

Statistics in outplacement – genuine success or a false impression?

In the context of outplacement, company representatives often ask me about statistics: how long does it take my coachees, on average, to find a new job? Does this figure say anything about the quality of my work as an outplacement consultant?

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I do not trust any statistic that I have not falsified myself. But even if all the figures are correct, the question remains: how relevant are they for assessing the success of a consultancy?

I recall my early days as an outplacement consultant – and the perceived pressure for coachees to take up a new position as quickly as possible. As a former recruitment consultant, I know that those who reach their goal fastest in the job search are usually those who apply for a similar role with a new employer. That is understandable – and statistically appealing.

But let's be honest: these individuals often find a new position even without any support. The real question therefore is: after a job loss, is it always sensible to take the next available position as quickly as possible?

The individuals concerned come first

Employers, too, often have an interest in former employees finding a new job quickly. The unemployment insurance system – and the RAV in particular – is likewise keen to see jobseekers reintegrated into the labour market as fast as possible.

In the process, it is easy to forget what outplacement should be about: doing what is best for those affected. Many of my clients use the period of unemployment for a thorough personal and professional assessment. They want to understand which direction truly suits them

professionally. They do not opt for the first opportunity that comes along but consciously choose a sustainable solution.

Some even temporarily deregister from the RAV to escape the pressure. As a career coach, I can only support this aim of finding a sustainable solution. At the same time, such an approach can prolong the job search.

A qualitative measure of success is needed

Clients who proceed in this way worsen my success statistics if these are viewed purely in quantitative terms. And if I additionally support clients whose job search proves time-consuming due to their background, their advanced age or the difficult situation in their labour market segment, the statistics become distorted beyond recognition. And yet it is precisely these people who are most in need of outplacement support.

If outplacement is to be aligned with the real lives of those affected, a qualitative measure of success is therefore required. A consultancy is not successful when someone ends up somewhere as quickly as possible – but when the solution is right for that individual. From a long-term perspective, this should also be in the interest of the RAV.

Neither the sponsor of the outplacement nor I as the consultant define what success means. Only the coachees themselves can do that.

As a sponsor, therefore, talk to your employees about whether they experienced the consultancy as helpful – and what they regard as success.

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