



There Are 5 Stages of Job Loss Depression

When it comes to [job loss](#), it doesn't matter if you've been fired (lost job due to your performance), or laid off (lost job due to your company's performance), the fact remains you must deal with a five-letter word: grief.

I recently came across an excellent article by a recruiter on the five stages of grief as they relate to job loss. You can read it [here](#).

My favorite part of the article is the very end when the author says:

"I've seen people get stuck in Anger for years and not understand why they never get a job offer. I've seen others go straight to the Acceptance stage the day after they've been laid off. Everyone is different. Don't be too hard on yourself!"

Are You Faking Acceptance?

I agree everyone navigates grief differently and that we shouldn't be too hard on ourselves.

However, I also see lots of cases where people think they are at the "acceptance" phase when they really aren't.

Here's an example...

A couple of years ago, a woman joined [CareerHMO](#) to help her stalled job search. She had moved to a new city after having spent several months caring for a sick relative. She was upbeat and excited about finding a new position, but couldn't seem to get past the first round of interviews. On paper, she was clearly talented, so I decided to dig a bit deeper to see if something was happening in the interview stage that was causing the problem. I found it when I inquired, "Why did you leave your last position?" I assumed the answer was around the care of the relative. However, instead she began sharing a long-winded somewhat confusing explanation of her former employer, a project she had been working on, and an ultimate lay-off of 200 employees. I said, "So, you got laid-off?" To which she again started in on a long explanation which lead me to say, "So, were you fired?" At which point, she started to cry.

Yes. She had been fired. But even worse... she had never really accepted it.

We worked for over two months together. Each week, I would challenge her to get through yet another stage of job loss grief. It took a lot of effort, but eventually I got her to truly accept what happened.



Two Signs You're Really There

The best way to know if you are truly over your job loss and in the stage of acceptance is if you can talk about the experience with:

- **Objectivity:** You can state the facts without adding emotional commentary.
- **Accountability:** You can take ownership of your role in what led to your job loss.

Trust me when I say hiring managers (and everyone else you talk to about your job search) can tell if you aren't at the acceptance stage of job loss grief.

So, I hope you will consider having an honest conversation with someone to see if this could be what's holding you back.

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