

## IDAHO TECHNOLOGY ■

# Job loss can offer a chance to rethink or reinvent your career

**A** layoff creates a tumultuous time in a person's life, filled with doubt, uncertainty and frustration. With major Idaho companies having cut back so much and hiring coming hesitantly, it can also be a time for introspection, for addressing weaknesses and even for reinventing yourself.

Looking back 15, 10 or even five years into our past proves how much the world has evolved. Jobs created a decade or so ago look much different. Right now there are positions available that didn't exist the last time you looked for work. Advancements in technology, computers, mobility, job searching, Internet, video commu-



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nication, smartphone capabilities, and of course social networking, make the workplace a different arena.

Because of this rapid evolution — or in some industries, revolution — there is a great need for technologically competent people who can learn new skills relevant to today's technology needs.

Educated, talented workers who were part of unfortunate layoffs are ideal candidates for new job opportunities in Idaho's budding entrepreneurial community, where the work is often focused on growing new tech companies.

Idaho has many opportunities for workers in the technology field, especially for those potential employees who are driven and willing to adapt within a constantly changing industry. The common assumption that Idaho doesn't have many job opportunities is actually hindering growth at some Idaho tech companies.

Software companies are in need of skilled employees with backgrounds in infor-

mation technology to help them turn their dreams of creating game-changing apps into reality. The new market for software comes from a culture that is rapidly adopting Androids, iPhones, tablets and touch pads as soon as they are launched. Thus, software development could unexpectedly turn out to be a solid lead for a dislocated employee.

Being part of a tightly knit community like the ones that exist across Idaho means there is support for those who need it. It's one of the reasons people join active industry associations like the Idaho Technology Council. Networking often pays big dividends. Members like me want to see not

only Idaho businesses succeed but fellow Idahoans, too. One won't happen without the other.

It is our goal to foster growth of technology companies in the state and to provide a valuable forum for industry, research, educators, investors and government. Mixers and meetings are frequently offered to members as a way to meet other tech pros who just might turn out to be a source of referral to your next job. You can be an ITC member for \$99 a year.

Similarly, Idaho government has been taking steps to combat Idaho's too-high unemployment rate. Gov. Butch Otter asked employees at the Department of La-

bor to extend their hours in the Boise area in response to the thousands of people affected by technology and other industries' layoffs. Otter said Idaho's government stands ready to assist those facing challenges of unemployment, new job training and other placement needs.

Those looking to hook on and prove their value in the job world should make proactive steps dedicated to bettering themselves. Learning how to work with new technology and networking to find the right niche is critical. It's never easy, but brighter days are out there for those willing to work for it. New opportunity is well worth the hard work.

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