

How to deal with Workplace Survivor Syndrome

- Allow yourself time to grieve – losing a long time coworker can be similar to losing a loved one.
- Resist the temptation to avenge lost co-workers. What’s done is done and holding a grudge doesn’t help.
- Ask for clarification from your Association on the decision process regarding reduction in force. Understanding the process can help alleviate the guilt of being spared.
- Avoid gossip about further cuts as this only adds to stress and anxiety. Focus on being positive and productive.
- Find opportunities to take on additional work or education that can lead to professional growth, personal fulfillment, and additional certification.
- Clarify your job description and ensure the district is aware of all your certifications and licenses. Hybrid positions may be created with duties that only you are qualified to perform.
- Take a mental break and reconnect with friends and family. Take a short trip and put physical distance between yourself and work.

If you experience any of the behaviors or symptoms listed below, use your District’s Employee Assistance Program (if available) or contact a local counseling center.

Behaviors

- Narrow-minded
- Not open to healthy risk
- Low productivity
- Depressed
- Increased absenteeism
- Low morale
- Loss of pride in the organization
- Increased resistance to change
- Acts of sabotage

Common Symptoms

- Insecurity about job
- Fear of the unknown
- Mistrust of management
- Uncertain/doubtful of skills and abilities
- Lack of loyalty
- High stress levels
- Low self-esteem
- Feeling overly dependent on the organization