



## Does 'Out-Of-Work' Mean Damaged Goods?

By: JT O'Donnell from AOL Jobs - May 6, 2014



### **Don't let being let go hurt your chances of getting hired**

Last week, I had a powerful conversation with a colleague who has been let go several times and was questioning if there was something wrong with him.

Millions of people have been let go in the last few years, creating a new group of professionals who share an experience that is driving high levels of crisis of confidence. An alarming number of out-of-work job seekers are struggling to articulate an answer to the interviewer's question, "Why did you leave your last job?"

### **'Let Go' Doesn't Mean 'Damaged Goods'**

When the unemployment rate is low and companies are competing for top talent, it's normal to raise an eyebrow if someone has been let go and is out of work. But, as I pointed out to my colleague, that's an outdated perception in today's economy.

We have been through a long recession that is not expected to rebound quickly. More importantly, carrying that belief in your head will significantly impact your ability to get hired. Here's why...

### **Self-Perception Impacts Marketability**

Confidence in your abilities needs to be sky-high if you want to land a job. You're selling your services to employers. They want the best bang for their buck. It's very easy to spot



a job seeker who is secretly doubting their abilities. You may think you are hiding it, but a large part of communication is non-verbal.

Rarely can a person with a crisis of confidence truly hide a fear of being sub-par in an interview. Which means, until you stop seeing being “let go” as a negative, you will struggle to sell yourself effectively.

### **Have a Funeral for Your Negative Thoughts**

I suggest you write out all the negative self-talk going through your head — and then burn the paper!

Do something to signify the need to put this to rest so you can move on. Better still, manage the job-loss grief process by talking to someone who can help you see that you are holding your happiness hostage by not putting this behind you.

It's time to stop beating yourself up!

### **The Silver Lining to Being Let Go**

Ironically, those people I've worked with who have been let go and successfully found a new job enthusiastically say there's been a silver lining: the experience gave them the opportunity to build their job search skills in the new economy and to prove to themselves that every job is temporary (and every lack of a job!). They feel stronger and in more control of their careers — that's a great result from a big career challenge, don't you think?

I hope if you've lost your job you can now see that you A) are not alone and B) can definitely move on from being let go. You are a valuable professional — but only if you believe it!

Want more advice on overcoming career challenges? Check out The Career L.U.C.K. Project's collection of 10 common career mistakes and how you can overcome them to create more luck in your career.

*J.T. O'Donnell is a career and workplace expert who founded the top-ranked career advice site, CAREEREALISM.com. In 2009, she launched CareerHMO, the first on-line career care membership site which specializes in curing chronic career pain.*