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How To Make A Layoff Payoff: 6 Surefire Tips

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Readers Digest has a really fabulous article about getting on your feet after a layoff. Sometimes we see it coming and there are others for whom it comes out of the blue sky with no warning. But in this economy, everyone should have a clear plan that can be implemented if the axe drops. So if you've recently lost your job, here's how to find it!

The Warning Signs

Keeping your ears to the streets. Translation? Listen out for the following buzz words as companies use them instead of the classic "fired" or "layoff". It sounds good but will you survive the "new direction" the company takes?

- restructuring plan
- restructuring program
- company-wide restructuring plan that includes staffing reductions in all divisions
- planned reduction
- head-count reduction
- reduction in force
- reducing our current employee total
- global workforce reduction and alignment
- repositioning
- aligning operations and resources worldwide
- consolidating operations
- downsizing
- rightsizing
- smartsizing

Which Jobs Go First?

Is your job the first to go? Which industries are more susceptible to layoffs?

Technical Jobs

Which positions are most likely to be outsourced? Technical jobs that depend on low-skill labor, can be broken down into segments, and don't require collaboration, like getting information into and out of databases (think call centers and information technology support). Jobs that require staffers to show up and work alongside others are less susceptible to outsourcing.

Positions that require creativity but not necessarily a brick and mortar location are up for grabs as well. For example, Pasadena Now, an online newspaper hires Indian workers at low cost to report their local news. Reporters send their notes and other information to writers who get to work on the final product you see online. Market research and drug development are amongst the new industries starting to outsource their research. [Aside: Sometimes I wonder, if we continue down this road, then what will we be producing?]

So...Whats The Good News?

Hiring a career coach can help you get back on track, refocus your energies on your current field or help get your established on a path to field more in line with your skills and abilities. Given the economic turmoil, it's prime time to learn new skills, go back to school, make use of transferable skills and/or [pursue your passions](#) by [starting a business](#). Your change in direction will be largely guided by your attitude and determination to succeed even with the doom and gloom on CNN, Headline News et al. We all have the skills needed to succeed, it's a matter of how you utilize them.

Using a career coach can help you get you off on the right foot the first time. Remember, you only get one chance to make a first impression and a career coach can be helpful in pointing out things to you that an HR manager won't have the time to do, nor are they interested in doing so. A career coach can be helpful in the following ways:

- Crafting your two minute pitch which describes your skills, education and

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- Interview prepping
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Sure you can read tons of career books but a coach helps you apply it all to your situation by coaching you on what you specifically need to tweak in order to increase your chances of finding your new job.

Keep in mind that using a coach costs \$\$\$\$ Readers Digest quotes \$5,000-\$20,000 but I tend to disagree that someone who has been laid off and jobless will pay that much for a career coach. My mortgage, lights and water bill will need to get paid before i shell out that much money for a career coach when I have no job. For a cheaper alternative check the Craigslist listings, your school's (undergraduate and graduate) career center or check with friends and/or colleagues for recommendations. [Twitter is also a great resource to find great career coaches](#). There you can interact with them to get a feel for their style and overall personality.

Shameless Plug: *I am also a life and career coach, however due to scheduling issues (I have too many clients!) I'm unable to take new clients at this time. However, I am available for email consultations and resume critiques as my schedule permits.*

You can also use the following sites to find a great career coach:

- [Career Management Alliance](#)
- [Career Directors International](#)

Resources:

- [Profler.com](#)
- [VocationVacations.com](#)

6 Tips From Readers Digest:

Give Them Options. If you sense that you're about to get the axe, then present a few options to your employer. They include: taking a pay cut, contributing your skills to a project (saves them money on new hire), unpaid leave, relocation to another office and/or work for them as a consultant. This not only shows that you're flexible but that you're willing to roll with the punches.

Tell friends and family that you're out of work. This will increase your chances via referrals and them forwarding job announcements that may suit you. Every job announcement that comes my way I forward it on to my friends and family. You never know who it might help and if they don't know you're looking then how will you get the help you need? Take a slice of humble pie, might do you some good!

Get a temporary job as it can open doors to a full time position while you wait for others to open up for one that opens up within the company. Sometimes a company will hire you under the guise of being a temp when all they really want to do is take you for a test drive. Get in the driver's seat!

Maintain relationships all around with your employer, colleagues and old coworkers. Let them know what you need and never be too ashamed to ask for help. One of them might open doors you wouldn't be able to otherwise.

Volunteer. You can do this with a for profit or nonprofit within your field or outside of your field. This helps pass the time as you go on interviews but can also help you network with others who again, might be able to open some doors for you. Most jobs aren't secured through Monster.com, but through relationships and networking. So if Hannah Headhunter/HR Manager has 1000 resumes for 1 job and receives a solid recommendation from a friend who fits what she's looking for, what do you think she'll do? You'll at least move to the front of the line for an interview.

Question: Have you been laid off? What are you doing to land your next job?
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