Surviving a Layoff

Coping with the financial stress of unemployment
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The axe hurts. It feels like an attack on who you are and all you’ve done. Yesterday you were safe, secure, you belonged and the future was promising. Now you’re on your own.

Why me?

First of all, it’s not your fault! You are a victim of the times. In business, costs are up and income is down. When costs are up and income is down, the only way to survive is to cut spending. One of the biggest spending areas in any business is payroll. Cutting payroll means saving money. It also means cutting jobs - and there you stand.

I Can’t Believe This is Happening

If losing your spouse is the greatest stress, how do other stresses compare? Here’s a partial list:

- Death of a Spouse
- Divorce
- Going to Jail
- Major Illness
- Job Loss
- Retirement
- Death of a Friend
- Change Jobs
- Loan Foreclosure
- Move to a New Town

Comparing Life’s Major Stresses

I feel helpless and alone.

You’re hurt. As you can see from Exhibit 1, the stress of losing your job isn’t much less than the stress of learning that you have a serious disease. The stress is real.

In a state of shock, everything becomes exaggerated. You see your future in a state of gloom. Such visions are normal. Your mind is setting a dramatic stage to help you accept your job loss and also push you into doing something about it.

The first thing to do is to talk to your family and/or close friends. Get the problem out in the open. Tell them what happened and tell them how you feel. Talk to them. Keep the communication channels open and you won’t feel so helpless or alone.

How Will the Bills be Paid?

I won’t have enough money to make ends meet.

Money. Here’s the subject that scares people most. Before you panic and start to sell off the family’s possessions, take a breath. We’re going to walk you through your money problems and show you a few things you might not be aware of – things that could make your hard times a little more bearable.

Where do I start?

The first thing you need to do is to go to Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) and apply for benefits. Give them a call before you go and ask what you need to bring with you to apply. If you’re eligible to receive benefits, you should start receiving cheques in 6-8 weeks.

I can’t make ends meet on these benefits.

The next thing you should do, after applying for benefits, is to review your budget and see where you stand financially. Use the worksheet in Exhibit 2 (next page), by listing all your sources of income. Then, look through your chequebook stubs and your credit card statements to see where you’re spending your money. Finally, subtract your spending from your income. The final figure will tell you whether you’re in the red or not.

In the red?

If you don’t have enough money to make ends meet each month, you may have to start cutting or eliminating expenses.

Where should you cut? The obvious places are:

- Supermarkets
- Restaurants
- Malls
- Recreational activities

Remember, your greatest wealth is your health.

Life Stress Inventory

Exhibit 1

Basic Data: The Holmes-Rahe Life Stress Inventory

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

Death of a Spouse
Divorce
Going to Jail
Major Illness
Job Loss
Retirement
Death of a Friend
Change Jobs
Loan Foreclosure
Move to a New Town

Tally your income. List the monthly sum of all sources of income:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Income</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment Insurance</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse’s Paycheque</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest on Savings</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Income</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While we are talking about spending cuts, take a moment to be honest with yourself; are you strapped for cash because you spend too much money on:

- Drugs
- Alcohol
- Malls
- Over-eating
- Expensive compulsions
- Smoking
- Lifestyle you cannot afford

If so, get some help. Remember, your greatest wealth is your health!
My Monthly Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Initial Date</th>
<th>Counsellor</th>
<th>Copy Received</th>
<th>Case Number</th>
<th>Initial Date</th>
<th>Revised Date</th>
<th>Copy Received</th>
<th>Revised Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>W - Weekly</td>
<td>M - Monthly</td>
<td>O - Occasional</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Housing Expenses:
- Initial
- Revised

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Mortgage</th>
<th>Second Mortgage</th>
<th>Property Taxes</th>
<th>House Insurance</th>
<th>Rent / Condo Fees</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
<th>Cell Phone</th>
<th>TV Cable</th>
<th>Internet</th>
<th>Hydro</th>
<th>Gas / Oil / Wood / Electric</th>
<th>Maintenance Contracts</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Work Expenses:
- Transit - Applicant
- Transit - Spouse
- Lunches / Breaks
- Lunches / Breaks
- Daycare
- Special Clothing
- Sub Total

Instructional Comments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Expenses</th>
<th>Total Forward</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Living Expenses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Travel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alimony &amp; Support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto License / Maintenance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance – Auto</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance – Life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical / Doctor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prescription Drugs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry / Dry Cleaning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Expenses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol / Beverages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Babysitter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Grooming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barber / Hairdresser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazines / Newspapers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Donations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Expenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Expenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debit Payments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of Funds Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Funds Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Income From All Sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less Total Expenses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Money Saving Tips for Budgeting

**Housing – 16 money saving tips**
1. Conserve water
2. Do your own painting
3. Learn to do simple repairs
4. Use glass instead of paper cups
5. Switch to energy efficient light bulbs
6. Lights on only when necessary
7. Lower the temperature at night
8. Make your own cleaning supplies
9. Improvise furniture, shop garage sales
10. Use worn out towels to make wash clothes
11. Make only emergency long distance phone calls
12. Carry only replacement value home insurance
13. Give up all unnecessary services on your telephone
14. Stand up when talking long distance or use a timer
15. Communicate with relatives/friends via email
16. Equip the house with storm windows/doors

**Food – 19 money saving tips**
1. Grow a garden
2. Consider no name brands
3. Preserve food when feasible
4. Do more cooking from scratch
5. Cut down on meals away from home
6. Pack a lunch as often as possible ($5 a day saves $25 a week, $100 a month, $1,200 a year!)
7. Use coupons for items you regularly buy
8. If storage permits, buy in quantity when a regularly used item is on sale
9. Plan menus in advance to avoid impulse buying
10. Make only emergency long distance phone calls
11. Make only replacement value home insurance
12. Use leftovers (planovers) in soups and casseroles
13. Communicate with relatives/friends via email
14. Equip the house with storm windows/doors

**Clothing – 11 money saving tips**
1. Carefully coordinate
2. Mend clothes promptly
3. Buy clothing that is washable
4. Buy clothing that does not need ironing
5. Sew as much as practical, repair, remodel
6. Have children change into old clothes for rough play
7. Hang on clothesline to dry instead of using a dryer
8. Do not buy clothes that require dry cleaning
9. Use detergent that works well in cool and warm water
10. Organize laundry to run a minimum number of loads
11. Comparison shop for best quality and prices

**Health & Medical – 8 money saving tips**
1. Serve nutritious meals
2. Have regular check-ups
3. Develop good health habits
4. Follow safety rules to prevent accidents
5. Carry only one health and accident insurance
6. Stop using tobacco, alcohol and/or addictive drugs
7. Investigate services offered by the health department
8. Learn to take temperature, pulse and respiration

**Entertainment – 7 money saving tips**
1. Eliminate cable TV
2. Take vacations at home
3. Cook at home more often
4. Use public transportation
5. Use community centers and recreation centers
6. Use public libraries
7. Use community centers and recreation centers

If you have a negative cash difference, cut or reduce spending and get your payments reduced to balance your budget.

Exhibit 2
### Money Saving Tips for Budgeting

#### Employment – 4 money saving tips
1. Share transportation
2. Use washable uniforms
3. Secure your position by being a valuable employee
4. Let your boss know you are interested in more training

#### Education – 7 money saving tips
1. Online newspaper subscription
2. Use the public library for reading materials
3. Cut out subscriptions to magazines that entertain only
4. Study to improve your qualifications for the job you hold
5. Develop skills to enhance your position
6. Use the library for free Internet services
7. Comparison shop for Internet services

#### Gifts & Donations – 3 money saving tips
1. Make gifts instead of buying them
2. Give your time instead of your money
3. Carefully consider each situation and cut out all the monetary giving that you possibly can

#### Child Care – 2 money saving tips
1. Share child care responsibilities with a friend, neighbour or spouse
2. Investigate government or church operated nursery schools that welcome children from low income families

#### Miscellaneous – 3 money saving tips
1. Have legal aid evaluate child support payment
2. Consider all costs to determine if the family really profits from two incomes
3. Communicate with relatives/friends via email

### It’s Hard to Make Ends Meet

If you still can’t make ends meet after cutting all the excess out of your spending, it’s time to ask if you can get your bills cut: utilities, telephone, taxes, auto loans, credit cards, insurance, day-care and any other monthly bills you might have.

#### Do you need to talk to someone about your finances?

If for any reason you can not meet your payment obligations to any of your creditors, contact the creditor immediately and discuss your problems candidly. Creditors are flexible when changes in your life make repayment of your obligations difficult, but you must make them aware of your situation. Do not try to avoid your creditors. It will just make the situation worse.

If you find that your ability to deal with your creditors directly has become impossible, or you can not see a way out of your financial situation on your own, contact your nearest Credit Counselling Service.

Credit Canada Debt Solutions offers no-cost/low-cost confidential credit counselling. It serves anyone who needs advice on how to handle money and reduce or eliminate debt. Credit Canada Debt Solutions also arranges debt retirement programs to help individuals deal with their creditors and get out of debt. Credit Canada Debt Solutions has offices and affiliated Agencies to serve you throughout Canada.

The Credit Counselling Services have helped thousands of people on the verge of personal bankruptcy fight their way back to solvency. They will just make the situation worse.

### Employment – 4 money saving tips
1. Share transportation
2. Use washable uniforms
3. Secure your position by being a valuable employee
4. Let your boss know you are interested in more training

### Transportation – 6 money saving tips
1. Car pool
2. Consider moving closer to work
3. Get rid of one car
4. Do your own maintenance
5. Use public transportation
6. Drive small cars that cost less to operate

### Personal – 5 money saving tips
1. Cut children’s hair yourself
2. Do your own shampoo, sets and blow dries
3. Select cosmetics that are reasonably priced
4. Carry only pocket change needed for bus fare and small items
5. Set reasonable amounts for children’s allowances

### Savings – 11 money saving tips
1. Open a savings account with a no-fee financial institution
2. Save bonus income
3. Keep your loose change for savings
4. Alter your spending habits
5. Be willing to compromise
6. Make saving a family affair
7. Determine your saving goals
8. Use savings for emergencies
9. Use payroll deductions for savings
10. Put your budget on a diet
11. Save on a regular basis, pay yourself first

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1. Car pool
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1. Have legal aid evaluate child support payment
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### Is Credit Canada Debt Solutions for real?

– It is important you send a letter, verifying your situation. Along with the letter, send them any supporting documents outlining your layoff, income and expenses.
– It is important you show your creditor where your money needs to come from. You can do this by utilizing the “Monthly Budget Tracker” booklet.

### Will they really lower my payments until I find another job?

– Of course. Lenders are human too. They know that some people are having rough times and they can be very sympathetic and understanding.
– The key is to talk to them before you start missing too many payments. The worst things you can do is to hide, miss payments, not answer the phone and make promises you can’t keep.

– Exhibit 3 (page 8) is a sample layoff letter one would write to a creditor(s). Each creditor has their own criteria for determining whether or not to stop the interest or reduce your payments. This will depend on whether or not you always made your payments on time or you were inconsistent in the past.
– Nevertheless, it is important you send a letter, verifying your situation. Along with the letter, send them any supporting documents outlining your layoff, income and expenses.
– It is important you show your creditor where your money needs to come from. You can do this by utilizing the “Monthly Budget Tracker” booklet.

– Look for ways to cut back on your budget and show where you cut back by filling out the “Revised” column. This can be done by utilizing your “Monthly Budget Tracker” booklet.
Tips for Dealing with Your Creditors

When on the phone.

Most importantly, make sure you talk to someone who is in charge or responsible such as:

1. Bank/Credit Union - branch manager, collection supervisor or loans officer
2. Financial Company - branch manager
3. Retail/Department Store - collection supervisor or credit manager
   - If the person you talk with is not helpful, ask to speak to his or her supervisor.
   - Keep a concise and accurate record of the person you talked with, company name, date, time, phone number, and what was said and how it was said.
   - Keep in touch with the person you talked with until the problem is solved.
   - Avoid making promises you can’t keep.
   - An agreement over the phone is not a legitimate contract. Put it in writing!
   - Keep your temper and be polite. Ask for your creditor’s help rather than telling them what to do.
   - If you feel the collector is harassing you, contact your local Ministry of Consumer and Business Services Office.

When Writing to Your Creditor

Never mail cash. Keep a receipt/copy of all your cheques/ money orders.

A. Write a letter outlining any of the following:
   - Your reason for the letter
   - Your employment status
   - Your intentions on the debt
   - Your reduced payment terms
   - Your request for interest relief
   - Your offer on a settlement amount
   - Your condition as to why you cannot make a payment
   - Your request for the termination of the debt (medical reasons)
   - Your request for the creditor to pull the account back from collections

B. Photocopy what you are collecting (pay stub/slip).

C. Create a monthly expense sheet (to be included in package to creditors).

Remember...

Be realistic.

If you offer to make a payment make sure you can afford it. Missing any payment could jeopardize your proposal.

Be reasonable.

Creditors will want to get paid back within a reasonable amount of time.

Be specific.

Tell the creditor when you will contact them in the future. Tell them which month or which day.

Make sure to follow-up with your letter. (See example on next page).

A Sample Letter to Your Creditors

Part of the process of managing your debt is getting in touch with your creditors to let them know of your intentions. Here is a sample letter that you can send to creditors informing them about your financial situation and outlining terms for how you propose to repay them.

Today’s Date

Credit Department
1 Downtown Street
Toronto, Ontario M5B 1L2

Dear (Creditor’s Name)

I am writing this letter to request a temporary change in the repayment terms of my account. Since I have become unemployed, (or list other reasons) I’ve had to make some financial adjustments. Please find enclosed a copy of my pay stub (or other) and my monthly expenses and any other debts/obligations.

However, when I carefully examined my financial situation and made a strict budget for my living expenses, it has become necessary to ask (creditor’s name) to accept a reduced payment of $__________ for the next _____ months.

My current monthly take home is $__________ (list total income) and my minimum monthly living expenses are $__________ (list total expenses). As you can see, I have only $__________ left each month for my proposed payment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Account #</th>
<th>Amount Owing</th>
<th>Monthly Pmt</th>
<th>Proposed Pmt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You can expect a certified cheque (or money order) for my first payment on (date). For the next _____ months I will make the same payment. As soon as my situation improves, or at the end of _____ I will try to catch up on the arrears and resume my normal payment.

I request that my account is not placed in the hands of a collection agency, (if it already has, ask them to pull the account back) as I wish to deal with you directly and do not want to go further in debt. Could you please consider withholding interest on my account over the next 60 (90) days as I am awaiting employment (or other) and will notify you in 60 (90) days as to any changes? I do not want to jeopardize my future relationship with (creditor’s name) as this has never happened before.

Thank you for considering this proposal. Please let me know if this is acceptable for the short term. If it is, please sign this letter and send me a copy. I am eager to resolve this problem.

Sincerely,

_____ Yes, I/We accept the payments offered.

Authorized signature ____________________________ for ______________________ (company name).

Attach a copy of any income proof – i.e., disability, pension, welfare, employment income (EI), etc.
Pennies From Heaven

Here are a few ways you can raise some money to help you through those moments when you need some extra cash:

**Collect old debts**
Stop and think, does anyone owe you money? Well, now is the time to ask for it.

**Sell your skills**
Do you have real skills such as typing, doing taxes, taking wedding photos, drawing or illustrating, cake decorating, giving music or dance lessons, tutoring students or just about anything else? Who knows, it might be the start of your own business.

**Sell old valuables**
Take a walk through your home and take an inventory of the valuables you no longer use such as baby furniture, kitchen sets, freezer, power tools, photo equipment or musical instruments. Put an advertisement in the newspaper and unload the stuff.

**Clean out the garage**
Have a garage sale. You could earn some extra spending money by selling old junk like books, hand tools, old sewing machines, toys, clothes, dishes, lamps, fans and any other items you no longer need.

**Sell off the family jewels**
If you have something of real value like jewelry, silver, an antique, Oriental rug or anything else of value, take it to several merchants who specialize in that item and ask how you might sell it. They might make an offer to buy it themselves or recommend a colleague who could be interested.

**Sell off the luxuries**
Unload the second car, the boat, the mink coat or any other luxury. Pay off the debt and pocket the profit while you're ahead.

**Get paid for a hobby**
Analyze your skills and see if you may be able to profit from them. Are you an expert at repairing cars, are you skilled in doing tax returns, do you make beautiful clothes? There are some hobbies, which could be very profitable.

**Rent out a room**
Gain some extra income by getting a roommate.

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### How Will This Affect My Credit Rating?

The thing that will hurt your credit rating the most is to say nothing and start missing payments. Creditors won’t know that you’re unemployed unless you tell them. If you don’t tell them and you start missing payments, they’ll assume that you’re not taking your responsibilities seriously and that you’ve become a bad risk.

If you fall behind on your payments and don’t bother to work out an emergency repayment plan, your credit rating will take a turn for the worse and your credit record will show you were delinquent. To the right is an outline of how the credit rating system works.

Remember, not saying anything and missing payments equals bad credit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Credit Rating Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Usual manner of payment.</td>
<td>0 (R) (I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too new to rate; approved but not used.</td>
<td>0 (R) (I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pays (or paid) within 30 days of billing; pays account as agreed.</td>
<td>(R) (I) (I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pays (or paid) in more than 30 days, but not more than 60 days,</td>
<td>(R) (I) (I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or not more than one payment past due.</td>
<td>(R) (I) (I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pays (or paid) in more than 60 days, but not more than 90 days,</td>
<td>3 (R) (I) (I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or two payments past due.</td>
<td>(R) (I) (I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pays (or paid) in more than 90 days, but not more than 120 days,</td>
<td>4 (R) (I) (I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or three or more payments past due.</td>
<td>(R) (I) (I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Account is at least 120 days overdue but is not yet rated “9”.</td>
<td>5 (R) (I) (I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making regular payments under a consolidation order or similar arrangement</td>
<td>7 (R) (I) (I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>through a third party.</td>
<td>(R) (I) (I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repossession (indicates it is a voluntary return of merchandise by the consumer).</td>
<td>8 (R) (I) (I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad debt; placed for collections; skip.</td>
<td>9 (R) (I) (I)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TERMS:**
- \(0\) = Open Account
- \(R\) = Revolving or Option
- \(I\) = Installment

To get a copy of your report contact Equifax Canada Inc., Trans Union Canada, and Experian Credit Bureau.

**Equifax Canada Inc.**  
Box 191, Jean Talon Station, Montreal, Quebec, H1S 2Z2  
Phone 1 800 465 7166  Fax 514 355 8502  Internet www.econsumer.equifax.ca

**Trans Union Canada – Consumer Relations Centre**, P.O. Box 338, LCD 1, Hamilton, Ontario, L8L 7W2  
Phone 1 866 525 0262 or 905 525 0262  Internet www.transunion.ca

**Experian Credit Bureau – Consumer Relations Centre**, 336 Rideau Boulevard, Rouyn-Noranda, Quebec, J9X 1P2  
Fax 1 800 666 5876  Internet www.creditbureau.ca
Two-thirds of all unemployed people need nine months to find a new job. Eleven percent need a year or more to find a job.

How Long Will I Have to Live Like This?

When and where can I expect to find a job?

Just for the heck of it, how long do you think it will take to find a job? Take the quiz below and see how you do.

How long do you think it will take to find a new job?

- 1 Month
- 3 Months
- 6 Months
- 9 Months
- 1 Year
- More than a year

How long will it take you to find a job?

A lot of people think it’s a snap to find a new job. They think they’ll be gainfully employed in a matter of weeks. They’re wrong, unless they’re looking for a job that pays less than $10,000 a year!

The Statistics

The layoff, unemployment and job hunting picture

Here are some statistics, the overall picture from when people get laid off to how and when they find their next jobs. Most people get let go on a Friday. Early mornings and late afternoons are popular times for laying people off.

Feeling Down?

Here’s the problem: Most people identify themselves with what they do for a living. Ask someone who they are and they’ll tell you what they do – "I’m a teacher," "I’m a welder," or "I’m a banker." Lose your job and you lose your identity – suddenly, "I’m not a teacher anymore." You feel lost and unimportant, your self-esteem is crushed.

Nearly 7 out of 10 people found new jobs by talking to friends and relatives. Networking out-performs all other approaches by at least four to one.

What’s the big deal with self-esteem?

Your self-esteem is that inner confidence that lets you feel good about yourself. If your self-esteem is crushed, you look and act like you are lost.

Your self-esteem shows! It shows in the way you act. It shows in almost everything you do. When you act, people react. As such, your self-esteem controls the way other people react to you. If you act with confidence and optimism, people treat you with confidence and optimism. If you act like you are lost, people will ignore you. Your self-esteem decides how other people see and treat you. This is important to know and it’s something to be aware of, especially if you’re out looking for a job.

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But it’s hard to keep smiling

It is. But you have to remember that you have a choice.
Feeling Down?

You CHOOSE whether or not you’re in control of your situation. Choosing to be in control means accepting responsibility for the events in your life.

First. Disappointment is a normal part of everyday life. You’ve had disappointments before and you’ll surely get a lot more of them in the future. You’ve survived those disappointments and you’re going to survive this one. Be optimistic not pessimistic. Look for the bright side.

Second. If you look over your life, you’ll find that you win as often as you lose. Do it – tally up your major failures and tally up your major accomplishments. Too many people get hooked on their woes. They become depressed. Focus on your accomplishments. Take inspiration from the strength you mustered to fight and win those battles. You’ll become inspired and better motivated.

Third. Every disappointment has a door. The door opens to an opportunity. A job loss for example, could lead to a new career, by finding the opportunity hidden within your disappointment. It could lead to a new career with the kind of work you really enjoy, a good company to work for and people who also appreciate who you are and what you can do.

Finally. You are in charge of your own life. If you want a life that’s fulfilling and enjoyable, you must take control, grab the steering wheel.

Remember, let choice, not chance, steer your life.

Scam Alert

Job seekers need to be on the alert to the many job scams relieving people of their money.

Bad economic times have triggered an onslaught of job scams. And even levelheaded individuals who normally wouldn’t fall for the schemes are becoming victims.

It’s often difficult for people who have been out of work for a long time to see through the sophisticated kinds of promotions and ways the scams are marketed. When they ask for up front money, this is a sign to walk away!

There are a number of different scams out there. With work-at-home scams you are asked to buy instructions, materials and sometimes even equipment such as sewing machines, to make items like dolls, aprons, rugs, clowns or jewelry. The promoter promises to buy them back (at a profit to you) if the quality is “up to standards.”

Another popular scam is the “stuffing envelopes” offer. Most people answering the advertisement offering “work at home stuffing envelopes” expect to be hired by a legitimate company to stuff envelopes for a salary. But what you receive, after sending a fee, of course, is directions to place the same advertisement you answered in the paper using your address or a postal box, as the company address.

Be careful with companies you have never heard of and also with firms using a postal box as their mailing address.

Also watch out for out-of-country job scams. Consumers are promised positions earning up to $75,000 a year. But they have to pay between $200 and $1,000 to cover travel costs, information lists, foreign work papers and visas, or deposits on accommodations. The consumers receive nothing for their money and the fake agents disappear.

Some consumers pay hundreds of dollars to receive outdated lists of foreign companies, which don’t even exist anymore.

Warning Signals:

• Job overseas
• Stuffing envelopes scams
• Get rich quick plans
• Full-time income for part-time work, often at home
• High income sales positions advertised with no experience necessary

Be suspicious when:

• The promoter asks for money up front
• The company operates out of a postal box

Below are two examples of typical advertisements, used by scam artists. They usually charge a substantial up-front fee, so be alert.

Scam Alert
Feel free to contact Credit Canada Debt Solutions.

As a non-profit charitable organization we provide affordable, practical assistance and confidential guidance to people in need. We are registered and Provincially licensed.

For a free online assessment go to:
www.CreditCanada.com

416 228 DEBT (3328)
Outside Toronto: 1 800 267 2272
8:00 am to 8:00 pm, Monday to Friday
8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Saturday