

Coping with Job Loss

Job loss is one of life's truly challenging situations that many of individuals may face at some point in their professional lives. In the early hours after the news has been communicated, the following positive suggestions can serve as a guide as you begin the process of searching for a new job.

- **Acknowledge Your Feelings:** You may experience a range of emotions following a job loss – anger, guilt, fear, rejection, grief, denial, anxiety about the future, etc. These feelings are all normal reactions to this significant loss. Allow yourself to feel whatever feelings float to the surface. As time goes on, and as you move towards your next job these feelings will lessen in intensity and will eventually disappear. As tenuous as today's economy is, chances are you already know people who have experienced job loss – some have been through it a number of times.
- **Take Some Time for Yourself:** Take several days to deal with your feelings and get yourself emotionally prepared for the job search. Start formulating a script to use when you do begin to reach out to your professional network. An example would be, "I am in a job search now because the company I worked for 15 years made the decision to eliminate my entire department and outsource all of the functions within it."
- **Focus on Your Strengths:** Make a list of those characteristics employers, coworkers, friends have admired in you. Revisit strategies that have worked for you in the past and put them to work again.
- **Compile a List of Networking Contacts and Organize Them:** Think about how you are going to approach your contacts, i.e., phone, email, face-to-face-meetings. If you don't have a computer at home, begin to research computer resources in your area such as the library. The job search process cannot occur successfully without the use of modern technology.
- **Reward Yourself:** Looking for a new job can be a long and arduous process, so it's important to enjoy small achievements along the way. Set goals and assign an affordable and meaningful reward for getting things done.
- **Activate Your Support Systems:** Immediately communicate what has happened with those who are closest to you. Tell them your job has been eliminated and allow them to

provide you with the listening and support that you have always appreciated from them in past difficult situations.