

Moving Forward After Job Loss

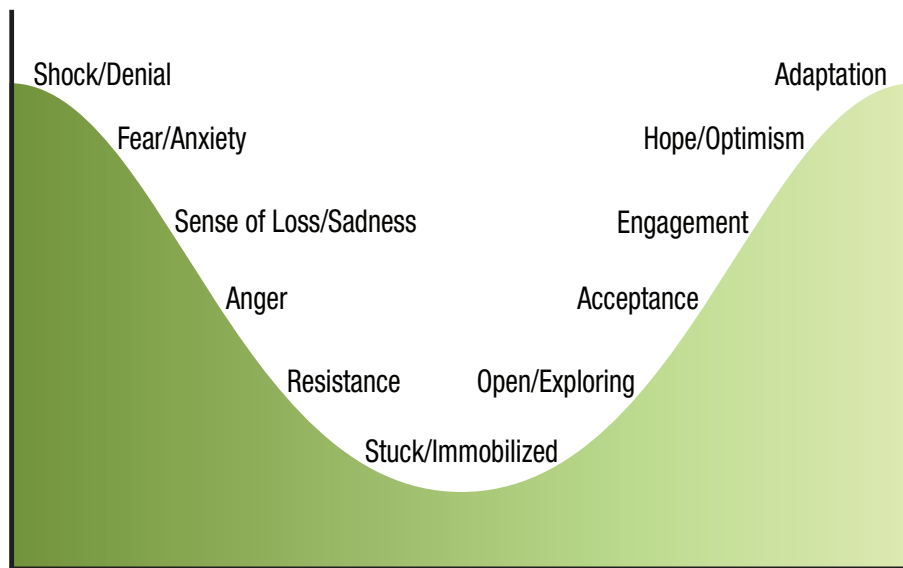
INTRODUCTION

An organizational change leading to job loss can affect every area of your life. The reality of job loss may be shocking to you even if you saw it coming. Now and in the coming weeks and months, you may experience a wide variety of emotions and reactions. Everyone experiences job loss differently; there is no right or wrong way to react. Research indicates that most individuals eventually adapt to a new reality and sometimes find a more fitting career path on the other side of loss. This document outlines helpful information in the following areas:

EMOTIONAL REACTIONS
WAYS TO MOVE FORWARD
RESPONDING TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS
LIFEMATTERS® RESOURCES

EMOTIONAL REACTIONS

Stages in the Process of Adapting to Change



Change is a process that takes time. The graph above illustrates stages you may experience as you adapt to the new normal. Usually, the initial emotions will be shock and denial followed by a sense of loss and some fear about what will happen next when the reality of change sets in. It's easy to get stuck in an unwillingness to let go of how things were in the past and wish things would stay the same. You may experience these reactions in different ways or at different times and not everyone goes through each stage. Eventually, most people begin to accept the changes and adapt to the new normal.

Moving Forward After Job Loss

LOSS AND VULNERABILITY

Common Reactions:

- You may experience shock and disbelief about what just happened.
- You'll likely grieve a significant loss of something you valued: a familiar role, a sense of security, an identity, a feeling of teamwork, or an implied trust between you and your employer.
- You may feel a loss of control over what has just happened and wonder what else is out of your control?

What You Can Do:

- Reach out to a friend, co-worker, spouse or other trusted person to talk about your feelings and experiences.
- Focus your time and energy on what you can control.
- Allow yourself some time to grieve and let the news sink in.

RESISTANCE

Common Reactions:

- Resistance is an unwillingness to let go of how things used to be, and may be shown through angry outbursts, criticism, blaming, withdrawal, etc.
- Resistance is one way to express your unhappiness with loss.

What You Can Do:

- Try to give yourself time to calm down.
- Focus on what you have accomplished in your role and the contributions you've given to your employer.
- Take some time to record the highlights of what you've accomplished. This record will also be helpful when updating your resume.

STUCK

Common Reactions:

- You may feel caught between holding onto the past and moving forward with new career options.
- Sometimes, you may actually be stuck — if the circumstances of the change are still up in the air, you may be in a holding pattern until everything gets settled.

What You Can Do:

- Try to remain in the present and focus on the future.
- Create some structure to your days by setting goals for yourself.
Example: Search for jobs from 9am-noon. Send out three resumes a day.
- Reach out. Update everyone you know that you are looking for a job. Attend networking events, job fairs, use electronic networking, etc.

Moving Forward After Job Loss

ADAPTATION

Common Reactions:

- You feel ready to move on and accept the loss.
- You are likely to look at the work world and job security in a different way now.

What You Can Do:

- Take this opportunity to explore options, gain perspective, and embrace upcoming changes.
- Learn to live in the present. Deal with circumstances as they are, not as they once were or might be.

***Enjoying success requires the ability to adapt.
Only by being open to change will you have the opportunity
to get the most from your talent.***

Nolan Ryan

WAYS TO MOVE FORWARD

Network

- Let everyone know that you are searching for a job. Consider social and professional networking websites.
- Attend job fairs.
- Set up informational interviews to learn more about your options.

Explore

- Websites:
 - www.careerbuilder.com
 - www.monster.com
 - www.careerlab.com
 - www.jobcentral.com
- Seek out the companies you are interested in working for and check their website to see if they have openings.
- Books:
 - *Knock 'em Dead: The Ultimate Job Seeker's Handbook* by Martin Yate
 - *Resumes that Knock 'em Dead* by Martin Yate
 - *Smart Networking: Attract a following in Person and Online* by Liz Lynch
 - *Guerilla Marketing for Job Hunters 2.0* by Jay Conrad-Levinson
 - *Working with Emotional Intelligence* by Daniel Goleman
 - *What Color is Your Parachute?* by Richard Bolles

Moving Forward After Job Loss

Other Tips

- Make a list of your strengths, skills, achievements
- Create or update your resume
- Role play or practice interviewing skills
- Contact your local unemployment office for unemployment compensation
- Meet with a career counselor or coach for guidance
- Set realistic goals and expectations
- Prioritize your time wisely
- Lean on your spiritual beliefs
- Set aside time for fun and relaxation

RESPONDING TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS

You've worked very hard to create a work-life balance that fits for your life; but when a change such as a job loss occurs, it can be upsetting to that balance. Your structure and sense of security have been shaken and you are faced with the task of creating a new "normal". Loved ones are also affected by these changes and it's important to keep the lines of communication open. Working together and staying connected, will help you survive and thrive during this difficult time.

- **Keep family in the loop.** Share your job search plans, let them know how you are structuring your day and update them on promising developments. Let them know how they can support you.
- **Explore changes.** Responsibilities may shift for household chores, childcare, and other tasks. Discuss goals and priorities and how to tackle these together.
- **Listen.** Your loved ones may worry about you and their own stability and future. Listen and give them a chance to discuss their concerns.
- **Discuss finances.** Consider how you can adjust your budget or how other family members may be able to contribute resources.
- **Set aside time for fun.** Take some time to enjoy each other's company and let off steam.
- **Contact LifeMatters.** Family members can also contact LifeMatters for assistance or visit the website.

Moving Forward After Job Loss

LIFEMATTERS® RESOURCES

LifeMatters can assist you with the impact of job loss through:

- **Individual phone or face-to-face counseling** with a professional counselor for staff and their family members.
- **Financial Services** to help with budget and bill consolidation concerns as well as many other financial issues.
- **Legal Referral Services** that will provide you with names of local attorneys for a free initial consultation (not for employment law-related matters).
- **Internet Access** at mylifematters.com. The LifeMatters website offers self-assessments, articles on lifestyle issues, and other helpful links. To obtain your company code, please call 1-800-634-6433.
- **Confidentiality:** All information given to LifeMatters is strictly confidential within the limits of the law. Your organization does not have access to LifeMatters records. If preferred, callers may use LifeMatters anonymously.

**For professional, compassionate assistance,
call 24 hours a day, every day of the year at 1-800-634-6433.**