected individuals makes a vast difference; it allows the staff to leave with dignity, a sense of closure, and highlights past contributions made. However, intervention should not end here. Organizations undergoing change should also consider how remaining employees can be helped, particularly when uncertainty is still looming as a result of transition. Unaddressed emotions and reactions can potentially have drastic impact on attrition & productivity.

This case example exemplifies the need, at the organizational level, to ensure that change is communicated appropriately to persons who are affected. Ultimately, transparency and honesty make a great difference in mitigating the damage. When false hopes are given, it can spawn feelings of betrayal, insecurity and uncertainty when the truth eventually comes to light. Communication is essential in engaging employees during the change management process. It also serves as an important preventative tool and should be used effectively.

⌘ CASE 7 ⌘

Leading Change: Facilitating the Smooth Closure of a Plant in China

Background/Presenting Problem

A manufacturing company was implementing a cost-cutting measure to maximize resources. They decided to close one of their plants in China and relocate some of their employees to other cities. The remaining employees were to be laid off.

This would be the second wave of a large scale downsizing in the past one year at the plant. The company had already faced strong and bitter opposition from affected employees during the first wave. There were disagreements on compensation packages, misunderstandings, and communication problems; many employees had no coping mechanisms to deal with the redundancies. In order to forestall a repetition, the HR manager contacted Human Dynamic for assistance in managing the organizational change.

The transition was planned to be completed within one year. Most of the frontline staff and managers would be relocated. The plant was to be permanently closed thereafter.

Challenges

In the first wave of lay-off, separating employees reacted adversely to the news. The management was concerned about the second wave as it involved an even larger number of employees. If the reactions from separating employees could not be contained, a much greater negative impact would be expected, particularly since during the transition period, the plant had to continue operating to complete outstanding productions.

Professional assistance was sought in the hope of facilitating a smooth closure of the plant.

Objective

The objectives of intervention were to:

- (I) reduce the risks of extreme confrontation from impacted employees
- (II) conduct the announcement of the upcoming redundancies and plant closure smoothly
- (III) enhance the ability of management and employees in coping with organizational change
- (IV) help maintain the normal operations of the plant
- (V) assist the separating employees in starting new careers

Intervention/Process

- (I) Pre-announcement
 - In preparation for the announcement, consultants from Human Dynamic:
 - o conducted coaching sessions for top management
 - o worked with HR and management on the agenda of the announcement meeting
 - o discussed measures to take in the event of an emergency
 - o assisted in crafting the announcement message, which would be communicated to the employees by the General Manager
 - o provided training for safety staff on handling extreme reactions (if any)
- (II) Support on the day of announcement:
 - o Consultants from Human Dynamic were on-site to respond to unmanageable emotional outbursts. As there was sufficient preparation this time, there were no strong negative reactions and the employees even gave a round of applause at the end of the announcement. D-Day ended smoothly, and what remained was to decide on specific arrangements for the separating and remaining employees, as well as ensuring the continued running of operations until the plant could be shut down as planned.

- o Trainings on “Effective Communication Skills in Leading Change” and one-on-one coaching for middle management were arranged. The aim was to help them better understand various aspects of the change process and how to support this change. They were also coached on coping strategies and how to manage their emotions, so that they would not inadvertently perpetuate negative emotions.
- (III) Follow-Up Intervention
- o The day following the announcement, consultants from Human Dynamic conducted four EAP briefing sessions for all employees to familiarize them with Human Dynamic’s services. The briefing also discussed when they could consider accessing the services, and how the services would help them in this organizational change. Using a survey, consultants also assessed the emotional status of the participants, their level of change acceptance, and the level/type of support they expected. The feedback from participants helped Human Dynamic understand the needs of the employees and provided the base for follow-up service/intervention. The survey also allowed Human Dynamic to evaluate service effectiveness.
 - o In the following 10 months, four workshops were conducted. Workshop topics differed depending on which stage of transition they were in.
 - o In the initial stage, the focus of the workshops was on handling emotional reactions, and how to cope with change and relocation.
 - o Later, based on a survey on training needs, the emphasis was shifted to coaching employees on how to adapt to a new work environment, enhance interpersonal relationships, cope with change, and have the right attitude in finding a new job.
 - o Trainings at the later stages included helping employees hone their skills in finding new jobs (including resume writing, interview skills, etc.). For employees who were more mature and/or at a lower educational level, workshops on starting a small business were conducted for them.
 - o During the whole change process, Human Dynamic provided 85 sessions of visiting consultation service (consultants were on-site to have private consultation sessions with the employees). The positive feedback and high demand for the sessions made it necessary for extra sessions to be arranged.
 - o To ensure that employees were well-supported and could access the service readily, Human Dynamic also provided them with one-on-one telephone consultation. Of the 360 affected employees, 39.17% utilized the telephone consultation service. Human Dynamic continued to provide consultation to some employees even after they had left the plant, in order to support them through adjustment issues in their new jobs.

Effectiveness/Impact on People

The intervention was highly successful, and this could be attributed to the excellent collaborative partnership between the company and Human Dynamic. Several instances illustrate the extent of cooperation: the General Manager personally introduced each of the consultants during the briefing sessions and paid close attention to the intervention, and HR staff responsible for the project kept in close contact with Human Dynamic throughout the intervention.

Overall, the company thought highly of the professional services that were rendered. The management team was very appreciative of the assistance provided. The General Manager himself shared this positive experience in one of Human Dynamic’s seminars. Before leaving China, he wrote to every consultant involved in the intervention to express his thanks.

At the employee level, 80 service users were selected at random so that their evaluation on the service could be analyzed. 90% said that the service had improved their situation. The details of the evaluation are as follows:

Satisfaction on the service

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Dissatisfied
No. of interviewees	26	49	5	0
Percentage of total employee population	32.5%	61.25%	6.25%	

Improvements made

	Greatly Improved	Improved	No Change	Worse
No. of interviewees	26	46	8	0
Percentage of total employee population	32.5%	57.5%	10%	

Key Learning

For cultural reasons, some employees in China find it more difficult for them to accept and to adapt to change. These workers usually work at joint-venture companies, which started off as state-owned firms. These firms tend to have the characteristics of a planned economy in which employees enjoy life-long employment. The employees also tend to be older, specializing in only one skill. Because of this, when forced to undergo sudden change, these employees react most adversely. Companies should equip themselves to better understand how and why change evokes such negative reactions, and provide the necessary professional resources to help employees cope.

Human Dynamic has had the opportunity to assist in a number of such situations. The prevalence of such situations will continue to increase as economies globalize and resources need to be redistributed. Professional people management consultation service providers that use an integrated approach will play ever more important roles in such organizational change processes and intervention. To maximize the benefit from such services it is important to consider the following:

- Service providers should be proactive, and need to understand the situation that the customer company is facing and evaluate needs before recommending intervention. Service providers and the top management should work together on the intervention strategy. Both parties should keep in close communication and cooperate throughout the change process.
- The services need to be customized to suit the local culture and the characteristics of the affected employees. (For example, many employees in this case used to be employed in a state-owned company and it was difficult for them to understand organizational change.)
- It is essential to normalize change. Affected employees need to understand that some practices and business decisions are outside their control. Keeping them aware of and providing relevant facts and legal information can also help them to adjust their expectations.
- For mature employees with a low education level and deep family commitments, it would be more practical to provide them with training (e.g. on how to start a small business) and equip them with other job-seeking skills.
- During the intervention, it is important to obtain timely feedback on various aspects of the service, including content and procedure, so that adjustments to the original plan can be made whenever necessary.
- Provision of one-on-one consultation to affected employees is essential because organizational change often proves to be a major disruption to work and personal life. Beyond career change, employees may also seek consultation on family, relationships with their spouse/partner, child-related issues, financial planning etc. Professional work life coaching is a valuable tool in helping employees and their families cope with the stress and challenges arising as a result of the change.

⌘ CASE 8 ⌘

Handling Employee Confrontation in a Downsizing Organization in China

Background/Presenting Problem

Organizational change in a company in China had resulted in a decision to lay off a few employees. China's labor laws mandate that an employee has to be a party to the termination. However, one of the employees refused to sign the agreement and threatened to physically attack a manager.

The company's HR tried to communicate with him but he was not receptive. HR turned to Human Dynamic for assistance.

Further discussions with HR revealed that the employee had been in the dark about his being laid-off until the actual redundancy interview. It was not surprising that he was extremely furious, and management was concerned that he would carry out his threat. They were also concerned that he would evoke negative emotions amongst other employees.

Challenges/Objectives

Since there was no trust between the employee and the company, the Human Dynamic was engaged by the company management (employee perceived the consultant to be on the company's side), the consultant-in-charge found it very challenging to establish a good rapport with the employee. After further discussion between the consultant and HR, it was agreed that intervention should focus on:

- reducing the risk of harmful actions by the employee
- facilitating the employee to leave the company smoothly
- minimizing the potential harm on the company's image and reputation

Intervention/Process

A project team was established, comprising of representatives from Human Dynamic (the Account Manager, the Regional Manager, a People Management Consultant, and an EA Consultant) and the company (the line manager of the employee, HR, and the Director). All parties kept in close communication on the situation.

Arrangements were made for the EA consultant to meet the employee and conduct a risk assessment. The consultant was able to build a good counseling relationship with the employee. In the follow up sessions, the consultant helped the employee address the negative emotions he was experiencing, and coached him to come to terms with the reality of his being made redundant. He was given an opportunity to focus on future development. Regular contact was made with the employee to ensure he was well-supported.

Meanwhile, Human Dynamic assisted the company in:

- informing the police, the local labor bureau and the company's safety department about the threat made by the employee against the manager – measures were taken to assure the safety of the manager and his family
- minimizing the harm to other employees by taking steps to address and stabilize their emotions
- opening communication channels between ordinary employees and the line manager/HR department
- deciding on an appropriate compensation package for the employee
- providing other resources, such as information on job vacancies, to the employee

Impact on People/Key Learning

The intervention was ultimately successful, and the employee signed the lay-off agreement. It was a smooth departure. The consultant continued to provide follow-up sessions with him after he left the company. He was able to come to terms with what had happened and managed to maintain emotional stability. He later found a new job. It was an ideal closure, and the company expressed its appreciation to Human Dynamic for the timely assistance.

The company benefited from this experience and made the most of it by improving its communication system and policies. They were also reminded to consider implementing personality assessments and measures of emotional stability of candidates at the recruitment stage.

Whenever a company has to lay off an employee, there is always the possibility of a violent backlash. These employees may threaten to hurt themselves or others, or jeopardize the reputation of the company. Risk assessment should therefore be an integral part of the planning process of any restructuring or downsizing exercise.

⌘ CASE 9 ⌘

Dealing with Restructuring of an Organization in USA

Presenting Problem

A business unit within an organization contacted the site Employee Assistance Consultant (EAC) and requested assistance with an initiative to restructure the organization. Leadership of this business had conducted an analysis and determined that reductions in force would need to occur. Business leaders were concerned about the anxiety and concern this process would cause to employees in the group.

Background/Purpose

A study was conducted by business leaders who sought ways to reduce costs and become more competitive. Findings determined that inefficiencies existed in services provided by two groups in the business and recommended consolidation of work to reduce duplications. The workgroups concerned understood the initiative and participated in the study and so were aware that personnel reductions were a possibility.

Intervention/Process

After meeting with the business leaders, the EAC ascertained that the extent of the impact would be unknown for 4 – 6 weeks. The workgroups were confronted with a great deal of uncertainty and concern that some of them could lose their jobs and many were distracted by this possibility. Despite the fact that leadership communicated available information weekly, the employees continued to feel unsure of what the future would hold.

Implementation Strategies

The EAC determined that it would be helpful to conduct sessions focusing on “Dealing with Change and Transition” for leadership and the workgroups. This program would assist employees to better understand the impact of change and transition and enable them to develop the skills necessary for better resilience.

This program was designed to be conducted in 60-minute segments. The groups met weekly in place of regularly scheduled staff meetings. Additionally, the EAC participated in the weekly leadership conference calls to keep abreast of critical information as well as assist with any workgroup concerns that might arise. These interventions were very well received and while a reorganization did occur, many of those directly impacted were able to transfer to other opportunities.

Key Learning

Change and transition can be difficult for even the most resilient individuals. It is important for leadership to involve the Employee Assistance Professional in the preparation for change as early as possible. This will enable leadership to craft the transition plan in such a way that respect and support will be provided for both employees and managers/supervisors. Additionally, early involvement allows the Employee Assistance Professional to make recommendations, which will facilitate the transition in a positive manner.

⌘ CASE 10 ⌘

Managing a Regional Downsizing Exercise through EAP in Asia

Background/Purpose

A multinational consumer product company had requested Outplacement Counseling Services for a 4-month period for 90 staff that it planned to release. The Company was concerned that affected employees be supported through the transition and that the negative impact of the reorganization be minimized as much as possible. Additionally, the company was concerned that the managers charged with carrying out the re-organization be supported in the difficult task of facilitating the reorganization. This case study illustrates how a combination of service delivery modes was able to meet the needs of both the company and its released employees and discusses the unique challenges cultural and geographical diversity can pose to OCS service providers.

Process

The range of services provided to the Company included:

- On-site Counseling Support on the Day of Announcement
- Training Workshop for Managers on Effective Staff Communication
- 3 Workshops on Job Search & Interviewing Skills
- Counseling & Career Consultation (including revision of resume)

Employees affected were geographically dispersed from North Asia (Hong Kong, Taiwan) to South Asia (Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka), the Middle East (Dubai) right up to South East Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore).

Implementation Strategy

Depending on geographical location, services were accessible to released staff via any or a combination of modes such as face-to-face consultation, telephone, fax or email consultation.

- o **Regions Served Directly by Human Dynamic Offices**
Released employees in Hong Kong, Taiwan & Singapore had ultimate choice in accessing services due to the presence of Human Dynamic offices in these locations.
- o **Regions Served by Human Dynamic's Singapore Office**
Released employees in all other regions were only able to access services via telephone, fax and email. Released employees were collectively served by Human Dynamic's Singapore office, the regional hub for the ASEAN Plus region.
- o **Countries Tapping Local Affiliates & Resources**
The range of services for the Philippines and India deserve special mention - released employees from India had the option of face-to-face counseling provided by Human Dynamic's Indian affiliates. Released employees from the Philippines had access to the use of office facilities (office desk space complete with computer, internet access & other conveniences) at a business center. Such additional services were provided at the specific request of the customer.

o **Service Utilization by Mode of Service Delivery**

Face-to-face consultation was available to 44 released staff but only 8 (or 18%) accessed service this way. Telephone consultation by contrast, was most relied upon – with a total of 251 calls initiated between released staff and Human Dynamic consultants. Consultation via email was the next preferred route of contact between service users and Human Dynamic consultants. Via email, released staffs were able to receive resume samples, cover letters, tips for interview taking and resume crafting. A total of 57 (or 63%) resumes were sent for revision this way.

o **Support on Day of Announcement & Workshops**

On-site counseling support on the day of announcement was made available in Hong Kong with released staff there being offered 3 training workshops on Job Search and Interview Skills. Twenty-two out of the 29 affected staff (or 75%) attended these workshops.

o **Access to Office Facilities**

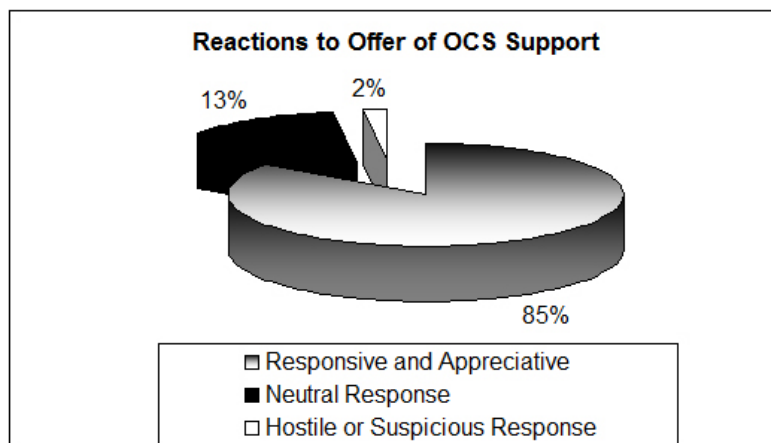
Of the 46 released staff with access to office facilities (e.g. use of office, computers, internet and printing facilities) just 39% chose to do so. In Taiwan and Singapore, where such services were available, none chose to use these services. Three of the 9 released staff in the Philippines used these facilities via a business center.

Key Learning

The OCS provided to the 90 released staff over a 4 month period saw intensive use of services especially in the first 2 months of service provision which gradually tapered off as many found work or had their resumes strengthened enough to feel able to manage on their own. By the end of the contract period, a total of 68% (or 61 people) had found a job.

Service Users’ Response

Released staff’s response to the OCS offered by their ex-employer fell into 3 broad areas as illustrated in the diagram.



Responsive and Appreciative - Released staff were mainly receptive to the OCS with 85% expressing appreciation for the service and making enthusiastic use of it. Neutral Response - Around 13% of released staff were neutral in their response to the service. These individuals seemed to be more self dependent – believing that the downsizing was nothing personal and that a clean cut in ties was best for moving on. Hostile or Suspicious Response - A small number, 2% of individuals, were not keen for any OCS follow up. These individuals exhibited feelings of hostility or expressed suspicion over the motives for the service. To them, such ‘after-care’ was seen as intrusive and unnecessary.

Employer Support & Effective Communication

Though only 2% of released employees were hostile or suspicious of the OCS, this nonetheless underscores the strong emotions evoked by downsizing. Skilled communication continues to make the vital difference to the success of any OCS effort. Investing in training for line managers to equip them with the necessary skills to communicate sensitively the message of downsizing is key. Coupled with on-site counseling support for the day of announcement, these measures go a long way in cushioning the impact of retrenchments.

Regional Time Difference

The Singapore office of Human Dynamic was challenged to provide services in regions that were between 2½ hours to 4 hours behind Singapore time (e.g. India, Bangladesh & Dubai). The Dubai experience posed the added challenge of a workweek that had Thursdays and Fridays as its weekend instead of the more traditional Saturday-Sunday weekend. Such time and work week differences had some impact on accessing services as opening hours/days for commercial internet rental shops meant delays in sending and receiving email, resumes for revision and other resource material. Significant overtime was put in over this period to cater to the needs of anxious clients who frequently forgot the time and workweek differences mentioned before. Flexibility on the part of the service provider was vital to making services responsive to client demands and realities.

Language

In all the regions served, language did not prove to be a barrier as Human Dynamic’s consultants and affiliates were able to deliver services in different languages (e.g. Mandarin, Cantonese & Bahasa Indonesia). Although the majority of released staff were English speaking, in many cases, knowledge of the local language was necessary as initial contacts via telephone were frequently answered by family members who were not English speaking.

Technology & Service Delivery

Apart from more traditional face-to-face and telephone consultations, this OCS assignment saw a significant proportion of service rendered via email to much success and client satisfaction. Email was shown to be a viable medium for service provision as attested by its high usage even in cities where Human Dynamic had offices. Increasingly available in most cities, it was still however beyond the reach of some as was the case in the Philippines. Making available the services of a business center readily solved the problem of access.