

EMOTIONAL ROLLER COASTER

You just got laid off, or maybe it happened last week or even last month. Whenever it happened you need to realize that this is a major point in your life. We depend on our jobs for our livelihood. We depend on our jobs to feed our children, keep a roof over our head and for just about everything else. Sudden, (and in many cases unexpected) loss of income has a serious impact on a person's life.

On the next page, Bob has drawn what he calls the "Emotional Roller Coaster". I like how he explains the emotional impact of job loss so I'm using it. I also like his resolution (based on over 20 years of experience) for dealing with many of those emotions (simply put: focus on your search!). I don't take this lightly; I've experienced all of the emotions listed and I've seen his resolution work; personally.

We will start with the section "Layoff / Termination" and proceed from there.

SHOCK

"I can't believe this happened to me." "I never saw it coming." Are both lines I have spoken myself. The initial reaction is shock. Getting "let go" from a company that we have been loyal to for however long; comes as a surprise to say the least. By the time you read this; it's likely you have gotten past "shock". By reading this you are obviously making an effort to focus on your new job instead of your old one.

ANGER

"I can't believe those dirty #\$\$, rotten, stinking, @#%\$\$!! did this to me!!!"*

Get mad. Take some time and get **really mad**. Yell. Scream. Throw things if it makes you feel better. I strongly suggest against throwing anything that might break or in a direction that might break something else. I also suggest yelling and screaming in a location where people won't be encouraged by your actions to offer you a white room with padded walls! Anger is good under the right conditions. After you yell / scream/ throw stuff you will have worked through most of your anger but not all of it. From now on, when you get mad; tell yourself "I'll show them! I'll just get a **better job!**" Now, go back to work on your job search.

Make sure you work through your anger before meeting new people or interviewing! Put your best foot forward!

RELIEF

This may come as "I'm so happy I don't work for that dump anymore!" or it may come as "wow, this time off is really nice!" Either way, take a deep breath and get back to work on your job search. This sense of relief is better than experiencing the shock or anger but can deter you from your search. Enjoy the emotion but stay focused.

DENIAL

Denial can be sneaky and creep up on you. Denial will show itself in your actions. Are you still spending money like you have steady income? Perhaps your finances are in pretty good shape and you're slacking in your job search. (What did I do? I stopped looking for work for about 6 months!) My father was fond of saying "The longer you put something off, the longer it will take to get it done." Have you put off creating a temporary budget to handle your finances until your back at work? What about those networking phone calls? *Get to work on your search. The longer you put something off, the longer it will take to get done.*

BARGAINING

This may have happened when you were informed that your employer "no longer required your services". For some of us, the bargaining happens in our brain; we run through scenarios that could convince our boss to change his/her mind. For some of us, we try to bargain with our employers. Either way, it's very likely you have already passed this emotion.

DEPRESSION

Depression is very common for the job seeker. It can affect your decisions, your actions, *and cost you valuable time.* In a moment of depression, I was misquoted by the local paper saying "Nobody needs me..." (WOW! **That's** going to help my search!). The best defense against depression that I have found is to schedule a meeting with someone new. It drives me to look and act my best. It gives me a reason not only to get out of the house but to put on a tie and jacket. *Physical activity is your best defense against depression. Get out of the house! Work on your search at the local library. Go for a short walk. (Note: depression in any form is a serious thing. Only you know your personal needs, if you need help PLEASE reach out and find help!)*

The best resolution for dealing with the emotional roller coaster is *to get back to work on your search.* Make phone calls, schedule networking and informational meetings, attend events. Find local groups that are related to your profession and get involved. Go volunteer with a local charity.

Looking for a job is a full time job. You should be spending about 40 hours a week on your search. Stay active and get involved wherever you can. Spending time not only helps your search, it helps you emotionally as well.

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