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CAREER

10 Things I Learned From Getting Fired

No one wants it to happen, of course, but some positive things can come of the situation too.



By *Erin Auerbach*



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I was so thrilled when I got a job as an administrative assistant for a tiny entertainment company in Las Vegas. Managing to find work in Sin City run by two decent guys who weren't sleazy was a coup. But after several months, they gave me the bad news: Their main account had fallen through. They would stay in business, but I was out of work. It had taken me months of unsuccessful interviews to get that job. Now I had to start again.

Most of us have been there at some point. You lose your job, often some factor over which you have no control. Other times, you make a mistake, commit some sort of company infraction (large or small), and you find yourself unemployed. People don't want to leave their jobs against their will, lose income, and have to find another position. But as I discovered in my situation, some good things can come of it too.



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1. It forces you to make a change.

It's not uncommon to be unhappy with your job or career path. There's a solid chance you didn't find your work terribly interesting. So this is the opportunity to find more satisfying ways to utilize your abilities.

2. It helps you realize you're more than your job.

Loss of employment shouldn't equal loss of identity. You are still the same smart, intense, flawed, interesting person you were when you collected a paycheck.

3. It forces you to soul-search.

If you worked in customer service but were fired for repeated rudeness to clients, perhaps you should consider a different kind of job. Or maybe this is the time to work on how you interact with people.

4. It gives you the opportunity to look beyond yourself.

You can use the the time you now have (when you're not sending out résumés and interviewing) to give back to your community. Offer to help at a local animal shelter or school. Volunteer at a hospital. Not only will you get some perspective on your personal plight (which likely will pale in comparison to what you witness), but you'll also be doing something good for those who need it. Plus, it will look good on a résumé.

5. Now you have to take time off.

You have no choice but to take the staycation you've been meaning to indulge in for a while now. Being unemployed is hardly relaxing and this is certainly not the time to blow your savings on a trip, but it is a good chance to do interesting (and even fun!) activities in your hometown. A little online research can point you in the direction of parks, museums, and other free or low-cost excursions that you would ordinarily eschew because you had to work.

6. You can collect unemployment.

Part of those pesky paycheck deductions serves a critical purpose: federal funds for a rainy

day. How much you get will depend on where you live and other factors. You will not become rich on unemployment, but you will not starve.

7. Technology and time are on your side.

You won't collect unemployment forever, but you now have real time to focus on finding another job, which is going to include reading online job boards, writing cover letters and résumés, attending networking events, and looking to your friends and peers for possible opportunities. Social networking, online résumé builders, and other digital formats have taken a lot of the painstaking time out of these efforts.

8. You can get back in shape.

Take long walks, use the gym membership you've let languish, and maybe catch a yoga or meditation class to clear your head. Happily, you are no longer subjected to the office baker — that well-intentioned colleague who tries to boost morale by constantly bringing in baked goods that have, combined with sitting at a desk for eight hours daily, caused your face to puff out like a baseball glove.

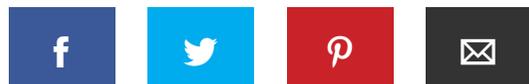
9. You can bond with your family and friend.

This is the time to reconnect with everyone you were too busy to see when you were working.

10. You are not doomed by your status.

Often, former bosses will just confirm for prospective employers the dates you worked at a company and your job title. Legally, employers are allowed to say that you were let go or terminated, but in our litigious culture, many avoid going into such detail to avoid potential lawsuits. This is hardly a death sentence — it's whatever you make of it!

From: [The Mix](#)



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