Tips On Dealing With A Job Layoff

Are you anticipating a job layoff? If so, hope for the best but prepare for the worst. It's important to make a plan. Here are six things to consider when planning for a job loss.

1. Start to cut back on spending right away.
2. Take advantage of your medical benefits. Get a good physical exam and see your dentist. If you need help sorting things out, consider counseling.
3. Maintain positive interactions at work. Realize that everyone is feeling more anxious. Don't burn your bridges behind you. You will need references from your current supervisor and/or co-workers.
4. Inform your spouse or partner of the possibility of a layoff. It will help them cope with the change if it does happen.
5. Take care of yourself: find ways to release stress.
6. Start networking now, both professionally and personally. Begin looking at other job possibilities.

If It Happens To You

Deal with your emotions -
Find a friend, support group or other appropriate avenues where you can freely express your feelings. You may feel panicky ("How will I pay the bills?"). You may feel angry and victimized ("Why me?"). You may feel embarrassed ("People will think I deserved it."). These feelings are normal and it will help you if you are able to talk about them to someone.

Tell your family -
Let all your family members know, including your children. Have regular family meetings to plan, discuss options and express feelings. Make time for family outings. Recreation is also important when you are unemployed.

Explore employee benefit options -
Find out how your company will assist you with severance pay, outplacement services, counseling or other support services and extension of medical benefits.

Finances

- File for unemployment
- Work out a new budget; determine what things you can cut back.
- Contact your creditors, inform them of your layoff, work out new payment terms if necessary.
- Seek help—Consumer Credit Counseling offices can help you set up a budget and develop a new payment schedule for your bills.

Assess your career strengths -
If you are considering changing careers, this is a good time to reevaluate your strengths, job
skills and accomplishments. Look at the job market and the availability of career counseling to help give you an objective look at your situation. Career counselors can help you with your resume, interviewing techniques and how to present yourself in the most positive light.

**Develop a job-seeking plan -**
When you lose your job, you've gained a new job. Think of your job seeking activities as a full time job. Begin each week with a schedule and a list of activities or telephone calls you will make each day. Each activity should be directed toward your ultimate goal of a new job. Your job now is to market yourself to *everyone* with whom you talk or write.

**Networking and community resources -**
Many jobs come through who you know. Don't be shy about telling everyone with whom you come in contact that you are looking for a job, what you want to do and about your experience. Go on informational interviews: set up meetings with people who work in the field you're interested in. Find out about the company, their outlook and future opportunities in the industry.

**Set up your support system -**
You can get energy and encouragement from other people. Choose friends with a positive outlook. Team up with at least one other person who is also job-hunting so that you have someone to spur you on and with whom to share your experiences and perceptions.