

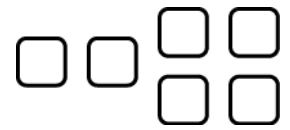


# Job Loss TIP SHEETS

CODE	TITLE
C - 1	Coping with Job Loss

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- use bookmarks
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# Dealing with Job Loss

Losing a job can be very stressful financially, emotionally and psychologically. Most people who go through job loss will experience a series of emotions. Remember that you are not alone and that it is important to let them happen so that you can be finished with them.

Above all, be kind to yourself. Think positively and avoid being too critical of yourself. Identify any negative thoughts or behaviours that you have and replace them with positive actions like writing a list of accomplishments, visualizing positive things happening to you, making a list of the things that you like about yourself and compliments that you receive from others.

## Coping with the Stages of Job Loss

- It may be useful to think about what work means to you to understand your feelings about losing your job. These can include: financial success, status, sense of purpose, belonging, social interaction, challenge, self-esteem, identity and personal growth.
- Some people will find it useful to stay in contact with their former coworkers; others may find that this is not helpful. Both feelings are normal; decide which is best for you.
- Job loss can also affect those close to you. Spouses or partners often feel the same emotions as the person who has lost their job, such as worrying about the future and concerns about the family.
- Work provides a place to go and a sense of belonging. Make sure to get up and get out of the house; meet with a friend, volunteer or take up a hobby. Doing this early will help you feel less alone.
- Some people feel ashamed of the fact that they are unemployed. Remember that the loss of your job does not mean that you are a different person with less value or skills. Lay-offs result from things outside your control, so it is important not to feel bad about yourself.
- For some people, losing a job can feel like losing a loved one; take time to grieve, but then focus your energy on moving forward.
- Keep active; nutrition and fitness are important to your well-being. If you are having difficulty moving on, speak with your doctor or healthcare professional.
- Don't job search alone. Join a Job Finding Club or a support group to make sure that you have the tools and support to be successful in your job search.

### Job Loss Cycle

**Shock** - immediate reaction of fear and anger

**Depression** - after the shock wears off, sadness is expressed

**Acceptance** - person is determined to make a change

**Enthusiasm** - hopeful, optimistic and positive

**Frustration** - pressure of job search is felt

**Apathy** - little energy for job search

**Identity Crisis** - isolation and lack of direction

**Readjustment** - refreshed attitude

**Leveling** - a change in outlook is achieved and person is likely to be employed or heading in that direction

Adapted from "The Dynamics of Unemployment and Job Search" by W. Borøen and N. Amundson

Your job loss may result in some very positive and exciting opportunities. This may be your chance to make a change! Think about whether you would like to continue in the same field or change jobs altogether. This may be a good time to return to school to upgrade your skills and education.

Think about all of your options and carefully consider what will meet your needs. Once you have made a decision that you are happy with, create a specific step by step plan that provides clear deadlines. It may be necessary to create a long and short term plan depending on your goals.

### **Steps to Take After Job Loss**

- Obtain a Record of Employment (ROE) from your employer. You must have an ROE to begin an Employment Insurance (EI) claim.
- Start your EI claim right away. Individuals on EI who have been laid off or cannot find a new job because of a lack of education or training may be eligible to apply to the EI fund for financial help for tuition, travel and living expenses while in school. You may also qualify for training through the Second Career strategy if you have been laid off. Check out [www.ontario.ca/secondcareer](http://www.ontario.ca/secondcareer) for information.
- Ask for all the details of your severance or settlement package in writing. You may want to have a professional review the document before you sign it.
- Meet with a Financial Planner to develop a budget and get a better sense of how much time you can afford to be off work.
- Get references and reference letters from your employer.
- Take time to consider what type of job would make you happy. Do not judge your ideas at this point, just dream.
- If you are considering a career change, create a list of the job titles that appeal to you. Research these jobs to learn about the education, training, pay rates and demand.
- Think about your needs related to balancing work and life. Consider what salary you and your family need, what hours you can work and how far you will commute.
- Write an Action Plan: list all the steps you need to take to reach your final goal and set up clear timelines. Include what you need to successfully complete each step, any barriers or challenges you may come across and how you will overcome them.