

A Script Guide for Interviews, LinkedIn, and Networking

How you talk about your layoff shapes how people respond to you — often more than the layoff itself. A story that sounds anxious, defensive, or bitter can make even a strong candidate seem like a risk, while a calm, factual, forward-looking explanation tends to build trust and shift the conversation quickly to what you bring next.

Most people never get coached on how to say this out loud, so they either over-explain out of nervousness or avoid the topic entirely — both of which can leave the listener with more questions than answers. This guide gives you a simple structure for explaining your layoff with confidence, along with ready-to-adapt scripts for interviews, LinkedIn, networking conversations, and outreach emails, so you always have language you feel good about using.

The Core Formula

Every version of your layoff story — whether it's 10 seconds or 30 — should hit three beats, in this order:

What happened	(brief, factual, no blame)
Where you're headed	(your target role or direction)
What you bring	(the value or outcome you create)

"My position was affected by a broader restructuring at [Company]. I'm now focused on [target role/field], where I can apply my experience in [skill/area] to help an organization [specific outcome]."

Once you're comfortable with this three-beat structure, every script below is just a variation of it for a different setting.

Do's and Don'ts

DO'S	DON'TS
Keep it brief – 10 to 20 seconds is usually enough.	Blame a former manager, leadership team, or company by name in a negative way.
Stay factual: "the team was restructured," "the department was eliminated," "the company reduced headcount."	Over-explain the internal politics or timeline of the layoff.
Pivot quickly to your direction and value.	Apologize for being laid off or sound uncertain about your worth.
Practice it out loud until it sounds natural, not memorized.	Let the story trail off without a clear next step ("...so, yeah, I guess I'm just looking around").

Quick check: If you read your explanation out loud and it takes longer than 30 seconds or ends without mentioning what you want next, it's time to tighten it.

Script 1: Interview Conversations

When it comes up: "Tell me about why you left your last role" or "I see there was a gap — what happened?"

"My position was eliminated as part of a broader restructuring at [Company] — it wasn't performance-related, and it affected [a team/department/several roles]. Since then, I've used the time to get clear on what I want next: a [target role] where I can bring my experience in [key skill/area] to help a team [specific outcome, e.g., 'improve retention' or 'scale operations']. That's actually part of why this role caught my attention."



Follow-up if they probe further: Keep the additional detail factual and short, then redirect:

"It was a difficult transition, but it gave me time to think carefully about the type of role and company where I can do my best work — which is why I'm excited about this conversation."

Script 2: LinkedIn Profile or Post

Use case: A brief note in your About section, or a standalone post announcing your search.

Profile version (About section opener):

"After [X years] leading [function/area] at [Company/industry], my role was affected by a company-wide restructuring. I'm now exploring [target role] opportunities where I can bring my experience in [skill/area] to help organizations [specific outcome]."

Post version:

"I wanted to share some news: my position at [Company] was eliminated as part of a recent restructuring. I'm proud of the work my team and I accomplished, including [one specific accomplishment]. I'm now looking for my next opportunity in [target role/field], ideally with a company focused on [industry/mission/value]. If you know of a good fit — or just want to connect — I'd welcome the conversation."

Quick check: Does your post name one real accomplishment and one clear direction, without sounding like a general "hire me" announcement?

Script 3: Networking Conversations

When reconnecting with a former colleague, mentor, or contact:

"I wanted to reach out and share that my role was affected by a recent restructuring at [Company]. I'm exploring opportunities in [field/function], particularly where I can contribute in [area of expertise]. I'd love to reconnect and hear what you're seeing in the market — no pressure, just wanted to catch up and get your perspective."

If the conversation turns toward "let me know if I can help":

"That means a lot — honestly, the most helpful thing right now would be a conversation with anyone you think I should know in [industry/function], or just your take on how things are moving in [industry/space]."

Quick check: Does your message invite a conversation, rather than asking directly for a job?



Script 4: Email or Message to a Recruiter or New Contact

Use case: Reaching out cold or responding to a recruiter's outreach.

"Thank you for reaching out. A bit of context: my previous role at [Company] was affected by a company-wide restructuring earlier this year. I've since been focused on opportunities in [target role/field], where I can apply my background in [skill/area] to help a team [specific outcome]. I'd welcome the chance to discuss whether this role could be a fit."

Quick check: Does the email answer the "why are you looking" question before anyone has to ask it?

Fill-in-the-Blank Template

Use this to build your own go-to version, then adapt the wording for each setting above.

"My position was affected by [restructuring / a reduction in force / a department closure] at [Company]. I'm now focused on [target role or field], where I can bring my experience in [key skill or area] to help [type of organization] [specific outcome, e.g., 'grow revenue,' 'improve customer retention,' 'streamline operations']."

Optional accomplishment add-on (for LinkedIn posts or longer conversations):

"While there, I [one specific, measurable accomplishment — e.g., 'led a team that reduced onboarding time by 30%']."

Before You Move On

Say your core script out loud — to yourself, into your phone's voice memo app, or to someone you trust — until it takes 20 seconds or less and ends with a clear sense of direction. The goal isn't to memorize a perfect speech; it's to feel calm and prepared the next time the question comes up, whether that's in an interview, a networking call, or a LinkedIn message.