



Sympathy and Concern: When Someone You Know Loses His Job

When people you know lose their job, for one reason or another, there are many thoughts that might go through your mind. You may first feel a sense of shock, because you know they are good workers and that they don't deserve to lose their job. You may feel fear that it might happen to you, too, or you may feel a sneaking sense of relief that it was they and not you! These are all legitimate responses, but expressing them will not help the person in question at all. If you are interested in making sure that you are saying what you need to say when someone you know loses his job, check out some things to be kept in mind.

If a co-worker you like loses his job...

... you should stop and express sympathy and also let him know that you are not going to cut all ties with him. Let him know that if he wants, you are willing to act as a reference for him. Remind him of the [projects](#) that you have worked on together and let him know that a new employer will look very favorably on them and that you are willing to vouch for his competence and what he can do. If your co-worker has been laid off, let him know that you are going to network him around to your friends and that your resources are open to him.

If a friend loses his job...

...sympathize. Let him know that you understand how hard he worked and how confusing and nerve-wracking this can be for him. Offer your help, both in terms of [networking](#) and personal support. If you often met for lunch during work, remember that you should not let the job loss stop you ever from seeing each other regularly. Sometimes, friends acting as a touchstone can be extremely beneficial, and whether you help him get his resume updated or you simply offer an ear and a cup of tea, you will find that you can make a big difference.

If a family member loses his job...

...it can be a little bit tricky, because you may not know where the line should be drawn. Be sympathetic and take him out for dinner. This is a good time to establish a connection and to really talk about what you can do to figure the situation out. If he welcomes it, help him analyze why he thinks he lost his job and what happened, and if there was anything that could have been done to prevent it. Sit down with him and plan. Keep this as non-judgmental and straightforward as possible. Don't show pity, and once again, offer to [network](#) for him, and ask around for any opportunities that he might fulfill.

If they have been out of work for a while...

...don't pressurize them. Remember that a job hunt is a difficult thing to deal with, especially if they have a lot of

special qualifications for their job. When someone is looking for the right job, they are going to be stressed and in a bad or nervous mood. Don't compound the problem by asking them questions that they might not have the answers to, like how they are going to pay their rent or why they haven't got a job yet. Take some time and really think about your options when it comes to what you say. A gentle question about how the job search is going is okay, but if they don't want to talk about it, have the courtesy to drop it.

If it has been a long time since they had to job search...

... offer to help. For people who had been with the same job for a long time, there is a special kind of terror when they need to search for a new one. Even in a few years the industry can change a lot, and the idea of getting back into a field that they have been out of for a while might be a bit daunting. Then of course, there are those people who had essentially created their own positions from which they were recently released and they might not know what they need to do to get back on board. Offer your [assistance](#) not only with networking but also with resume editing. Show them how their most recent position benefited them and show them how they are definitely in the fight.

If your son or daughter loses his or her job...

... be a parent first. If your children lose their job, first make sure that they are doing well emotionally. Losing a job, especially if they are very young, can be a devastating blow, so go over the situation with them. Talk with them and make sure that they know what happened and figure out how they can prevent the same occurrence. Ask them what they learned at the old job and help them put together an updated resume. Remember that if they have lost a job then you can also offer to network for them, but be kind and do it in the most professional way possible. It will stop them from having to deal with problems later on down the line and it will serve them well in the future.



Career Tips

When people you know lose job it can be quite sad. Be supportive and assure them that there is a future for them,

and that you will help them get there!

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