It isn't the things that happen to us in our lives that cause us to suffer, it's how we relate to the things that happen to us that causes us to suffer.

- Pema Chödrön -
Getting Fired!

1. Your Reaction
2. Preventative Measures
3. First Steps After Being Fired
4. Understanding the Legal Processes
   – Legal Issues
   – Commission on Ethics
5. Your Reputation
REACTION

Think and act POSITIVELY!

Take Time to Reflect
OMG! What do I do?

1. Avoid Panic
2. Avoid Isolation
3. Avoid Letting Negative Emotions Consume You
4. Avoid Rigid Mindsets
5. Avoid “what ifs”
6. Avoid Lethargy and Inactivity
7. Avoid Going it Alone
PREVENTION

1. Hire an Attorney with Both Labor and Ethics Commission Experience

2. Obtain Professional Liability Insurance

3. DOCUMENT – CYA

4. Institute Reputation Management Initiatives
First Steps After Being Fired!

1. Contact Your Attorney
2. Make a written request for severance per contract.
3. Apply for Unemployment
4. Sign up as MIT and start the Job Process
5. Reflect and Understand Alternatives Before You Act
6. Begin /Expand Reputation Management
What Happened? Legal Quandaries

Were you Fired for Good Cause?

Was it a wrongful termination?

- Retaliation
- Discrimination
- Breach of contract
Lawsuit? To Sue or Not?

Is there any chance for mediation or settlement outside the court?

Could a lawsuit affect your future employability?

Are you strong enough to handle the emotional stress associated with settling a lawsuit?

Are you ready to commit to a lengthy process 2-3 years with an unsure outcome?

Do you have the funds to pay attorneys and other expenses or if you lose pay all costs associated with the suit?
Understanding the Florida Commission on Ethics

Do you think we need to strengthen our ethics laws?

Let me ask my lobbyist friends what they think about it and I'll get back to you!
COE Process

Complaint Filed By a Complainant

Within 5 Days
Forward to Accused

Three Procedural Stages
**Stage One**

Are the allegations legally sufficient?

- **NO**: Dismissed without investigation, and all records relating to the complaint will become public at that time.
- **YES**: Preliminary investigation initiated > Moves to Stage Two

Six months to one year from initial filing of complaint

How many move to Stage Two? 52%
Stage Two

Determination of Probable Cause by COE based on advocates recommendation

- NO: Complaint Dismissed and becomes public
- YES: Enters Third Stage of Proceedings

One to 1 ½ years from initial filing of complaint

How many move to Stage Three? 52%
Stage Three

Was the Law actually violated?

• Administrative Hearing
• Informal hearing

Recommended and Final Orders

1 year from COE Determination of Probable Cause and Final Order

Overall: 2-3 years from filing of original complaint
Managing Your Reputation
Before and After Being Fired!

"I can't explain it—it's just a funny feeling that I'm being Googled."
Reputation Management
Do it Yourself or Hire a Firm?

Clearly, this was not a good decision.
Marketing Yourself – 3 Easy Steps!

Create Websites/Blogs with your Name
- **Buy:** .com, .org, .net, .biz, .info
- **Free:**
  - [http://oelwingo.blogspot.com](http://oelwingo.blogspot.com)
  - [http://oelwingo.wordpress.com](http://oelwingo.wordpress.com)

Generate Social Profiles
- **The BIG THREE:** Linked-In, Face Book and Twitter
- **Minor Sites:** BigSight.org, Biznik.com, ProfessionalOnTheWeb.com, CVShare.net, AboutMe.Com, Multiply, Ziggs.com, Google+, Yahoo, Jigsaw, Orkut, and MySpace.

Publish New Material
- On your Blog and Websites regularly
- Interact on the big three regularly
REMEMBER

1. Avoid Panic
2. Avoid Isolation
3. Avoid Letting Negative Emotions Consume You
4. Avoid Rigid Mindsets
5. Avoid “what ifs”
6. Avoid Lethargy and Inactivity
7. Avoid Going it Alone
Additional Information

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