

backtalk



By Tanna Guthrie

The Pink Slip

The Pink Slip. If only it came with a matching bra. It never does. Instead, you walk off your job, for the last time, feeling rather exposed, unwanted and definitely not in a pink mood.

Losing your job sounds as if it's merely misplaced; if you look hard enough, you'll get it back. Many of my friends have recently been downsized, outsourced or moved in a "different direction," which always means out the door.

It's happened to me four times over the course of my radio career. Even knowing that it's coming doesn't lessen the sense of being an outcast as you take the perp walk past the receptionist's desk, shying away from the sympathy in her knowing eyes. It's a sense of being the lone wildebeest that the lioness brought down while everyone else escaped. Keep on running; every man for himself.

On the drive home, you call your spouse, your parents, your friends, determined not to cry. You didn't need that job anyway.

Alexander Graham Bell is the one who coined the phrase, "When one door closes, another opens." Do you suppose he said that during his first phone call to a fired friend? That clichéd platitude doesn't really help. What does is sitting down with your girlfriends for a bitch session on the subject of why you were screwed over.

From your former co-workers, you want a phone call, an acknowledgement that you mattered. Those calls seldom come. Maybe it's the fear of not knowing what to say, but saying nothing is the coward's way out.

When you first meet someone at a party, after you exchange names, the first question usually is, "So, what do you do?" Right or wrong, our sense of self worth is often centered on cashing a paycheck.

Panic and desperation. Not a good combo. Time to breathe. Regroup. Remember: when one door closes ... make sure you slam it. You'll feel better.

Tanna Guthrie is the afternoon radio host on 98.1 KUDL and plans on staying there until she's given the pink slip. Tanna is also a charity fundraising auctioneer and an associate of Prudential Kansas City Realty. She can be reached at 913.568.4888 or via e-mail tanna@kudl.com.

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