Dealing with Loss in the Workplace

When faced with a loss in the workplace, such as a death of a co-worker, lay-off or transition, it is very natural to have feelings of grief, sadness, confusion and anger. These feelings are normal reactions and actually aid in the healing process. This guide will not guarantee that dealing with your emotions will be easy, but it will assist you in recognizing the impact the loss can have on your health and lead you to someone to consult with about how to deal with your feelings.

What are some common reactions to grief and loss?
+ Disbelief that this actually happened
+ Anger, frustration, blaming
+ Feeling that in some way you could have changed the outcome
+ Difficulty sleeping
+ Change in eating habits
+ Difficulty concentrating
+ Feeling forgetful
+ Isolating yourself from everyone else
+ Continual recall of the event
+ Change in social activities
+ Agitation with family/coworkers
+ Sudden bursts of crying

How Long do these feelings last?
Generally about 1-3 months, however, sometimes grieving can last up to a year or more. As with most difficult situations, time frames for dealing with strong emotions can differ. If you experience continued sadness and recall of the loss, please contact the EAP at (408) 241-7772.

I recognize that these feelings are normal, what do I do now?
+ Acknowledge that things are different now.
+ Allow yourself to feel sad; cry if you feel like crying. Talk with a trusted friend.
+ Get plenty of rest. If you can't sleep, get out of bed and read or work on a project until you are tired enough to sleep.
+ Exercise, minimally five times weekly for 20 minutes.
+ Utilize the support of your family, friends and co-workers.
+ Make as many daily decisions as possible.
+ Prioritize your tasks and your time.
+ Keep your reactions in check so as not to lash out at family members or co-workers.
+ Call your EAP (408) 2 4 1 -7772, and speak with a Counselor. This is a free benefit provided to you by your employer.