



Coping with Job Loss Reactions Associated with Company Layoffs



Layoffs, downsizing, reorganizing, merging, restructuring, or joint venturing - how do employees cope with these changes and losses? It's a high time of stress whether you are among those laid off or those who remain employed. Whether you have suspected a layoff may occur or not, it's still almost always a shock when you receive notice that you've lost your job. Hard-working, well-educated, successful individuals are among the casualties in workplace reductions. Losing your job today is no longer an indication of the quality of your work.

Loss in the Workplace

Reactions to a job loss usually follow patterns similar to those experienced in response to other types of loss, such as a death or the ending of a relationship. Layoffs are often accompanied by intense feelings such as loss of identity, security, pride, and the ability to trust.

One emotion that tends to emerge after a layoff is anger. While the source of anger may be toward those who you feel took away your job, it's often directed at those closer to you (i.e., family, friends). Be aware of your responses to those close to you. Strengthen your network of family and friends; seek out rewarding and fulfilling activities. Your friends and family are there to support you, use them!

Coping

Stay Healthy:

When your body is stressed, you need to eat well and get adequate rest and exercise. The most important coping advice is to try to keep a regular schedule.

Goal Setting:

Allow yourself time to feel your sense of loss. Recognize this is a time to move on to new experiences. Begin setting goals immediately for each day/week.

Rise to the Challenge:

Reframe your situation; view it as a new challenge rather than an insurmountable obstacle.

Remember, Individuals can control perception and response.

Reassess Things:

You may be without a job today, but don't be a victim. Expand your network; the more people you tell you are looking for opportunities, the more available opportunities you will have. Sometimes this may seem very challenging so develop a survivor approach and avoid isolation. Self-esteem can take a nosedive, even for confident people. This is normal.

Making Changes

Budgeting a New Life:

Of course you will need to adjust to your new financial circumstances. On average, it takes about 10-14 weeks to find a new job. Keep in mind, most people do find new employment. If you can reframe your thoughts to see this part of your life as "transitional and temporary," your positive attitude can help you stay focused.

Expect to be responsible for your self-esteem and future. Empower yourself by making changes.

Ask yourself:

- ~ "What motivates me?"
- ~ "What fears keep me from trying something new or working towards a goal?"
- ~ "What are my successes? What did I do to achieve these successes?"
- ~ "What resources can I utilize to help me through this time?"

Questions?
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