

## **THE FIRST 48 HOURS**

Significant emotional events (including loss of job) are always accompanied by a wide range of emotions. These emotions, while perfectly normal, are generally non-productive, discomfoting, sometimes painful and may also cause you to act in a manner that is economically damaging and/or self-destructive. At this point, it is important to realize that family and close friends will experience these emotions too and they can motivate you to act emotionally.

Time and careful planning will help everyone deal with these emotions. While your present state of mind may make this concept seem incomprehensible, it is critical that you get these emotions under control quickly. The immediate potential for harm is so strong that we offer 3 critical pieces of advice for everyone involved:

**COOLING OFF PERIOD:** Although the natural tendency/desire is to immediately confront the former employer to bring closure to the event, the timing is wrong. This is a significant event for your former employer, too. They are on their own emotional roller coaster. Consequently, you will have two emotional parties trying to make decisions. The best strategy for you is to disappear and plan your approach. Use the time to analyze your needs (financial and emotional), seek career counseling and fully understand the terms/implications of your separation arrangement. Then schedule a meeting to discuss the issues objectively and unemotionally.

**FRIENDS:** Unless they have an immediate job opportunity for you or they are experienced career counselors, these are the highest risk and most unqualified people you can talk to. Their well-intentioned calls usually intensify the emotions you are feeling and make you feel worse. While these individuals can be a big help in the near future, it is best to minimize contact with them until you know how to structure/control the conversation. Tactfully put them off until you are prepared to deal with them. This can be accomplished by saying something similar to “I appreciate your call but I’m not sure what I am going to do just yet. Give me a week to figure out my plans and I will call you back.”

**FAMILY:** As we mentioned earlier, your situation affects family members too, therefore, they will be experiencing emotions similar to yours. It is, also, not uncommon to see stronger, more intense emotions among family members than those you are experiencing. It is equally important for family members to gain control of their emotions too, as you do not need the complications of family pressures at this time in your life. The strategy for accomplishing this is **COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE**. During this meeting you have been given a tremendous amount of practical and objective information. You need to share this information with those individuals who are close to you.

*You now have two choices. You can feel normal (angry, awkward, experience sleepless nights, etc.) and dwell on the past or you can begin **SEARCHING FOR SOLUTIONS**. The search for solutions means accepting your situation and devoting 100% of your energy to making the future happen quickly. Our experience is that the quicker you reach the search stage, the better you will feel and the quicker things will happen. The above advice was developed with this concept in mind. Our intent is to get you moving ahead instead of looking backwards.*

**SEARCHING FOR SOLUTIONS:** *This can be a great opportunity in that (and perhaps for the first time) you are totally in charge of your future/career. You have a number of critical/important decisions to make and they shouldn’t/can’t be made in a vacuum. The choices you make will have a dramatic effect on those close to you. We encourage you to step back, get your emotions under control and approach this change enthusiastically, but in a logical, planned fashion.*