

Am I going to be fired?

Signs that you might be receiving a pink slip

No one accepts a job expecting to be fired. But reversal of fortunes happens and circumstances change. And before you know it, your manager is telling you your services are no longer needed. Anger and betrayal follows and you feel you have been unfairly treated.

But have you *really* been a good employee?

In such a time, take a step back to assess the situation. Have you recently violated a company policy, shown some bad attitude or have been performing poorly? Did you make a huge mistake that cost the company a lot of money?

Possible signs of a looming pink slip

Sign #1 - You are slowly becoming "invisible"

You suddenly find yourself kept out of the loop of company notices and important emails, and are no longer called to meetings. You were once privy to crucial confidential information in the company due to your position - but not anymore. And to add insult to injury, communication between your boss and colleagues is becoming less sociable and more perfunctory. In fact, you think they are talking about you behind your back.

Sign #2 - You were called in for an unscheduled performance review

An unscheduled performance review might signal a possible axing, especially if the company conducts staff appraisals during a fixed period each time every year. Also, if you are being called in more often than usual by your manager to discuss your work performance, it may not bode well for your employability status.

Sign #3 - You had a really, really bad performance review.

Your boss had a lot of not-so-nice things to say when it came to "more room for improvement" at your performance review. If your score is lower than the worst average-performing employee in the company, it could spell trouble for you.

Sign #4 - You were told to "take a vacation"

Your boss tells you to take time off, but you have not been clocking any overtime on a project or do you have any annual leave to clear. However, considering the current economic climate, this could be more common in some industries (e.g manufacturing) where there have been a considerable dip in orders.

Sign #5 - Your company was recently sold or had merged with another

Mergers and acquisitions do not bode well for staff most of the time. A merger would mean duplication of departments and jobs and job cuts would be necessary. And being sold off to new management may mean new plans that could include layoffs and cost-cutting measures.

Sign #6 - You now have fewer responsibilities

Generally, companies do not let go of people who have large responsibilities and people reporting to them. But if over time your work responsibilities are reduced and direct reports have been assigned to someone else, management might have other plans for you - just not in the organisation.

Sign #7 - Sighted: a new job posting for your company that matches your job scope

The company might be preparing for your eventual departure by looking for someone waiting in the wings to immediately fill your shoes. They might even get you to train your replacement and then ask you to leave.

Sign #8 - You created a very big and/or a very expensive mess

You have committed a serious faux pas that cost the company a large amount that could have never been lost otherwise. Or you are guilty of a serious violation of conduct at work. You would most likely not be spared from either.

Fired? Deal with it

The hardest but most important thing is to accept the termination and reflect on why things went wrong. It is only human to feel angry and indignant but get over it quickly - lingering over the matter would only eat away at your self-confidence and affect your next job hunt.

While on a job hunt, be positive and honest in your resume and job applications - you do not want to be fired at your next job for fraud. And at the job interview, be truthful when asked about your last termination. It is the best opportunity to show the potential employer your sincerity and how you have learnt from your past experience.