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Chautauqua Works

americanjobcenter®

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Executive Director's Message



Building Talent Today to Strengthen Tomorrow's Workforce

Summer is often viewed as a season of opportunity, and in workforce development, it truly represents one of the most important times of the year. With more than two decades in this field, I have seen firsthand how meaningful work experiences, skill development, and strong community partnerships can transform lives while strengthening our local economy.

Across our region, employers continue to face evolving workforce challenges. At the same time, job seekers are looking for pathways

that lead to sustainable careers rather than simply finding their next job. This is where workforce development organizations like Chautauqua Works play a critical role. By connecting education, training, supportive services, and employment opportunities, we help individuals build the confidence and competencies needed to succeed in today's labor market.

Our Summer Youth Employment Program remains one of the most important investments. For many young people, a first job teaches far more than technical skills. It builds responsibility, communication, teamwork, and problem-solving abilities that will serve them throughout their careers. Equally important, businesses who mentor young workers are helping cultivate the future talent pipeline their industries will depend on. Businesses are vital partners providing work readiness training on the job; becoming part of the work readiness skills gap solution.

Chautauqua Works success is made possible through collaboration. Employers, educational institutions, community organizations, and public

expertise and resources. Together, we create opportunities that address workforce needs while supporting economic growth across our community.

As we move through the summer months, I encourage businesses to continue opening their doors to interns, trainees, and new employees. I also encourage job seekers to take advantage of the training, career coaching, and supportive services available at Chautauqua Works. Every new credential earned, every successful new job obtained, and every partnership formed represents progress toward a stronger workforce. Together, we are not only filling jobs—we are building careers, strengthening businesses, and creating a more resilient workforce for generations to come.

Like and follow us on Facebook at:
<https://www.facebook.com/Chautauqua-Works-280188958769133/>

Chautauqua Works Job Fair!

Chautauqua Works will be hosting a Job Fair on **Thursday, July 23rd from 10am to Noon** at our Jamestown location.

Representatives from the New York State Department of Labor will be on hand to sign in individuals and answer any questions.

15 businesses will be in attendance for the Job Fair. Be sure to have plenty of copies of your resume and dress professionally to meet face-to-face with potential employers!

Please use the North Main Street entrance to attend the Job Fair.

We are open Monday through Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm at these locations:

Jamestown—4 East 3rd Street, Suite 102, 716-661-9553

Dunkirk—407 Central Avenue, 716-366-9015

WE ARE HERE FOR YOU!

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What to do When You Get Laid Off.

“Courage does not always roar. Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying, ‘I will try again tomorrow.’” Mary Anne Radmacher

Job layoffs are an all-too common experience of American work life. But knowing what to do when you get laid off can make all the difference in how long you'll be sidelined from work. Here, we'll give you 11 actions to get yourself back on someone's payroll.

1. Request a 'Laid-Off Letter' from Human Resources

If you lost your job for reasons outside your control — restructuring, economic reversals, mergers, buyouts, relocations, and so on — a layoff letter that explains the circumstances to you (and prospective employers) may be part of your farewell package.

Read it carefully for errors or omissions. If the letter gets any significant details relating to your separation wrong or overlooks important contributions made by you or your team, point it out to someone in Human Resources. Then ask politely for a revision.

Beyond a layoff letter, ask HR for another tool for your upcoming job search. “Ask for a recommendation or referral from your previous employer,” says Lilia Stoyanov, CEO of Transformity, an HR software and freelance platform.

2. Inquire About Your Health Insurance Benefit

How long you are covered under your employer-sponsored medical insurance plan hinges on how far in advance you pay your premiums. Typically, employers pay one month in advance, which is welcome news for those laid off early in the month and not so much for those laid off near the end.

Health Benefits Option No. 1: If you were laid off from a company that had 20 or more employees the prior year, COBRA — the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act — lets you continue coverage for you and your family for up to 18 months. However, COBRA can get expensive, especially if you enjoy a benefit-rich plan. You may be required to pay up to 102% of the cost to the plan.

Health Benefits Option No. 2:

Under the Affordable Care Act, you may [shop for an individual health care plan](#) on state or federal exchanges. With your income temporarily slashed, you may qualify for a substantial subsidy. Losing your job is a “life event” that allows you to apply for insurance within 60 days of your last day on the job.

3. Collect — Or Check On — Your Final Paycheck

Depending on the circumstances of your layoff, you may receive your final paycheck the same day you leave the company. Make sure it's for the correct amount and that all the deductions are in order.

If you're part of a mass layoff, you will work for at least two more months before your last paycheck arrives. The federal Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN Act) requires employers to provide 60 days' notice, during which all wages and benefits will continue to flow as usual.

Meanwhile, break out the employee handbook to find out how the company treats unused vacation/sick days or PTO (paid time off). State laws vary about compensating employees for unused time off, but many companies compensate for banked vacation/PTO.

4. Review Your 401(k) and/or Pension Plans

If you have a 401(k) with your former employer, you have options what to do with that money.

- Leave it in your former employer's plan.
- If your next employer offers a 401(k) plan, find out whether you have the option to merge your old plan with the new one.
- Open a rollover IRA and drop your 401(k) money there.

5. Investigate a Severance Package

Most companies have had their severance packages (if any) reviewed by legal staff, and unless the work is sloppy, what you're offered probably is what you'll get. Consult an attorney specializing in labor law if you suspect the package falls short of industry standards or if it fails to follow guidelines spelled out in the employee handbook.

If the company won't budge on its payout and your leverage is minimal, ask about other areas of help. It could come as a letter of recommendation, a guarantee that your former supervisors will provide good references when potential employers call, help with outplacement services, or a set period when your company email and voicemail will remain in service.

6. Register for Unemployment

As a former employee in good standing, you have a right to unemployment benefits. Accessing those benefits will take some pressure off your [emergency fund](#), so sign up as soon as is feasible. Your eligibility, the amount you'll receive, and the time you're covered (often 26 weeks) depends on where you live. Check with the local branch of your state's Department of Labor and the unemployment office. More than likely, you can apply online.

7. Put the Internet to Work for You

Effective networking is key to the optimal job search. Being savvy online will help you cover a lot of ground quickly. “Being digitally savvy has become increasingly important,” says Kane Carpenter, director of career services for Employment BOOST.

What to do When You Get Laid Off (Continued)

Set up job alerts on LinkedIn, Glassdoor, Indeed and other online job boards, including industry-specific boards. You'll waste less time surfing for jobs because they'll come directly to your inbox.

If you're not already doing so, follow industry influencers on LinkedIn and other social media platforms (Facebook, X, Threads, Instagram, etc.).

Finally, leverage your built-in personal network on Facebook. Your friends will love to help you land on your feet, so share your job-search news.

Looking for a new job IS your interim job. Dedicate time each day to various parts of your search.

8. Reinvigorate Your Resume

If you're not someone who routinely reviews and updates his/her resume, now is the time.

Don't know how to begin? Type "resume builder" into your favorite search engine, and off you go. Uncertain what your strengths are? Ask coworkers, friends, and other associates for an honest evaluation. They may see qualities you have overlooked.

9. Develop Your Personal Brand

Post on your blog, your LinkedIn or Facebook pages about topics you're passionate about. This will help you stand out from the crowd, and it will help you build trust and credibility with those who read. Promote your posts with links on other social media platforms.

Comment on posts with others on social media who are influential in the work niche you want to join.

Besides bolstering your LinkedIn and Facebook pages, consider building a personal website — a place where you can tell potential employers about all the wonderful things you've accomplished. Include a nice photo or two plus the best ways to contact you.

Order business cards to hand out whenever you come across someone who may have a job lead.

Don't use business cards from your former company with scratch-outs and handwritten updates.

Include your name, non-work telephone number, specialty email address (set up an account exclusive to your job search), a target job title, (Senior Customer Opportunity Manager; Director of Troubleshooting), a unique branding statement, and your LinkedIn profile URL.

While you're at it, scrub your other social media accounts of embarrassing, compromising and unprofessional posts.

10. Take Time for Self-Care

We probably should have mentioned this at the top: Take a breath. You've suffered a blow, and you hurt. You may be angry. In fact, 1 in 3 Americans report that they have layoff anxiety, according to a survey from lender Clarify Capital.

It's OK to grieve the loss of your job, especially when you ultimately have no power to influence events.

"When you're laid off, it's important to embrace the way you feel and surrender to feeling sad, excited, angry or whatever emotion you're feeling," says Keri Ohlrich, CEO of the Abbracci Group, a Los Angeles-based HR consulting firm.

As you grieve and vent to your closest confidantes, moderate what you say to the rest of the world about your former employer. Muster as much professional class as you can to put your experience in a positive light: what you learned, what you achieved, the colleagues you supported and who supported you, and why you're a better employee for the experience.

11. Start Your Job Search

As you grapple with your new reality, think hard about what you want to do next (it may be a completely new direction), how to position yourself for that opportunity (maybe take a class to hone or acquire a skill), understand your transferable skills, cultivate your network, study how to become the best interview you can be.

Now, let your friends and social media networks know you're in the market for that next opportunity. Email friends. Post an upbeat message across all your platforms. Don't fret about being idled. Everyone understands about layoffs.

Play this right and ultimately you may come to see the dark day you lost your job as the springboard to the career you always wanted.

It's also important to surround yourself with supporters who can lift you up when you experience down days. You're being tested, but plenty of people have walked this path before, and there is life on the other side of your old job — maybe even one that's more satisfying.

After you start your search, develop a weekly routine. It will keep you on task until you're ready to say yes to something new!

From "What to do When You get Laid Off", InCharge Debt Solutions, June 2, 2026.

"Even the darkest night will end and the sun will rise." Victor Hugo, Les Misérables

Correcting Negative Behaviors at the Workplace

“Be not afraid of growing slowly; be afraid only of standing still.” - Chinese Proverb

Negative behavior in the workplace comes in many forms, but according to a report from the Center for Creative Leadership, the employees with the worst job performance—the kinds of workers that give managers the most trouble—demonstrate some common characteristics. The survey asked a global sample of 214 leaders to describe a current or past “problem employee.” The authors then used their responses to identify the most prevalent behaviors of bad employees in the workplace

10 Examples of Negative Behavior in the Workplace

1. Poor Job Performance (25%)

The number-one example of negative behavior in the workplace is a lack of results. Not meeting your boss’ goals? The first step to take is to find out why you’re underperforming and take steps to improve on your weaknesses. Do this in a timely manner; you don’t have to wait until your annual performance review to get feedback from your supervisor.

2. Doesn’t Work Well With Others (24%)

Workers who had a difficult time forming positive relationships with coworkers, clients, and customers were considered problem employees. Trust is at the core of any professional relationship, therefore, to forge authentic relationships with your peers, make sure to give coworkers praise when it’s due, avoid office gossip, and lend colleagues who need help a hand in order to establish yourself as a team player.

3. Not Responsive to Coaching or Feedback (20%)

Business leaders said one quarter of their problem employees were impervious to feedback and failed to make needed improvements that would boost job performance. If you don’t want to be in that camp, get a clear idea of how your boss measures success. Some supervisors, however, are reluctant to give direct reports criticism. So, depending on your boss’ management style, you may have to be proactive and ask for feedback.

4. Resistant to Change (17%)

A significant number of the leaders surveyed said their problem employee was not open to change, for one reason or another. If you struggle to adapt, the solution is simple: Embrace change, and be willing to learn new skills.

5. Lacks Responsibility for Their Own Actions (17%)

Nearly one-fifth of the participants said their problem employees frequently failed to take responsibility for their actions and were more likely to blame others around them for poor outcomes. Don’t make excuses for your mistakes. Hold yourself accountable.

6. Negative Attitude (14%)

By your actions and responses, you can demonstrate and teach others how to behave in a positive and professional manner. Everyone is dealing with stuff outside of work, but don’t bring that baggage to the office.

7. Poor Work Ethic (14%)

Different people have different expectations about work ethic. Understand what your manager’s expectations are and tailor your work style accordingly in order to show that you have a positive work ethic

8. Arrogance (11%)

Know-it-all+s don’t tend to gel well with their coworkers. Self-absorption is a real problem. One tactic you can use to curb arrogant behavior: Genuinely listen to what others are saying before you give your two cents.

9. Ineffective Communication Skills (11%)

Bite off only as much as you can chew at one time. If you can’t accomplish a task, don’t commit to it.

Don’t wait until you feel overwhelmed to ask for help. Go to your manager when issues arise—not when it’s too late to solve the problem.

Ask open-ended questions. Questions that only require yes or no answers aren’t going to tell you much, but asking questions that begin with the five W’s gives the person you’re talking to the chance to share his or her knowledge with you.

10. Skills Don’t Match (10%)

An employee’s skills need to match their job responsibilities if there’s going to be any hope of success. For example, if attention to detail is a key element of a job but the person assigned to it is not very detailed-oriented, that person should not be in that job.

Hopefully, you can use these steps to correct any negative behavior and become an all-star employee!

From “Negative Behavior in the Workplace: 10 Examples”, Daniel Bortz, Contributor, Monster.com, 2024

How to Successfully Participate in a Job Fair

As mentioned earlier, Chautauqua Works in Jamestown is hosting a Job Fair at our location on July 23rd from 10am to Noon. Check out our website or our Facebook Page for participating employers.

It may seem like there are a lot of things you have to do when preparing for a career fair, but our most important advice is simple: **plan ahead**. These two simple words will be the key to your career fair success if you follow them.

As you take the time to plan ahead, you should focus on:

Having your resume written, proofed, and printed. A resume should not be thrown together the night before the career fair. This one page document is a snapshot of your education, experience, and accomplishments. It's crucial that you work to make your resume professional. Don't forget to make plenty of copies, as well! You don't want to be short if a recruiter asks for one!

Being well-groomed, and having an outfit ready. You might be the type of guy who likes the shave the night before or maybe you are the type of woman who likes to have a fresh coat of nail polish before a big day, either way make sure you save yourself some time to get these done. The last thing you want to do is to be shaving in your car while driving to the career fair. Weeks prior to the career fair, plan your outfit accordingly. If you need to go shopping for new clothes, give yourself plenty of time!

Rehearsing your elevator pitch. It will take several times saying your pitch out loud to memorize it and feel confident when saying it to recruiters.

Take days or weeks before the career fair to prepare your elevator pitch and rehearse it in the mirror. Remember an effective elevator pitch should last no more than 30 seconds!

A polished elevator pitch is useful at career fairs where your time to interact with employers is often limited to just a few minutes. In this instance, use your pitch to quickly make a good first impression and stand out from other candidates. When you introduce yourself to an employer at a career fair, lead with your elevator pitch but try not to jump into it immediately. First, exchange names and greetings, then the employer will likely reply with, "Tell me about yourself." If they don't, then you could say, "I'd love to tell you about myself—would that be ok?" Then begin your pitch.

Researching the companies that will be at the fair. This part of preparation is crucial to success when speaking with recruiters. Go on a company website and review the information. Knowing who they are and what they do will make you stand out amongst other attendees. Reading up on some company news and happenings will go a long way. Also, many companies like to promote their community involvement. Researching this topic can be beneficial as you will show the recruiter that you are interested in many aspects of the company.

Plotting your course through the career fair. Attendees often find themselves overwhelmed at career fairs because there are so many booths to visit, with so little time. By researching companies in attendance and planning a route, you can visit companies most relevant to your career choice.

Get a Business Card! When you finish your interaction with a recruiter, make sure you ask for his or her business card. In this way, you have a direct line to the company.

Following up after the Career Fair. Remember employers and recruiters are meeting dozens of potential hires in a short amount of time. A thank you email is an effective way to remind an employer/recruiter of your interaction with them. Sending a thank you email shows you are interested in the company and any open positions you are seeking.

Here are several key steps you can follow to write a successful thank you letter:

Address your email to the right person.

Reintroduce your self.

Thank them for their time and consideration.

State your interest in joining the company.

Politely suggest an informational meeting or interview.

End with another thank you.

Provide your contact information.

Hopefully this article will get you prepared to meet the employers at our Job Fair on July 23rd!

From: "The Most Important Things You Can Do To Prepare for a Career Fair" Career Fair Plus, 2022 and "How to Give an Elevator Pitch" by Jennifer Herrity, Indeed.com Career Guide, 2022

LOCATIONS

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www.chautauquaworks.com

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Over the past year, private sector jobs in the Western New York region shrank by 1,000 or 0.2 percent, to 541,400 ending in May 2026. Gains were greatest in private education and health services (+600), professional and business services (+300), and mining, logging, and construction (+200). Losses were centered in leisure and hospitality (-700), manufacturing (-700), and trade, transportation, and utilities (-500). Government sector jobs declined by -500 over-the-year. (New York State Department of Labor).

The unemployment rate for Chautauqua County as of May 2026 remains at 4.5%. The current rate is slightly below the New York State's unemployment figure of 4.6%. (New York State Department of Labor).

Check out our Facebook Page!

Our Facebook page is updated daily to inform job seekers of open positions throughout Chautauqua County. These positions are either full or part time, temporary or permanent and provided by numerous employers as well as the New York State Department of Labor. Job descriptions and information on how to apply are featured. Please visit our Facebook page and like/follow it!



Chautauqua Works On-Line!

Chautauqua Works has its own webpage:

www.chautauquaworks.com

This website features events, linkages to websites for job seekers, business services, information on our youth, disability, and veteran programs, and other valuable employment resources.

