



The 5 Emotional Stages of Job Loss

Experts agree that there are five clear and common stages that usually accompany any loss, including the loss of a job. Read on to learn more about these stages.

Disbelief and Denial - In an attempt to lessen the shock, we refuse to accept the facts. We tell ourselves that the boss or company will have a change of heart and everything will return to normal.

Anger - When reality sets in, we may lash out at whomever we feel is responsible for the loss, or at the people closest to us.

Bargaining - We want to negotiate, either directly with the boss or with ourselves, by promising to do better this time, if given the chance.

Grief and Depression - We internalize the loss and succumb to emotions that interfere with rational thought or activity, and which may cause physical illness.

Acceptance - We gain control of our emotions and begin the healing process by accepting that we've lost our job, and starting to look toward the future.

All of these stages are normal and should not be suppressed. However, the sooner you can get to the acceptance stage, the better off you will be. Only then will you be able to change focus and begin projecting the positive image and optimistic attitude that is necessary for success.

Your ability to rebound from this traumatic experience, or any similar situation, will depend a good deal on the degree to which your life is in balance. For most of us, there are four major areas that make up the "life experience." If you have strength in all four areas, the disruption of one is less detrimental to your well-being. These four areas are:

Value System, or Conscience - It is that inner force that governs our behavior and guides us in our human relationships.

Family - For most people, the immediate family is the most tangible and prevalent source of support.

Community This includes friends, acquaintances, and others whom we encounter as we move through life. We need meaningful interaction with other people and to connect on a deeper level.

Work - It gives purpose to our lives and an outlet for creativity, as well as providing for our subsistence. Each of us is called to contribute our unique gifts and talents.

Questions?

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Accentuating the Positives Associated with Job Loss

Accomplishments: You will be hired if you convince an employer that you can contribute to profits by increasing revenues or decreasing costs. Within those two broad categories are many contributions that may not have an obvious or direct bearing on the bottom line, but the more closely you can relate your achievements to the company's profits, the better.

Throughout your life you have accomplished many things. Some have been work-related, while others have been part of your personal life. They all count. Write down some of your achievements. Be brief and specific. Especially for those that are job-related, include measurable benefits, using numbers, dollars, and percentages. For example, "increased sales by 12 percent" or "reduced down-time of presses an average of three hours per week." Do this for each job you have had, including job changes within the same company.

Skills and Abilities: By analyzing each of your accomplishments, you can identify your skills. Most likely, there will be a direct correlation between your strongest skills and your greatest accomplishments. Identifying the skills that you enjoy using the most will help you focus on positions where your best talents can be utilized.

Benefits: Learn to talk in terms of benefits by highlighting them on your resume. To maximize your success, you need to be aware of and able to describe the value you can bring to an organization, i.e., the benefits your day-to-day actions generate for the organization. Most resumes focus on experiences and some accomplishments.

Make sure your resume highlights how the organization benefited because you did your job well.