



ABOUT 95 WORKERS TO BE AXED AT LONGABERGER CO.

The Longaberger Company

The Longaberger Co., manufacturer of handcrafted maple wood baskets and other home and lifestyle products, confirmed that they will let go about 95 staff at its Newark, Ohio plant effective immediately. Most of the affected workers, which include 83 manufacturing workers and 12 basketmakers, have an average tenure of 22 years in the company. The laid off staff will be paid until Jan. 14 though the cuts take effect immediately. Longaberger now has 886 workers, down from more than 8,200 in 2000.

Tom Matthews, Longaberger spokesman, explained that the layoffs are attributed to the seasonal adjustment after the December holiday rush. "The first quarter is historically the slowest selling season and it's common to reduce the work force after the holiday season. That's what you're seeing here, an adjustment to the post-holiday demand." Matthews noted that though the layoffs are typical slated every start of the year, this is still a difficult decision for the company. "It doesn't make it any easier for employees, and we recognize that. There are transition programs available, and they've been offered. And, we've made adjustments on the other side, too, such as recalling those removed employees."

Layoffs have been a typical scene at Longaberger over the past years. In 2010, the company removed over 125 plant workers. In 2009, over 295 employees were eliminated from the corporate office and manufacturing facility of the company. Longaberger also laid off around 225 staff in 2008 ranging from senior management positions to basket-making manufacturers. In 2007, the company let go over 710, though 471 was rehired, which represented more than one-fourth of its work force.

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