

[YOU'RE FIRED!]

by RON HALL / Sr. Editor

Call it getting the pink slip, terminated, pushed out the door, fired, let go, sacked, kicked out, dismissed, downsized...what else?

However you say it, it all means the same thing: your employer is getting rid of you, probably in short order.

Say goodbye to your work-a-day schedule, to co-workers, to regular paychecks (at least for awhile anyway). Say hello to uncertainty.

What do you do?

Ed Walsh, a certified golf course superintendent, learned some things firsthand after he got fired a few years ago. He admits it wasn't pleasant, but now, looking back, he views it as being "a very positive experience."

Walsh, who now manages the golf course at Essex County (N.J.) Country Club, offers these five suggestions:

1) Remain visible. "It's embarrassing to be fired and you may not want to see your peers, but the worst thing you can do is drop out of sight," says Walsh. Continue to attend and be active in association meetings, continue to meet with friends, continue your social life.

2) Get professional help. This may include legal and/or psychological help.

Walsh says that, on the recommendation of his wife and another close friend, he met with a psychologist. "It helped me take two steps back and look at myself. It



helped me assess my strengths and weaknesses."

If you're concerned with information that your former employer is providing to prospective employees, or if you feel that you're not receiving adequate compensation from your former employer, you may need legal help, too. Consult with an

attorney that's versed in labor law, advises Walsh.

3) Assess your financial situation. Don't wait; you may not find new employment right away.

"How far can you go on what money you have?" asks Walsh. "What assets can you sell to generate cash?"

Also, examine your pension plan and do financial planning—while you're employed.

4) Evaluate your performance at your former employment. This is probably the most difficult thing to do, Walsh says. It's easy to make excuses why you were let go. But, if you're honest, you'll find things you could have done much better. Learn

from this.

5) Don't burn bridges. That means not criticizing former employers.

"When you do that, you reduce the biggest assets you have for future employment. You want these people to still become positive influences," says Walsh.

How did you find another job the last time you had to go on the unemployment rolls? How long did it take you to find something? Did you have to settle for a job that was lower on the totem pole than your previous job? Let us know. If we publish your observations and hints, we'll mail you a free LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT ball cap. □

Your turn

Every other month, we report what readers think about current topics. Tell us how you found a job last time you were **FIRED**. Tear out or photocopy this page, and fax or mail your response to: Talk Back, Landscape Management, 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, Ohio 44130 • Fax: 216/891-2675 • E-mail: 75553.502@compuserve.com

Have you ever been fired before? Why?

- Yes COMMENTS _____
- No _____

After getting fired, was your next job a better or worse one?

- Better COMMENTS _____
- Worse _____

How did you go about finding a new job?

COMMENTS _____
