

YOUR 10-STEP GUIDE TO SURVIVING A LAYOFF

Let's face it, being laid off is the most stressful job-related situation you can overcome. But, layoffs are a common occurrence and happen due to circumstances beyond your control. By taking it in stride, not only can you survive a layoff, *you can turn it into the best career move you've ever made.* Here's how:

1. **Don't frame it as a negative event.** Remember, there are far worse things than being laid off. Instead of framing it as a personal failure, you should think of it as an opportunity to re-think your career goals and figure out what you want to do most in life.
2. **Get what you're owed.** Most companies will pay your medical benefits through the end of the month. If you get laid off on the 30th, ask if it can be pushed to the 1st to buy more time. After that, you'll have 60 days to sign up for COBRA healthcare coverage if you need it.
In addition to medical coverage, you'll need to decide whether or not to exercise stock options and roll over your 401K. Some companies will let you keep your 401K with them indefinitely. This isn't advised, however, because it usually limits the control you have over your investment choices.
3. **Don't burn any bridges.** Your network is one of your greatest assets. Take your Rolodex with you and use it. Ask for recommendation letters from previous managers. Send out one email to co-workers expressing your goodbyes and gratitude and send out another email to all of your personal and professional contacts asking them for referrals for new job opportunities.
4. **Keep the same schedule.** It will make you feel better to get moving and get on with your life. Use the time you would have been at work to regroup and prepare for your job search.
5. **Inventory your skills.** Don't forget that you have many unique skills and experiences that make you marketable in the workplace. Take some time to conduct a full inventory of the tremendous value you can offer to prospective employers. This information will not only be invaluable when you update your resume, it will give you the extra boost of confidence you need to start your job search.
6. **Expand your knowledge.** Take a preliminary look at the skills required for your top five jobs. If there are requirements or certifications you don't have, this is the best time to learn them! You can take classes while you are looking for job opportunities.
7. **Develop your elevator pitch.** You need to be comfortable promoting yourself and all the reasons an employer should hire you. Write out a 50-word summary of who you are and what you can offer and then practice saying it in front of family and friends.
8. **Get to Work.** Submit your updated resume to a recruiting firm that specializes in your industry. Use every other resource available to you (friends, family, former colleagues, the internet, newspapers, networking groups, etc.) to find and apply for ideal positions. Follow up with all of your contacts on a regular basis so you will be top-of-mind when opportunities arise.

9. **Don't settle.** This is your chance to find a job that brings out the best in you. Make a list of job deal-breakers (i.e. working on weekends, frequent travel, commuting over an hour) and stick to it. Don't accept a job that will make you feel underutilized or undervalued.

10. **Take care of yourself.** Transitions can be stressful, so you should do everything you can to stay positive and remain in good physical and mental health. Eat well, exercise and enjoy your downtime while you can. This will come through in your emails, cover letters and interviews and help show employers that you're the right person for the job.

Ready to take your career to the next level? [Upload your resume](#) or [contact Prism Group today](#).