

You're Fired



Introduction: Being fired from your job is not the end of the world, but it is a devastating experience nevertheless. How devastating it is depends on your reaction, how you view the causes and what you learn from them. A person who never accepts responsibility for the causes of the termination will not profit from the experience.

You can and should profit in a positive way from the negative experience. Here is how you can do that:

1. **Always request an "exit interview."** Specific, poor work performance and/or personal qualities are discussed in an exit interview.
2. **Find out the specific reasons why you are being terminated.** "You didn't do the job" is not specific enough. Find out what skills were poor and how you might improve them. Be professional, tactful and polite. Ask questions. You can't improve if you don't know what to improve.
3. **Take responsibility for your previous behavior and/or performance.** Don't blame others or make excuses. Do not argue with the employer. This is a stressful time for you and you should not say things you will later regret. Don't "burn your bridges behind you."
4. **Find out your good qualities.** Now that you have heard all the negatives, and are perhaps feeling low, find out your good qualities. If you have been on the job three months and are terminated, you have been doing something right or you wouldn't have been on the job that long. Find out those good things (i.e., always on time, always there, always appropriately dressed, etc.). You will find out that you are still a good person with good qualities and leave feeling better about yourself.
5. **Ask for a letter of recommendation based on your good qualities.** Employers do not like to terminate people and often like to soften the impact. If you handle this professionally, you are very likely to get that letter of recommendation. If the employer refuses to give you the letter of recommendation, thank him/her politely and leave. You have done all you can do to leave appropriately. Keep your chin up - **you are still a worthy person.**
6. **Contact your career specialist immediately.** Review with the specialist what happened and what you learned from the exit interview. Do not repeat previous mistakes. Everyone can make mistakes, but the wise person does not make the same mistake twice. Learn from it and come away knowing you will never repeat that mistake again.