

Email Subject Line: How an “Outplacement Consultant” Can Help You

[workopolis.com EN home page](#)

Headline: Should I Use My “Outplacement” Provision?

Summary:

Question: Last week I was downsized from a job I'd been in for close to 10 years. My employer gave me a generous severance package, which includes career transition coaching from a reputable “outplacement” firm here in the city. I am just wondering if I should bother with the coaching as I think my chances of finding a new job on my own are pretty good. Should I try to get the cash equivalent from my employer instead?

Laila Z., Winnipeg, Manitoba

[Landing Page copy](#)

Headline: Should I Use My “Outplacement” Provision?

Dear Mark,

Question: Last week I was downsized from a job I'd been in for close to 10 years. As a middle manager my employer gave me a generous severance package, which includes a lump sum payment of salary as well as career transition coaching from a reputable “outplacement” firm here in the city. I am just wondering if I should bother with the coaching as I think my chances of finding a new job on my own are pretty good. Would I be better off taking the coaching anyway, or not bothering and trying to get the cash from my employer instead?

Laila Z., Winnipeg, Manitoba

Dear Laila,

I spent about seven years as an outplacement coach working with one of the world's biggest firms in this very helpful and fascinating field. One of my conclusions? People who have recently been let go and are just starting their job search consistently overestimate their ability to find work within a reasonable amount of time.

Often this is because if you've been working steadily and have been performing well, and you were let go for reasons not related to your work habits, you naturally assume that potential employers will see this quickly and will want to invite you to become part of their team. Hey, why wouldn't they?

Unfortunately there are some missing factors in this equation. For instance, job seekers who are just starting out tend not to remember how competitive it can be out there. They may also forget how unpredictable the decision making process can sometimes be at the employer's end. Sure, if all hiring was done completely without emotion, bias or arbitrary impressions, things *ought* to go your way sooner than later.

But why not influence things by getting the free professional advice your former employer has already arranged for you? The outplacement firm will assist you in preparing a top notch, targeted, achievement-oriented resume. They'll show you how to research hidden job opportunities and create lists of possible employers that match your work preferences. Want to

run through a mock interview before the big one? Your coach will put you through your paces and provide instant feedback. Also they'll teach you how to use the online job banks effectively, put together a portfolio of your previous work accomplishments to take with you on interviews, counter difficult questions, negotiate a favourable compensation package for yourself, or even embark on a major career change should you choose to pursue that path.

So if you're convinced you don't need any of these services, and believe you'll be happily re-employed within a couple of months through your own efforts, then go ahead and see if you can get the cash instead of the coaching (not that there's any guarantee you're employer will consent). Otherwise I highly recommend using the outplacement provision for all it's worth - which could be thousands of dollars. The techniques you'll learn will stay with you, and continue to benefit you, as you progress throughout your career.