



ATTORNEY SEARCH

By Vanessa Alvarez, Esq.

## How to Cope with a Change in Employment Status

We regularly read and hear that “jobs for life” are disappearing, to be replaced by a pattern of consecutive jobs and unpredictable career dislocations. When the time comes to face such a change on a personal level, these statistics take on a whole new meaning.

The emotions one experiences during a change of employment status are entirely normal. Although no two people react exactly the same way, most of us experience a range of emotions that includes shock, denial, anger, worry, depression, resistance, relief, acceptance, and the need to take action.

Fortunately, a change in employment status does not have to lead to a gloomy spiral of events. Your initial feelings of anger, frustration and despair can and will be overcome and eventually replaced by feelings of acceptance and control.

By thinking positively, taking appropriate action and looking toward the future, this transition can become an opportunity to secure a more satisfying position. Throughout this process your recruiter can help you take constructive and creative steps towards developing a positive job campaign, and moving to the next step of your career.

**Facing the World During Your Job Search.** Family, friends, neighbors and colleagues may already be asking you “What happened with your job?” This is a question you will frequently hear as you begin your job search. It is important to handle this question capably, regardless of who asks it. Therefore, one of the first things you should do is develop a response that is truthful and acceptable to you and prospective employers. When creating your response, you should consider applying the following: (1) keeping it short and factual, (2) be as positive as possible, and (3) put your best foot forward, but remain truthful.

**Keeping It Short. Generally,** the more you try to explain, the more difficult your explanation becomes. You should prepare a short, to the point statement, and be prepared to answer follow-up questions, but only if they are asked.

**Be As Positive As Possible.** Negative statements about your former boss or employing organization will only hurt you. The last thing you want to do is burn bridges, or give a prospective employer the impression that you are a disgruntled employee. By keeping your statement as positive as possible, you will only help to advance your candidacy.

**Put Your Best Foot Forward, But Remain Truthful.** There are a number of factors that result in someone leaving. Explain them to your recruiter, he or she will help you determine reasons that are most positive and easiest to explain, while remaining truthful.

## How to Cope with a Change in Employment Status

***What it Takes to Succeed.*** First, it is important for you to believe that you will succeed in your job search. In order to do this, you should take some time and determine your strengths, and clarify your objectives. The following steps will help you put together an effective plan for your job search, and help you create a strategic plan with your recruiter:

***Take Stock.*** You should identify past successes, current strengths, overall work style, and personal preferences.

***Refine Your Career Objectives.*** You should be clear, focused, and realistic about your career objectives, based on your past work experience and academic credentials.

***Work With Your Recruiter to Make a Dynamic Presentation.*** Your recruiter will help you to draft an effective resume, and review interview skills, so that you may be at your highest level of effectiveness when approaching a potential employer.

***Work With Your Recruiter to Create a Marketing Strategy.*** Your recruiter will help create an effective marketing strategy on your behalf, in terms of firm selection, and the type of presentation to be made to these firms.

***Be Persistent.*** The job process can be a long and challenging one, but your commitment to the search and implementation of your recruiter's plan will give you the best chances to ensure a successful outcome.

Job loss can be a very emotionally traumatic experience. In fact, it ranks among the highest of all stress-causing situations. However, rather than looking at a job loss as a horrible thing, you should focus on its positive aspects. Remember, this might be an opportunity for you to find a more rewarding position. Be open to opportunities. You never know what doors this turn of events may open for you.