



**Media Contact:** Shelley Parnell, Defero  
480-703-9268

## **FIVE CHANGES LEADERS CAN EXPECT FOLLOWING A LAYOFF** *Renowned Author and CEO of InitiativeOne Identifies Warning Signs*

**SCOTTSDALE, Ariz.** (2009) – Each day, layoffs at companies throughout the United States make the news. While some companies are preparing for layoffs and many employees fear the inevitable, thousands of companies are busy dealing with the aftermath. A bold step taken to protect corporate viability, even a layoff handled with thorough planning, genuine sensitivity and effective communication can still leave negative residue within a company.

Dr. Fred Johnson is author of the book “Is Everyone on the Bus?” and Founder & CEO of InitiativeOne, a company whose programs provide intensive counsel and direction for businesses experiencing turmoil or are in need of growth, human development or accelerated change. According to Dr. Johnson, a company leader should anticipate these five potential changes in the work environment during the post-layoff stage:

- 1. Fear will increase significantly** among remaining employees. People will be preoccupied with the inevitable questions: Will there be another round? Am I next? In such a fear-based environment, people may lose focus regarding the objectives and immediate goals that still must be met. Because fear breeds distorted thoughts and conclusions, expect employees to be preoccupied with rumors and conversations that attempt to anticipate further cost-saving measures within the company.
- 2. The “hunker down syndrome”.** Because people are fearful of losing their jobs, people often may begin to “play it safe”. Some employees will hesitate to challenge or give alternative viewpoints to a boss’s decision. Others may decide not to air concerns or discuss problems that may cause tension or conflict. Appropriate risk taking and effective problem solving may diminish as people become highly concerned about making mistakes that could draw unwelcome scrutiny.
- 3. Diminishing passion and engagement,** at least in the short-term. When people do not feel safe, their attention is not on grasping the company vision or achieving great goals. Their focus is on survival.
- 4. Distrust and suspicion toward leaders.** Distance sometimes develops between the decision-makers and those who could potentially be a victim of a layoff. This can impact a leader’s ability to lead. It is more difficult to lead a follower who is backing away emotionally.
- 5. Passive-aggressive protests.** Some team members may feel angry, disillusioned or betrayed, especially if trusted friends and colleagues were let go. Some may feel a compulsion to protest by not taking product quality as seriously. Others may engage in destructive side conversations regarding company direction and decisions. Politically savvy employees may even attempt to make a boss “look bad” in any number of ways.

For more information on Dr. Fred Johnson or InitiativeOne, please visit [www.initiative-one.com](http://www.initiative-one.com) or call 602-374-8990.

###