

Just Laid Off



Many workers experience a lay off at some time during their work lives. Since few jobs provide life-time job security, every job is a temporary job. This Guide provides information that you can use as you seek your next job. You will want to also review the JobSearch Guide Downsized!

Layoffs...

- Are generally due to circumstances beyond the employee's control. The economy may be flat or in a decline: the company's products may no longer be in demand or competitive with similar companies.
- Typically occur because companies have to adapt to the rapidly changing needs of the marketplace. From your local One-Stop Career Center you can obtain information about which technologies are becoming outdated and which are in more demand. Use these clues to find a new job.
- Are often temporary in industries that have seasonal cycles; e.g., the construction industry slows down significantly in winter months. In contrast, when a company downsizes (i.e., becomes a smaller business or closes) the dismissals are usually permanent.
- Can be a drain on your emotional strength, your physical and economic well-being and your relationships with others. Be prepared to do everything you can to protect all these areas of your life.

Remember...

Things you cannot change:

- ✓ You cannot change the past.
- ✓ You cannot change the fact that the layoff occurred. It's in the past.

Things you can change:

- ✓ You can change your future by changing what you will do today.
- ✓ You can find a new job.



What to do when you're laid off.

Very few people are completely surprised when they get their layoff notice. Companies rarely just close the door and slip out in the night. The signs of an impending layoff are usually present weeks before the actual time. Workers often either ignore the signs or are convinced that they are not included.

When it happens to you, be prepared:

1. **Get it in writing!**
2. Ask if the layoff is permanent. If not, find out when they want employees to return to work.
3. Get a letter of recommendation that day from your supervisor.
4. Get answers to when you will receive your last paycheck, severance pay and unused vacation time. Find out the status of benefits such as health care and retirement funds. **Get responses in writing.**
5. Ask your supervisor if there was anything you did that contributed to your getting laid off. This will either clear your mind or help you avoid future layoffs.
6. Get the names of others who've been laid off. Form a job search group.
7. Find out where and how you apply for unemployment benefits. Take your layoff letter with you.
8. **Start your job search!**



More about Severance Agreements. . .

Typically, your employer will ask you to sign some documents, including the severance agreement. What you do next is critical to your future. *Don't sign anything without first taking the time to review it* and perhaps showing it to someone whose opinions you trust. It's okay to:

- Tell the employer that you've had a shock and need some time to think.
- Schedule a time for the next meeting.
- Leave the office and take the papers with you.
- Have your union representative review the papers.

Severance benefits are often negotiable!

The 3 big things you want are:

1. **Income**
 - In most industries, there is usually a formula such as one or two weeks' pay for every year you've worked for the company. Check your employee handbook.
 - If a number of workers are being laid off, find out what others are getting, or what people have received in the past.
2. **Health insurance benefits**
 - Find out how long your coverage will be paid.
3. **Out-placement services**
 - Ask what the company will do to help you find a new job.

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