

What to Do When You Lose Your Job

When a job loss impacts your life in a big way, it can be a difficult situation to navigate, but there are many things you can do to be resilient and get back on your feet. Here are a few tips:

Pause for a moment.

After a job loss, it is very common to experience many different emotions, including anger, disbelief, resentment, fear, denial, and anxiety for the future. Take some time before jumping into a job search to process these feelings. Talk to a trusted family member or friend about how you are doing or consider reaching out to a counselor for additional support. Losing a job can be one of the most stressful life events, and it's important to take care of your emotional health during this time.

Don't burn any bridges.

While you may feel bitter about your job loss, don't take this out on your former employer by bad-mouthing or talking negatively about them with others. It reflects poorly on your character, and your energy is better spent on building your future. You never know how your paths may cross or if you will need a reference from your previous manager/colleagues.

Stay positive.

A job loss can shake your confidence in yourself and have a big impact on how you view yourself and your value. Remember that a job loss does not define who you are and is often not a reflection on you, but rather changing business needs. Engage in positive thinking and remind yourself of the many accomplishments that you have achieved. Dwelling on the negatives does not serve you well in creating a positive future. Surround yourself with supportive people who value you for who you are, not what you do.

Get prepared to job search.

One of the first steps in getting prepared to job search is determining the strengths, skillsets, and experiences that you possess as well as what type of positions and companies you are interested in working for. Think of ways to transfer skills from your past positions to a new job that may require you to use those skills in a different way. Once you know who you are and what you are looking for, you can start building your resume with this information in mind. Many people want to jump right in with applying for jobs; however, it's important to have prepared first so that you can present your best self to future employers.

Use any outplacement help your company makes available.

Some companies offer separated employees assistance through an outplacement program to help with things such as updating a resume, preparing to interview with other organizations, and hosting support groups for job seekers. If your company offers outplacement, make sure to take advantage of it.

Leverage community resources.

There are many community resources available to assist with navigating unemployment and searching for a new position. Seek out local or state organizations, such as the Job Center of Wisconsin (<https://jobcenterofwisconsin.com/>) or the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (<https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/>). In some cases, there are also programs available to help you learn relevant job skills to get you back to work.

Establish a budget.

The financial burdens of a job loss are often a major concern. One of the best things you can do is assess your financial situation by establishing or reviewing your budget. Knowing how much money is coming in, what you have in savings, and what your expenses are can help you determine your financial situation. You may find it beneficial to talk with a financial advisor for advice. If necessary, consider an interim job to help pay the bills while you look for a new position.

Keep your options open.

Look at this change as an opportunity to start a new career or refocus your current career. Take the time to explore what could be and how you want to progress in your work. It is also an excellent time to learn some new skills that could help in your future position or that you have always been interested in. Volunteering during a job search can be another great way to connect with people, give back to the community, and potentially learn some new skills.

Take care of yourself.

Maintaining good health can help you to better cope with the stresses of a job loss. Eat a healthy diet, exercise, and make time for activities you enjoy. Keeping a regular sleep pattern can support a balanced equilibrium and keep you on schedule as well.

Make networking a priority.

The majority of job seekers report finding a new position through networking. While many hate the idea of networking, it's probably something that you are already doing and don't even realize. In its simplest, networking is about building relationships with others. These relationships can help you learn about new companies or become aware of potential opportunities in the job market. LinkedIn™, an online social networking tool, is an excellent place to make these connections. If you're new to networking, do some research to understand how to leverage networking in a job search and what it takes to be a successful networker.

Ask for support.

Don't be afraid to reach out to others for support or assistance during your career transition. You'll probably be surprised by just how much others are willing to lend a helping hand. Remember to be willing to return the favor to those who are in need and ask for your help.