

Future Match MD Hamed Al Tamami says managers should build morale even after layoffs.

"One of the greatest dangers of downsizing is pushing employees' feet into uncomfortable shoes. In today's downturn it's tempting for managers to reassign the work of terminated employees to those closest to them. However, consider that a manager's job after layoffs is to improve performance by increasing the energy, focus and morale of those that remain. This requires shifting people into positions that match their skills and strengths,

rather than forcing them into roles where they are less likely to succeed.

Do you remember the final pages of Cinderella,

when the wicked stepsisters struggled to claim the glass slipper? Grunt and push as they might, they couldn't fit a foot into the dainty shoe. Only Cinderella had the right shoe size—and the right temperament—to win the heart of the coveted prince.

The cyclical nature of the economy mandates that companies think long-term, as well as short-term, when trying to pump up morale and productivity. Businesses should be identifying, grooming and incentivising those survivors showing promise as future leaders or outstanding contributors. This requires genuinely understanding their needs, motives and talents. Not every gifted engineer, for example, has people management skills. Burdening your most talented developers with unwanted supervisory responsibilities can turn star performers into 'dead wood', drag down team spirit and impede corporate momentum."

