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Click for section: [Features](#) [Offers](#) [Resource](#) [Tip](#) [Where](#) [About](#)

## *a MESSAGE from SYLVIA*

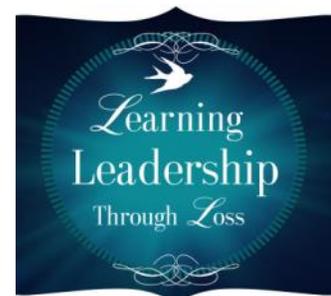
### **SETBACKS: Catalysts for Growth**

Setbacks come in various forms. Your star performer fails to complete a major project on time. A new hot shot product doesn't sell. Funding for a necessary service doesn't come through. A colleague betrays a confidence. A Board member undermines your efforts. Somebody else lands the promotion you've wanted. These are just some examples of the kinds of setbacks managers and leaders must endure and accept. .

Tests of character and will, setbacks can be learning experiences for all of us. By their nature they remove the cataracts from our eyes and let us see things we never saw before. They help us view and comprehend the bigger picture. If we're amenable, they can make us strong. Smart professionals expect setbacks. Wise professionals look for the lessons they teach

Over the years I've known a lot of setbacks. In my **forthcoming book** (hitting Amazon and Kindle at the end of this month) I talk candidly about several at work and at home. Firsthand I've seen that dealing with setbacks

requires flexibility, resilience, and perspective. It also takes a certain amount of



How to Leverage Personal Pain to Help Yourself and Others Succeed at Work

**SYLVIA D. HEPLER**

physical, mental, and emotional energy. Yes, you can crumble or quit. Or, you can pick yourself up and keep on going. That's what I did—every time. You can do it too. My feature article below, an excerpt from my book, gives you the guidance you need. The good news? Setbacks don't have to bring defeat.

[\*back to Ezine top\*](#)

## **FEATURE ARTICLE**

### **Rebounding from Setbacks: A Basic Blueprint**

#### **Acknowledge the setback.**

Name it aloud. Don't pretend it doesn't exist by sticking your head in the sand or burying yourself in work. Let yourself feel the anger, helplessness, and fear associated with the setback. Write freely about it in a journal. Don't hold back.

#### **Talk about it.**

Share the situation with a trusted colleague, partner, or friend in a safe environment. When someone listens with her whole being, some of the burden is lifted from your shoulders. Invite that person to provide insights and possible solutions. Tell her you want to hear about her own experiences with setbacks and how she coped with them.

#### **Avoid blame.**

Though it's a natural response, blame doesn't change the situation. Because it can ruin relationships and deplete your energy, blame often makes things worse. Get honest and determine if *you* played a role in the setback. Whether you did or didn't, you may need to forgive someone else.

#### **Look for the higher purpose.**

What do you know now that you didn't know before you suffered the setback? Think about how you can use that new knowledge to your personal advantage and the advantage of your company. Who are you being now? Perhaps, as a result of the situation, you need to lead in a different or unique way. While the Divine didn't give you the problem, a spiritual lesson may abide in it.

#### **Revise your expectations.**

Setbacks can show you where you expected too much in the first place from a person, a group, a product, a process, or an opportunity. As a leader, your job is to minimize the chances for setbacks to occur at all. Take off your rosy colored glasses and look at everything around you the way it is. Identify your blind spots about favorite employees, an esteemed funder, outdated procedures, or a short time frame. Face reality.

### **Take responsible action.**

The best salve for setbacks is action. Refuse to be a victim who sulks in the corner. Review your resources and plan next steps based upon the information you have now. Decide what ought to be done in light of current circumstances and who should be involved. Carefully examine your reasons. Responsible, honorable action is always rewarded. Just don't expect instant success.

### **Use humor.**

Laughter always helps. Even a forced smile can elevate your mood. As endorphins increase in your brain, you are better able to tolerate disappointments and deal with stress. As your anxiety level goes down, your ability to solve problems goes up. Humor removes some of the heaviness associated with setbacks, creating room for hope. Occasionally, give yourself permission to chuckle and joke. If you must, do it in secret.

Savvy managers and leaders regain their equilibrium after encountering setbacks. They look for the individual and organizational benefits to these threatening events. They roll with the punches. While all of this is possible, I'd never say it's easy.

[\*back to Ezine top\*](#)

## ***What Clients Say***

*I hired Sylvia a few months after I lost my job because my company went out of business. Needless to say, I was devastated and starting to get a little depressed. Never before in my career had I been unemployed. Suddenly I had no real purpose or structure to the days. I kept walking around in circles—going nowhere. During the three months I spent with Sylvia I got re-energized and motivated as we worked through several relevant steps in her “Blueprint for Landing Your Next Job” coaching program. By the end of the coaching*

*engagement I was emotionally and practically positioned to land my next management job.*

- Jana T., Southeastern PA

[back to Ezine top](#)

## ***Offers and Opportunities***

### **FREE Webinar on Risk-taking Slated for April 21st**

**Mark your calendar now** to participate in Sylvia's brand new webinar that focuses on risk-taking in the workplace. From 3:00-4:00 PM EDT on April 21, 2015 she plans to present various types of professional risk along with their potential benefits and consequences. Don't miss this free Power Point opportunity. By tuning in you may eliminate a lot of unnecessary problems, confusion, and stress.

[back to Ezine top](#)

## ***RESOURCES***

### **Resources in Your Midst**

In addition to reading online or offline literature on the topic of coping with setbacks, try tapping into the people you trust. In private conversations ask two or three colleagues to share their observations about how well they think you face and manage both large and small setbacks at work. Be sure to request examples. By the way, don't forget to create a safe environment so folks feel free to give you information that actually serves you.

[back to Ezine top](#)

## ***TIP***

Identify your most recent setback at work. Clarify its specific personal, professional, and organizational impact. Connect with your feelings. Then describe what you are learning about yourself, others,

and business as a result of experiencing this particular setback. Such dissection can position you to deal with future setbacks more efficiently and effectively.

[back to Ezine top](#)

## Where in the World is SYLVIA?

On March 10, 2015 Sylvia conducted a free one-hour teleseminar entitled: The Beauty of Boundaries: What, When, Where, Why, and How. Establishing boundaries at work is another topic she discusses in her forthcoming book. If you didn't register for this audio event but would like the recording, simply send an email request to: [sylvia@launchinglives.biz](mailto:sylvia@launchinglives.biz). The link will be sent to your inbox.

[back to Ezine top](#)



*Join Sylvia on these social networks!*

## About This Ezine

The purpose of this Ezine is to: 1) Provide readers with valuable FREE content which contributes to personal and professional growth as well as overall career development; and 2) Invite readers to take next steps toward working directly with Sylvia.

Back issues are [available here](#). Send an email by [clicking here](#) to manage your free subscription. Sharing content with attribution is encouraged as is forwarding the Ezine email. Include launchinglives.biz in your list of safe senders or friends, depending upon your email software, to be sure you receive the monthly emailed issues.

Launching Lives Ezine is dedicated to “building people ... building businesses.” ©2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014

[back to Ezine top](#)

## About SYLVIA

**Sylvia Hepler**, Owner and President of Launching Lives, LLC, specializes in career development for both corporate and nonprofit executives and managers. Based in South Central PA, she specifically supports clients as they upgrade their current job performance, seek a promotion, or plan/navigate a career transition. What makes her services unique is that Sylvia helps people to cope with change, loss, and grief as they work on developing their careers. Her professional background includes: nonprofit executive management/leadership, nonprofit community health program start-up, program evaluation, public speaking, business and freelance writing, teaching, and retail sales.

A certified executive coach through The Rescue Institute in Golden, Colorado and Quantum Endeavors in Chicago, Illinois (plus a participant in extensive continuing education opportunities with several coaches of national notoriety), Sylvia offers individual and group coaching, assessments, teleseminars, workshops, keynote speeches, and retreats. She also has created tangible and downloadable products that augment her coaching and speaking services.

**For more information** and to connect with Sylvia try:

[Launching Lives Website](#)

[Click to contact Sylvia by Email](#)

Reach Sylvia by phone at **717-761-5457**

[back to Ezine top](#)

## Launching Lives SERVICES

**Launching Lives, LLC** is a full service career development company for managers and executives located in South Central PA. Utilizing a holistic approach to service provision, Launching Lives focuses on supporting clients as they create the platinum level career they desire by upgrading their job performance, seeking a promotion, or planning/navigating a career transition

Often people don't really know HOW they might benefit from coaching. Quite simply, ask yourself these questions: "What can't I seem to resolve on my own? What is keeping me awake at night? What am I missing when I look at a certain situation? How can I get to the next professional level? How can I learn

certain skills quickly? How can I narrow my professional gaps? How can I motivate my staff? How can I communicate more effectively so I serve myself and others better? How can I reduce my work-related frustration? How can I develop a viable plan of action for myself and/or my organization? How can I obtain greater job satisfaction? Coaching may be the SOLUTION to any of these issues.

*[back to Ezine top](#)*

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