Per the Challenger, Gray & Christmas report (Feb 5, 2026):

- 108,435 layoffs announced in January 2026
- Up 118% from January 2025
- Up 205% from December 2025
- Highest January since 2009 — the tail end of the Great Recession
- Also the lowest January hiring announcements on record

And here's the detail that should catch your attention: Andy Challenger noted these cuts are happening while GDP is still growing at ~4%. That's not a recessionary pattern — it's employers making preemptive moves because they're pessimistic about 2026's outlook. Most of these plans were set in late 2025.

Layoffs accelerating during economic growth is a tell. It suggests the executive class sees something coming that the headline GDP number isn't capturing yet — or they're using the political cover of "efficiency" and AI transformation to restructure workforces while no one's watching the jobs data too closely.