



# Severance

THE LEXINGTON LETTER



From the minds behind the Apple TV+  
Original Series Severance, directed by Ben Stiller.

**DT** **DARIA T (dt@topekastar.com)**  
Lumon Letter, November 12 at 12:43 PM  
TO: JIM M (jm@topekastar.com) Inbox

**TO:** JIM M (jm@topekastar.com)  
**FROM:** DARIA T (dt@topekastar.com)  
**SENT:** November 12 at 12:43 PM  
**SUBJECT LINE:** Lumon letter

Hey Jim,

I received the letter below from a Severed employee at Lumon. I also scanned the employee handbook that she mentions in her letter here too, so that's attached.

The whole thing seems pretty out there... but perhaps worth pursuing? What do you think?

Daria

—  
Daria Thorne, Reporter  
The Topeka Star

*Attachment 1 of 2:*

**PLEASE READ IMMEDIATELY**

**Daria Thorne  
c/o The Topeka Star  
Saturday, November 10**

Dear Ms. Thorne,

My name is Peg Kincaid. Until yesterday, I was an employee at Lumon Industries here in Topeka. I'm writing on behalf of myself and my friend, Peggy K, who is now no longer with us. Maybe it's strange to call her my friend, but it's how I think of her. Depending on how much you know about Lumon and what they do, maybe you already know what I mean.

I chose to reach out to you because I've seen, among other things, your thorough coverage of the Dorner truck incident on November third. I thought about going to the cops with what I'm about to tell you, but people say Lumon has a lot of connections with the police and City Hall and so I don't think they would believe me anyway. I hope you believe me. I really need someone to believe me.

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With that in mind, I'm going to try to give you the full story. Forgive me if I get a bit rambly... I tend to go on and on when I'm nervous. And I'm really very nervous about this. Right now, I'm staying in a motel because I can't shake the feeling that someone has been watching me. The same black cars seem to always be parked next to mine. And for the last few weeks, my mail has been all crumpled when I've gotten it at night, like someone's digging through it. It all feels so off.

So yes, I just want to get this all written down, in case something happens. Something beyond what's already happened. Alright. Here goes:

As a bit of background (I think, in your field, you call it "color"), up until about two years ago, I was a school bus driver for Clover Elementary down off Route 2. I'd been there for about twelve years. I loved my job. I love kids, even though I don't have any of my own. And I sincerely believe they liked me too. At some point, the kids learned that I was the youngest driver on the school's payroll (even though I was already fifty), so they gave me the nickname "Baby Driver," a reference to the beloved action film of the same name. But despite this fun camaraderie and my relative youth, I'll confess I was starting to feel burned out. My route had gotten longer, I had a few real misbehavers, all that stuff.

It all came to a boiling point one day in February. It was a cold day; the kind I used to call a "booger-freezer" to get a rise out of the kids until a fundamentalist mom heard about it and complained. I was near the end of my afternoon route when, through no fault of my own, my bus hit black ice. I pumped the brakes, as per protocol, but our momentum kept us sliding and for the first time in my career in child transpo, I landed my rig in a ditch.

All the kids screamed. I wanted to scream too, but you know how it is — gotta be the adult. Thank the good lord no one was hurt, just shook up. But we were stuck for nearly two hours, with the heat knocked out. The kids were crying, scared, cold, asking for their

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mommies. We had three urination events, which in the low temperature proved a real issue. Finally, another bus was able to come by and get my kids. I remained with the vehicle (again, protocol), and listened to the radio to try to stay warm. I don't know, it made sense at the time.

Now this is the part that, when I look back, still makes me squirm. While I was sitting there waiting for the tow, boogers freezing, I distinctly remember thinking to myself, "Fuck this job". I may have even said it out loud, I'm not sure. But I either thought it or said it, and right at that moment, as if it had heard me, this ad came on the radio. It was an employment recruiting ad, but they were weirdly vague about the job. Lot of flowery talk about "making history" and "rethinking the notion of work." I was sort of tuning out until the end when they said the name of the company: Lumon Industries. I knew who they were — I'd been using their deodorant since puberty — but I didn't know they had a branch in Topeka. I remember thinking "Well, that was weird".

Anyway, two hours later, the tow truck finally came and yanked my rig from the ditch. I got home five hours later than usual, with an angry voicemail from my supervisor accusing me of driving recklessly. I wasn't asking for a medal or anything, but a word of acknowledgement over the hell I'd just been through would have felt more appropriate than a chewing out. That night, I told myself I needed to start looking for a new job.

I was off the next day, and I went downtown to run a few errands. On the way home, I passed what I realized must be the new Lumon site, which had been under construction for the past few months. It was a big building that looked almost like a mall. I thought back to when I'd heard their ad while shivering in that freezing bus. And even though I had ice cream in the trunk, I found myself turning into the parking lot. I parked, and I went in.

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At first I figured no high tech company would hire someone like me. I mean, I only got through a few semesters at Kansas State. But the nice Lumon lady who greeted me told me that didn't matter. She said that I could get a great office job, incredible benefits, manageable hours, and all I had to do was this tiny little procedure called Severance.

I'm guessing you know what that is. Well, I didn't — remember, this was a few years back and it took them longer than it probably should have to explain it to me. They told me that after a screening process, I'd have a small, totally painless chip inserted into my brain. That freaked me out for a beat, but they assured me it was easier than getting a cavity filled. Then they told me that the chip would make it so I wouldn't remember work.

That was the real benefit here: I'd have absolutely no memory of work. Never. I'd just go into the office and the chip would turn on in my brain, activating my work self — my "innie" is what they called it. That person would do all the work. And then when I'd leave work, the chip would turn off, and I'd be back and have the whole rest of my day ahead of me. No memory of work and four times the pay? Despite it being quite a drastic procedure, all that made it feel like, well — a no brainer. Or, ha, a half-brainer? Because of Severance? You get it? Sorry. My dad always hated it when I joked when I was nervous, but here we are!

So where was I? Right. Back to Lumon. I got the procedure, I was Severed, all that, and it was totally fine. They even gave me a really nice four-cheese panini afterward because my procedure time slot butted up against the lunch hour. I thought, "This is so great! What a great place to work!"

I was wrong. Very very wrong. But I wouldn't learn that for another two years.

I started at Lumon the following Monday and settled into this nice day-to-day routine. I'd show up at work,

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swipe my fancy Lumon badge and then change out of my outdoor clothes and into some Lumon neutrals, as they call 'em — which means no labels, tags, patterns, no words at all, on anything. Company policy. Lumon wanted a complete divide between innies and us people on the outside, a.k.a. the outies. No written word, no messages back and forth were allowed — all of that is what you sign up for when you get Severed. In my orientation, they even talked about these code detectors built into the elevators that would sense written words. It was a fancy place.

Then, after changing my clothes, I'd take the elevator down to the Severed floor in the basement and then — nothing. Sweet sweet nothing. In the middle of the elevator ride, my Severance chip would switch my consciousness over to my innie, this whole other personality, with no memory of my life here in Topeka. She could walk and talk and all that, but didn't remember, say, my third-grade teacher's name, or me falling off a horse and breaking my arm when I was eight, or when my ex-husband told me he wanted a divorce. Lucky girl.

She was ME, but NOT me.

So yeah, my innie would wake up and head to work — doing whatever it is my innie did down there. Some desk job with data, I'd been told. And meanwhile, the other half of the brain — that is, ME — would basically get to just take a nap for the day. At the end of the workday, I'd come to, in that same elevator, maybe a little tired after what I assume was a hard day's work, but otherwise none the wiser for earning that paycheck.

And that's how it went, day in and day out, for two years. Until one particular Tuesday, when I messed it all up. Or, actually, we messed it all up.

That Tuesday, I got off work — in other words, I came to in that elevator — and went to my locker. Nothing odd there. But then, as I was pulling on my jacket, I felt something in my pants pocket — a surprise, since we're

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not supposed to bring anything in or out. I pulled out a half-sheet of typing paper, neatly folded into pocket size. Seeing that the upstairs security guard was busy watching soccer on his phone, I opened it up.

Now, at this point, I need to back up again and give you more “color,” but I promise it’s for a very important reason. My sister Meryl is only about eleven months older than me. We actually were born in the same year, funnily enough. We’ve since grown apart as time’s gone by, but as kids we were really close. In fact, we were so close that we invented a secret language together, called Puglish. We’d write long letters to each other about what boys we liked or teachers we hated in Puglish so no one else could understand. I say “language,” but actually, all we did was replace each letter with a different symbol. “A” was a seahorse. “B” was a lightning bolt. “X” was a pair of boobs, which got us in trouble once or twice, but not too often because it’s an uncommon letter and we were sneaky. Anyway, like I said, Meryl and I had grown apart over time, and I hadn’t thought about Puglish, let alone read or written it, for more than thirty years.

So, on that Tuesday at Lumon, you can imagine my surprise when I unfolded the paper and found it lined with rows of little seahorses, lightning bolts, and other distantly familiar symbols. There was even a boobs in the second paragraph. I stood there, baffled at how a full note in perfect Puglish had ended up in my pocket while I was down on the Severed floor.

I took the note home and looked it over. It was strange how quickly my memory of our code came back to me, and I was able to read the message almost as if it had been in English. Understanding its contents proved a little harder:

*Dear Peggy K,*

*I don't know what this language is, or why it's in my head. It's been coming to me slowly over the past few weeks. I find myself writing it at my desk. I thought if anyone would know what it was, maybe it*



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*would be you. I don't know if this will even pass the code detectors, but I felt I had to try. I know this is a breach in protocol. Please don't be angry with me.*

*If you cannot tell, I am your innie. I live down here in the Macrodata Refining Department, with my three co-workers. I have often thought of you and what your life might be like out there, and why I exist in the first place. Why does one choose to get Severed?*

*Maybe this language isn't real and I'm writing nonsense. But if you can read this, I would love for you to write me back. I understand if that is not possible. I do not mean any harm.*

*Sincerely, your innie,  
Peggy K*

Well, this knocked me on my ass, I'll be honest. I hadn't really given my innie too much thought before then. Like, I knew she was down there, doing her thing, but part of what I loved so much about this whole Severance thing is that I didn't need to think about it.

But then there she was — Peggy, my innie, writing to me. In Puglish. I stared at it for a long time. It also tripped me up because I hadn't been called Peggy since elementary school. I'd been told during training that my innie would be like a little kid, with little to no life experiences, but I didn't think it'd be so... obvious.

I stared at that note for the rest of the night. I thought of her, or me, or a different version of me I guess, down there in the dark, on the Severed floor, clearly desperate for more information.

I was really torn about what to do. I loved my job, or what I knew about it, and I didn't wanna mess that up. Writing messages to my innie was definitely against Lumon policy, there's no question about that. Was it possible a code invented by two grade-schoolers could be enough to trick the detectors? Granted, it was a new technology, but still!



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To this day, a part of me wishes I'd done what I was supposed to: Call my Lumon supervisor, Mr. Alvarado, and report my innie's infraction. But sometimes, at the end of the day, I'd come out of the elevator feeling, I don't know... different than I'd ever felt before. Maybe a little giddy or sometimes all wound up, or scared even, and it made me wonder: What were they doing down there with my body?

So, the next morning, I decided to write her back — just this once — and ask her.

She wrote back right away — I got a message in my pocket that next night. She told me she worked as a Macrodata Refiner. When I asked her what that means, she told me it involved working at a computer, putting these special numbers into special bins, which made no sense to me — that's a JOB?? And I'm making four times as much as when I was driving a bus?

Once the floodgates were opened, I couldn't help myself — I wrote back to her more and more, asking follow-up questions. She responded with such a weird description that I had to write it down here:

*The best I've come up with is that the numbers make you feel things. It's not an individual number, but a whole cluster of them, and after a while, they'll sort of \*throb\* a certain emotion at you. Sometimes it's joy or sadness or worry. Sometimes it's obvious, other times more subtle. Each type of number has its own designation, like the angry ones are called MA. Once you've identified the numbers, you surround them with the arrow on your computer and into a bin they go.*

I want to take a moment, Ms. Thorne, and say that this sounded as nuts to me as it does to you. These numbers made her feel things? Peggy tried to help me out, and describe it more, but the more detail she'd go into, the more confused I got. I asked her if the numbers ever ended. She told me yes, when you finish a file. I guess there's a whole wall of them on her computer screen,

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but eventually, the wall runs out, and all the numbers have been sorted, and that's that — file completed.

Peggy told me that they get prizes when they finish the files: Some weird stuff, like a melon bar and something called a “music-dance experience” and a waffle party. It all sounded pretty infantilizing to me, but I hope they at least get different types of syrups to go along with those waffles.

It wasn't always me drilling her though — she also asked me things too. And over and over again, I was beside myself with how much it felt like I was talking to a kid-version of, well, myself. She wanted to know everything about outside life, like what it felt like to be drunk, or asleep (I'd never thought of it before, but she'd never been asleep, because I do all that on the outside!), or to fall in love (that one was a toughie to answer, just ask my ex-husband) or to have someone you love die. It was strange to see how the procedure filtered her knowledge. She knew what beer was but couldn't name a specific brand. She knew she lived in America but couldn't draw a map of it to save her life. She knew that movies exist, but not who David Niven was (despite him being by far my longest-standing crush). It was like she'd seen only the vaguest shape of the world through a foggy window.

She asked me what snow felt like (I sat on that one for a while, and finally came up with holding a cold cotton shirt that melts in your hands), and if I knew how to ride a bike. (I do. Not very well, but I don't tip over either.) And if I ever regretted getting Severed. To be honest, I hadn't — until I thought more about her sitting down there, in the dark.

So anyway, yes, Peggy and I wrote these letters back and forth for, I don't know, maybe three or four weeks. Not every day, but enough that it started to feel like... this sounds crazy, but like I'd found a new friend. She made me see my life in a different way. I used to think my life was boring, and pretty mundane, but Peggy found all the little details I'd mention fascinating, even

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glamorous. Once I painted my nails hot pink (which is really not my style), just to see what she'd think. That night, she wrote me back saying tears had sprung to her eyes, our nails were so beautiful.

Sorry, I could go on forever. Like I told you, I ramble when I get nervous and I'm jumping out of my chair over here. No joke — Housekeeping just knocked on my motel room door and I shrieked.

So anyway — Me and Peggy kept thinking we'd get caught, but nothing seemed to come of it. Peggy grew concerned that their head of security, Mr. Dooley — a "pale little man with a terrifying smile" — was watching her more closely than usual. She described seeing him at the far end of the hall when she'd leave for the day, "Just standing there, smiling. Like he knew what I was doing but wanted to play with me a while before dragging me to the Break Room." I asked her what the Break Room was, but she never told me. Despite the forbidden nature of our whole interaction, this seemed to be a specific topic she was afraid to broach.

Still, those code detectors never seemed to bother us or pick up the Puglish. If they had, I would've cut it off, played dumb, blamed my own idiocy — and never Peggy's — but it never happened.

But then we get to that morning of Friday, November 3rd, which is why I'm writing to you in the first place. I come-to in the elevator as usual that night and check my pockets, just like I've been doing for months — and there's another note from Peggy. And she's really excited. She finished her file, which was named "Lexington," earlier that afternoon, at 2:30 pm. She says she's been so excited to tell me about it that she could barely wait to go home, even if it meant cutting her melon bar party (???) short.

She told me that the Lexington file had been extra complicated and particularly exhausting to do (this made sense to me — I'd felt fried for the last few weeks after coming-to in the elevator and didn't know why). She said she'd pushed through and completed it and that everyone

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at Lumon, including her boss and her boss' boss, was thrilled with her work. They'd even given her an extra melon bar party to cash in later in the week. Whoopee, right? Again, I don't fully get this whole refining-files thing, but a big win at work makes me look good too, so what the hell. And our whole body just felt JAZZED when I came to in the elevator, which wasn't a bad feeling either. I drove home and went for a jog for the first time in weeks. I felt like I could tackle the world.

Later that same night, I'm watching TV and I see you, Ms. Thorne, on the news. Your face was as serious as I've ever seen it, your voice steadfast and resolute, as you reported about the truck that had been blown up in New York at 2:32 pm that day. The Dorner Therapeutics truck. Dorner, of course, is a major competitor of my now former employer Lumon. God, watching that footage made my heart stop. Seeing bystanders running for cover, the destroyed street, all of it seemed like hell.

That's when a sudden, intrusive thought dumped a hard knot right into the pit of my stomach. I looked back at my earlier note from Peggy, and read again when she'd completed the Lexington File.

The time had been 2:30 pm.

Two minutes before the bomb went off.

I was stunned. I tried to tell myself I was being paranoid, but I couldn't stop the thoughts from coming. Two people were burned alive in a truck. Four others were dead, too. No explanation, no terrorist group claiming credit. The next day, Dorner said that some of their devices had been destroyed. Their prototypes or whatever. It almost seems like this was some kind of corporate espionage.

It all seems like too much of a coincidence, doesn't it? Is that why these numbers are making the innies down there feel things? Because they're dropping bombs or blowing things up from down there? What had I gotten my body — and my innie, my friend — into?

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I barely slept that weekend. On Monday morning, I wrote Peggy another note, asking her to send me any information she could about the file she'd just refined. Told her it was super important. She didn't know anything about the Dorner truck down there, of course, but I tried to press her more about the numbers. I asked her: What do her bosses tell her about the numbers? About Lexington in particular? What is this data they're refining? Not much, she said, other than it being very important work. Finally, I worked up the nerve to tell her about the truck. It took me over an hour to write that note. I told her I couldn't be sure there was a connection, but that the timing felt too close to ignore. I told her not to refine another number down there, no matter the consequences. I told her that, if I was right, then Lumon had been using us both for something insidious and horrifying. I told her none of this was her fault. And that I loved her.

I didn't hear back.

A day passed, then three. Every day I went down, hoping to feel the familiar pressure of a note in my pants pocket as I came back up. But there was nothing. Was she mad at me? Horrified by my claim? Or was it something else? Was there something stopping Peggy from responding?

It's a funny thing, worrying about your innie. I was leaving each day without a scratch on me, and I was certainly still alive, which meant that physically Peggy had to be fine. But her silence every evening grew more terrifying as the days turned to weeks. I wanted to write her again, ask what was going on — but was Lumon on to us? If so, another note could spell disaster for my dear friend.

One Tuesday, I emerged to find my hair wet. A note on my windshield from Lumon informed me that my innie had had a "visually comedic but painless mishap with the water cooler". I was given a gift card to Murray's All-Day Breakfast Buffet as an apology for

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the inconvenience. That night, over hashbrowns, my mind raced. What the hell were they doing to her down there each day? How could I help? Should I resign? Since Lumon was the only place she was alive, quitting would essentially mean killing her. Surely, I couldn't do that, no matter how bad things had gotten.

It was two weeks later when, upon ascending for the evening, I felt something thick and firm tucked in the back of my waistband. I struggled to show no emotion as I went to my locker, retrieved my personal items, and went out to my car. When I was safely off Lumon property, I breathlessly pulled it out and saw a faded, spiral-bound booklet with a teal cover marked "The Macrodata Refiner's Orientation Booklet." A note was taped to the front, written in the King's English in my very own handwriting:

**Dooley found your last note. Been in Break Room. Don't know how long.**

**Think you're right about Lexington.**

**Lumon updating code detectors but they're down today. Hope this booklet gives clarity.**

**Be careful. I love you too.**

I opened the booklet and was startled to find an eerily chipper creature smiling up at me from the page. He looked – pardon my indelicacy – like a little dildo with translucent skin revealing a spiral-shaped digestive tract leading down to his anus. After reading his intro, I learned that this was "Sevy," a personified Severance chip and the internal mascot Lumon uses to train its innies.

Describing this document is probably a fool's errand, so I'm enclosing it here for you to look at too. I've spent hours going over it, trying to decipher what the numbers might mean, as explained by the all-knowing Sevy. Maybe you can figure out more, 'cuz to me this whole thing feels like it was written for a child. That's all you'll tell me about what all this stuff means? The only thing the handbook says about it is, "We know you may be curious about what the numbers mean."

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However, knowing the true meaning behind the numbers could inhibit your natural intuition.”

Well, my natural freakin’ intuition is telling me something horrible is happening here.

After that, I didn’t hear from Peggy for a week. I didn’t write anything either, worried that Lumon’s updated code detectors would be able to read Puglish and I’d land her back in the “Break Room”, which I could tell by now wasn’t a fun place with bean bag chairs and a pinball machine.

This brings us to last Friday morning. I sat in my car in the Lumon lot, trying to mentally prepare for my strange daily descent, and wondering what horrors the day held for my dear Peggy. For some reason, I thought of that moment on the bus, skidding across the ice with the kids screaming behind me. Knowing I was responsible for whatever was going to happen to those children in the coming seconds. As their screams rang in my head, I did something that contradicted my better judgment. I grabbed a fast-food receipt out of my cup holder and hurriedly wrote a note in Puglish. It was a very quick note. All it said was “*Are you okay?*”

I went into work and descended in the elevator as usual, trying not to look nervous as I went down. When I came back up, my heart was RACING, my palms were sweaty — though of course I didn’t know why. More troublingly, I felt a dry clump of something in my mouth. I looked at my watch: 9:10am. Only ten minutes had passed since I’d gone down.

Trying to look casual and avoiding eye contact with the security guard, I made a beeline for my locker. There, I deftly spat out the object in my mouth, which I found was a wadded-up sheet of paper. Unable to wait, I opened it and read:

*Peg,*

*Leave now. Get somewhere safe. They will try to follow.*

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*Nothing they say is real.*

*Distribute the training booklet. Answers are there if you look.*

*Thank you for my life. You were the best part of it. I'll be with you always,*

*Peggy K*

And that was it.

I called Mr. Alvarado and quit on the spot. I left Topeka without returning home.

I only wish I could talk to Peggy again, tell her that I was going to get help for her and for all the Severed people down there, and that somehow... somehow I'd get the word out about what Lumon is doing. That attack killed six people, and I can't even begin to tell you why — even though I may have been the one (or two) who pulled the trigger.

But the thing that hurts the most is the only way I could ever talk to Peggy again is to go back to Lumon to switch my Severance chip back on... and I can't do that again. Not ever.

So instead, here I am, writing to you. I considered putting this up on social media, but I have about sixteen friends on there, including my ex-husband, and figured you could get the word out faster than all that.

I hope so anyway. For me and for Peggy.

Thank you for your time, Ms. Thorne. I look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible. My cell is 785-555-4332. Please hurry.

Very sincerely,  
Peg Kincaid



DT

Jim M (jm@topekastar.com)

Re: Lumon Letter, November 12 at 12:43 PM

TO: DARIA T (dt@topekastar.com)

Inbox

**TO:** Daria T (dt@topekastar.com)

**FROM:** Jim M (jm@topekastar.com)

**SENT:** November 13 at 10:03 AM

**SUBJECT:** RE: Lumon letter

Hey Daria,

Read through this letter. Interesting stuff but all, as you said, pretty “out there”.

I don't think we have the resources right now to put you on this type of story. Besides, seems more like a disgruntled employee making stuff up. I called over to a source I trust implicitly at Lumon and it sounds like she was let go because of too many absences.

Let's have you focus on the high school basketball playoffs, as discussed.

Thanks,

Jim

—

**TO:** Jim M (jm@topekastar.com)

**FROM:** Daria T (dt@topekastar.com)

**SENT:** November 13 at 10:08 am

**SUBJECT:** RE: Re: Lumon letter

You're sure? I can still file that story and then move onto this. These allegations, if true, are pretty astonishing.

DT

—



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Inbox

**TO:** Daria T (dt@topekastar.com)  
**FROM:** Jim M (jm@topekastar.com)  
**SENT:** November 13 at 1:03 pm  
**SUBJECT:** RE: Re: Re: Lumon letter

Too late anyway. Just saw this — from Carolyn over in Obits:

***Margaret “Peg” Kincaid, 54.*** *Peg Kincaid passed away from complications from a car accident on November 11th. She is survived by her sister, Meryl Rasmussen, of Tacoma, WA, and a group of supportive and loving friends throughout the Topeka, KS area. A dedicated school bus driver for several decades, Peg enjoyed bridge, spy novels, gardening, cats, and David Niven films. She will be missed by all who knew her. A memorial service will be on November 20th at 10 am. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Topeka Humane Society.*

Tough break. Sorry. Not to sound too harsh here, but all this might be for the best... her whole letter felt really loose and it's not like we want to get into a libel suit with Lumon. You may remember what happened with the Nashville Tribune when they printed what they thought was a well-sourced exposé on Lumon's feeding tube devices: They got sued into oblivion and folded six months later.

Please send me those basketball pages ASAP though. I want to run them in tomorrow's edition.

Jim

—  
Jim Milchick, Editor

*The Topeka Star*

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# **The Macrodata Refiner's Orientation Booklet**

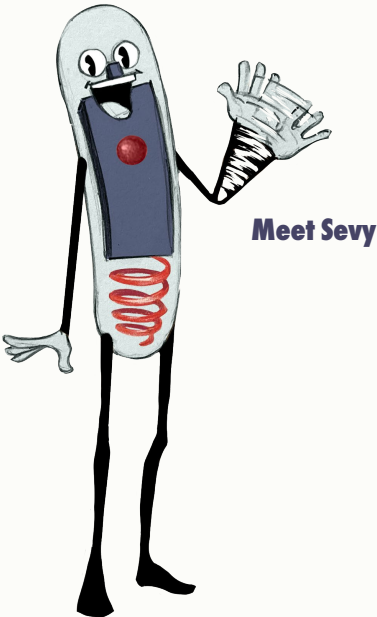
**Instruction  
Handbook for  
Newly-Severed  
Employees**

# Welcome to the Lumon Family

**Congratulations on your new job!  
All of us are thrilled you've become  
a part of Lumon Industries.**

**From the humble beginnings of  
a small topical salve company,  
to the world's leading pioneer in  
biotechnologies, Lumon has thrived  
thanks to workers like you.**

**Welcome to the Lumon Family!**

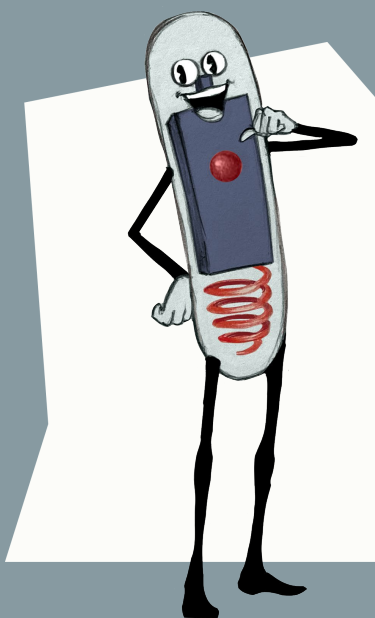


## What Does It Mean to Be Severed?

**By agreeing to join the Severance program,** you have consented to your perceptual chronologies being surgically split. What this means is that your access to memories will be spatially dictated from now on.

You will be unable to access your outside life memories whilst on Lumon's Severed basement floor, nor access your inside work memories upon your ascent and return to the outside world.

This effect is permanent.



## Fun Fact:

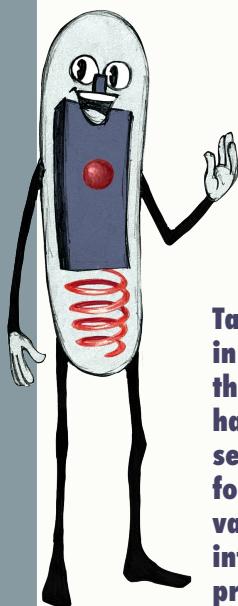
**Becoming Severed may sound invasive but we assure you that the procedure is quick and painless.**

**The Severance Chip is implanted in the brain through a needle that is inserted via the back of the neck into the memory portion of the brain. The procedure is handled by a world-class medical staff directed by a fluoroscopy monitor which allows for precision placement of the chip.**

**The procedure takes just a few minutes and recovery is immediate.**

## What Does It Mean to Be a Refiner?

**A refiner is someone who makes something pure,** more usable, and more accessible, whether it is the oil industry, the sugar industry, or our industry. As a Lumon refiner, you'll be removing impurities from data and reorganizing that data into its purest form. You have been selected for this position because we recognize in you both the intuition and emotional intelligence to perform those tasks quickly, efficiently and, most importantly, reliably. Essentially, a Macrodata Refiner sorts data sets from different categories into digital bins, a task which requires immense skill and focus.



**Take pride in knowing that you have been selected for your vast intellectual prowess.**

**We know you may be curious about what the numbers mean. However, knowing the true meaning behind the numbers could inhibit your natural intuition.**

## How Will I Know What to Work On?

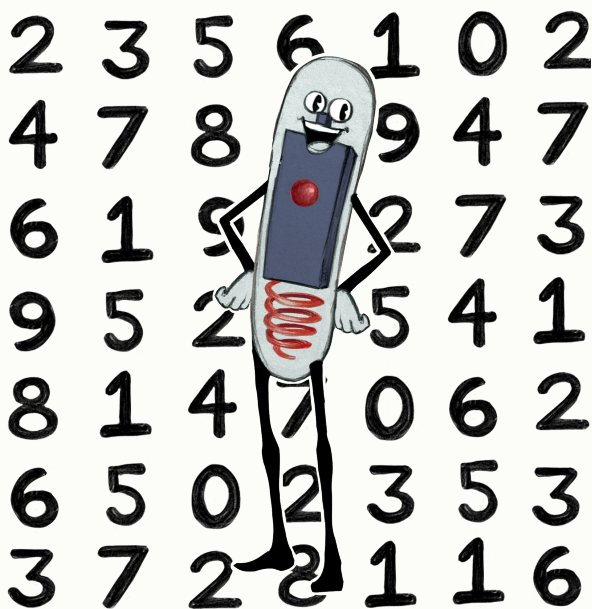
**First, you will be assigned a macrodata file.** This selection has been made carefully by your superior.

**After opening your file you will be met with a sea of numbers that seems to stretch endlessly in all directions.**

**Over time, certain clusters of numbers will start to make you feel a certain way.**

**There are four categories of numbers, each of which elicits a different feeling. A refiner's job is to fill each of five bins evenly with the four kinds of number clusters.**

**Once every bin is properly filled, the file is 100% refined and the job is done.**

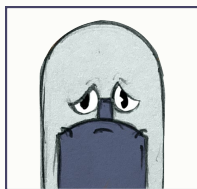


## What Are The Four Kinds of Numbers?

**As a Macrodata Refiner**, it is important to learn the four different types of numbers you will encounter throughout the process of refining a data set. Every number will elicit one of four emotional responses within you, and it is important to be aware of the four types so that you can more quickly assess and categorize your emotional response. This will, in turn, allow you to more quickly sort the numbers into their appropriate bins.

Here, Sevy will teach you about the different types of numbers.

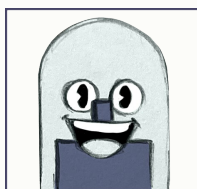
1



**WO**

These numbers elicit melancholy or despair.

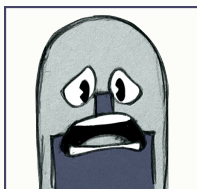
2



**FC**

These numbers elicit joy, gaiety or ecstasy.

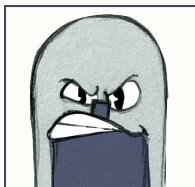
3



**DR**

These numbers elicit fear, anxiety or apprehension.

4



**MA**

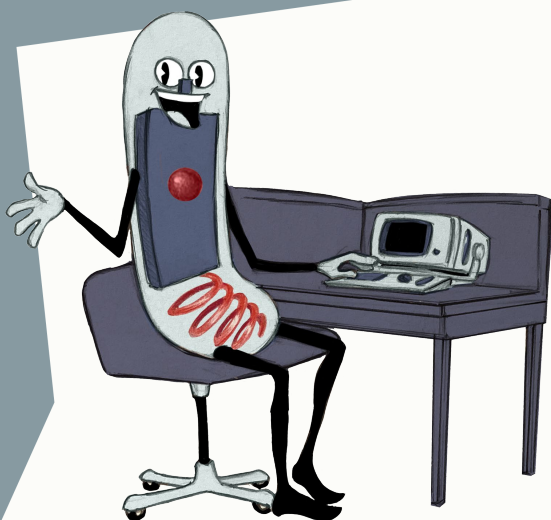
These numbers elicit rage or a desire to do harm.



## How Do I Refine a Number Cluster?

**Sorting numbers is easy once you get the hang of this simple method!**

Follow along with the steps of sorting numbers on the following pages.



**After you sort one set, it's easy to keep going until the whole file is complete!**

## All About Refining Numbers

1. Turn on your computer. Sit back and watch as your computer cycles through its boot-up process. Do not be alarmed by the many lines of text appearing on your screen. This is completely normal. Your computer is simply loading the Macrodata Refining Program.

```
Open interface: 0x100000531
parseElements: keyboard: 0 digitizer: 12 pointer: 0 0 scroll: 0 led: 0
parseElements: vendor: 2
HE2N_Key Does Not Exist, use kSMCPStatesIGPU for Internal GPU
GPU = IGPU Initialized, Control ID 16
Exited AGPMController::start()
-- 0x5c30 -- 0xe000 -- 0x7e00 ****
initWithTask
start
**** -- ON -> ON (thread: 0xfa40)
Speaker has output streams: 1
Reuse output buffer idx:1 dev:Speaker offset:13c000 size:41000
Codec Output has output streams: 1
Reuse output buffer idx:2 dev:Codec Output offset:184000 size:20800
Digital Mic has output streams: 0
Codec Input has output streams: 0
Total output descriptors: 3
Device:Speaker using output stream idx:1
Registered DeviceUID:Speaker Index:1
ActuatorDeviceUserClient::start Entered
```

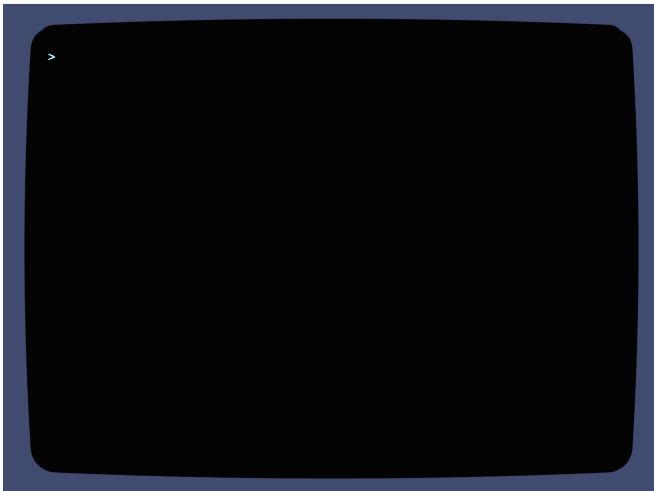
2. Now, watch as the iconic logo of our beloved company spins onto the screen. This is all part of the computer's boot-up sequence.



## All About Refining Numbers

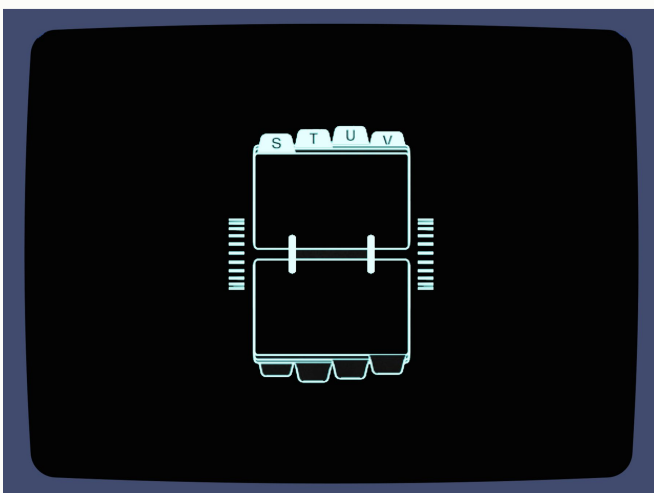
**3.** After the logo disappears, a small blinking cursor will appear in the upper left of your screen. Using your keyboard, type the name of the file on which you will be working and then press ENTER.

If you have not been assigned a file, or if you cannot remember the name of the file you were assigned, ask your supervisor to refresh your memory.



**4.** After pressing ENTER, your computer will load a file Rolodex. Using your ARROW keys, page UP or DOWN until you locate the tab that shows the name of the file you were assigned.

CLICK on the Rolodex card.



## All About Refining Numbers

**5.** When the Rolodex disappears, your computer will now load the Macrodata Refining Program. Take a moment to familiarize yourself with the interface using the key below.

**A** Project Name: This is where the name of your file will appear.

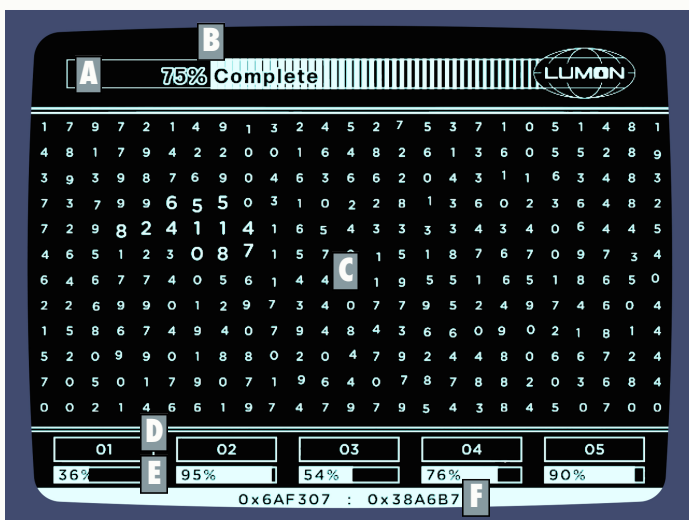
**B** Progress Bar: This bar shows how complete your file is at any given time.

**C** Data Field: These are the numbers that need to be refined.

**D** Bins: There are five bins, into which you will drop data sets.

**E** Bin Progress Bar: These bars show the fullness of each bin

**F** Coordinates: These numbers show your relative location in the data field.

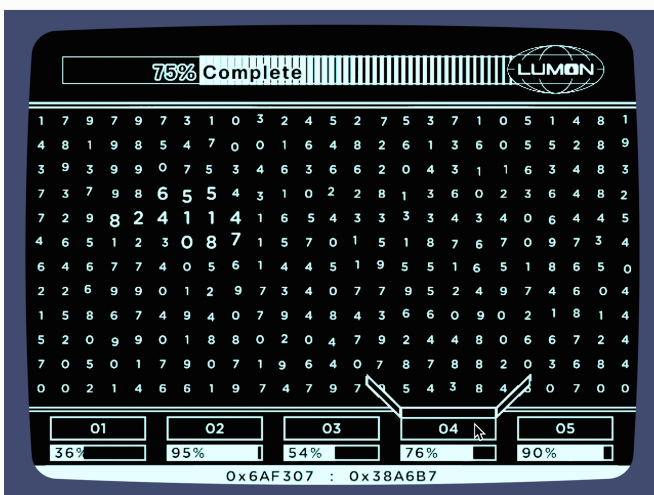


## All About Refining Numbers

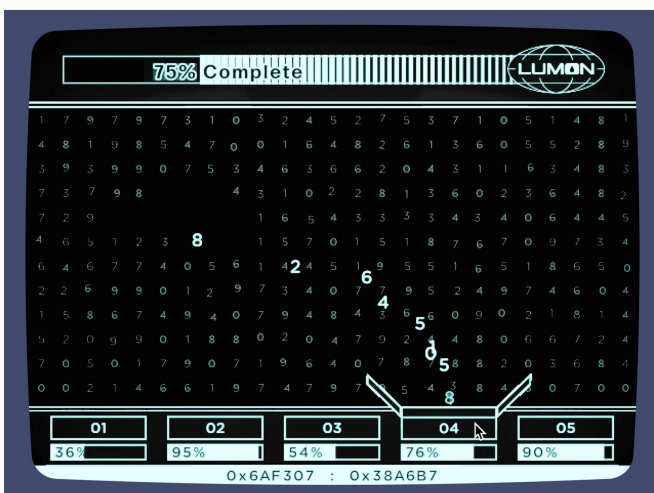
6. Using the roller ball, move the magnifying glass around the data field and watch as the numbers enlarge as it passes over them.

Next, use the ARROW KEYS to move left, right, up, and down within the data field. This will reveal more numbers.

When you are ready, try highlighting a group of numbers by clicking and scrolling over a data set. Then, use the cursor to select the bin into which you wish to drop the numbers. Once CLICKED, you will see the top of the bin open.

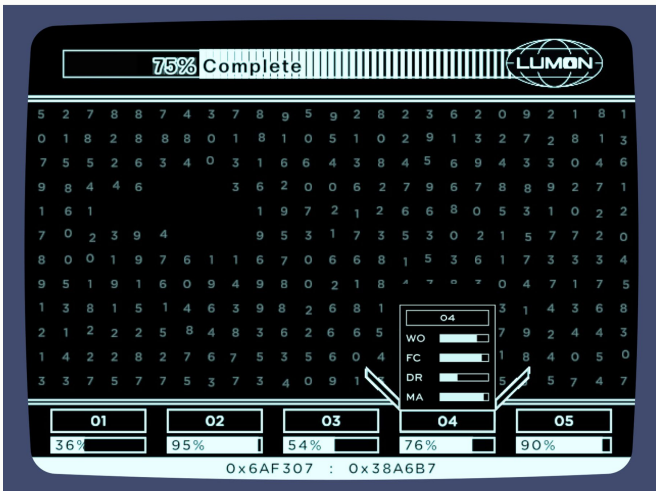


7. Once you have CLICKED the bin, watch as the highlighted data set flies down into the open bin. You have just refined your first set of numbers!

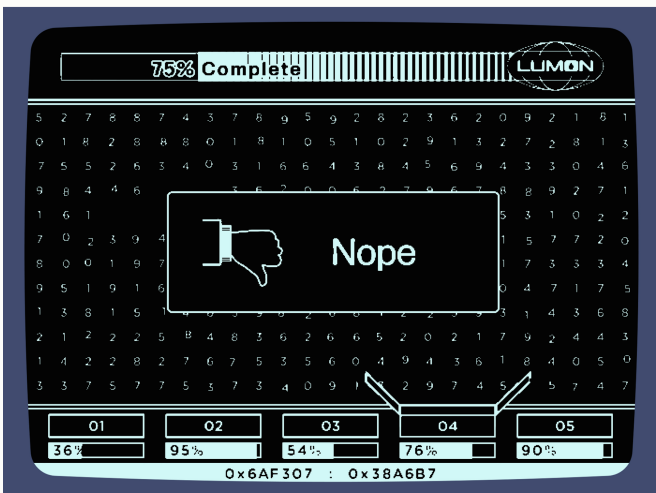


## All About Refining Numbers

8. After the numbers enter the bin, a **PROGRESS REPORT** will be revealed. This report shows the levels of each number type within that bin.



9. Should the numbers not be a correct match for the bin in which you attempted to refine them, a “Thumbs Down” will appear on screen to inform you that the refinement was not successful. The data set will then return to its original place in the data field.



## Success! You Did It!

### Congratulations!

You should now have all the information you need to keep refining data sets. However, should any further questions arise, feel free to ask your supervisor for clarification and help with the procedures.



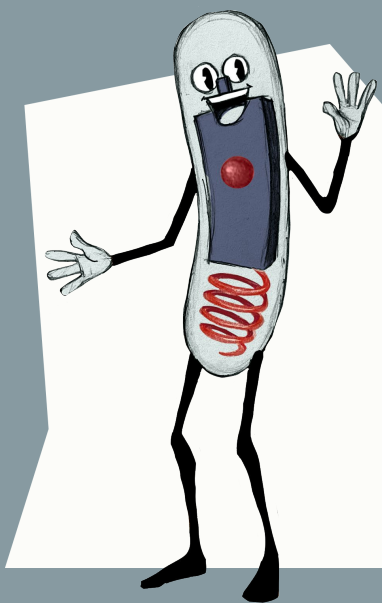
There you have it!

Refining numbers is as easy as sorting them into bins.

Happy refining!

## What is the Office Dress Code?

**All clothing is to be monochromatic and solid in color.** Permitted colors are black, white, navy, grey and pastels. All attire is to be free of labels, as labels will activate the detectors placed in entry and exit points of the Severed floor.



**Don't worry about remembering the dress code when you leave the office; as you are dressed by your outie, this information has also been given to them.**



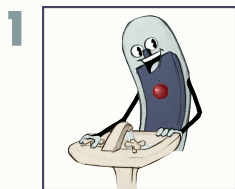
## Health and Hygiene

**Keeping our employees healthy is a top priority here at Lumon.** Hygiene is imperative for keeping your innie and outie as healthy as can be. One of the most simple and effective ways of keeping you healthy at the workplace is to wash your hands, frequently and thoroughly.

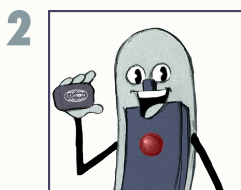
### Employees must wash their hands:

- At least 10 times per day
- Before and after eating
- Before and after using the facilities
- When coming in contact with a co-worker

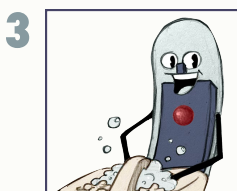
**Below, learn the proper hand washing technique:**



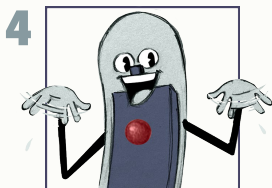
First turn on the faucet and let the water reach a balmy temperature. Run your hands under the water. Then, turn off the tap to conserve water.



Apply the Lumon branded soap. Lather the soap in your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Make sure to lather the backs of your hands and between each of your fingers. Then examine under your nails, and remove any unwanted grime or debris.



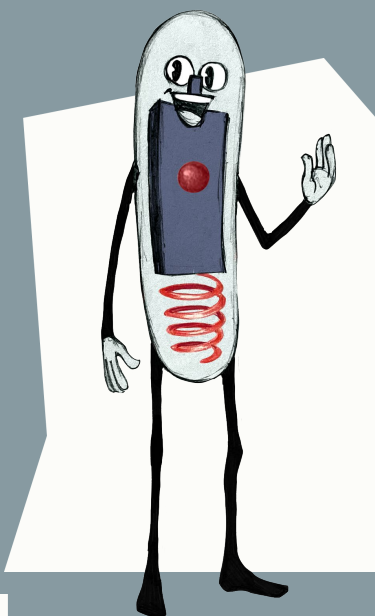
Scrub for 20 seconds. *A helpful hint: sing "Happy Birthday to Kier" in your head, and by the time Kier would be ready to blow out the candles, your hands will be clean!*



Turn on the faucet and rinse your hands until no suds remain, then thoroughly dry your hands.

## Inter-Department Fraternization

**Important:** All members of each of the departments on the Severed floor are encouraged to stay within their designated departmental area only. We institute this measure to contain the spread of pathogens, and ultimately to keep our employees healthy. Fraternizing with or visiting other departments is discouraged as it can increase the chances of spreading a disease. We don't want to lose employees due to sickness, not just because we care about each and every one of you, but also because the work we do here at Lumon contributes to the well-being of humanity.

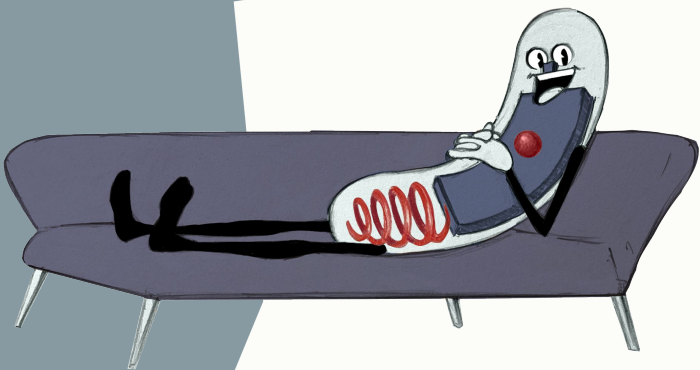


**Remember: if our workflow suffers, then in the long run, so does the world.**

## The Wellness Center

### The Wellness Center's

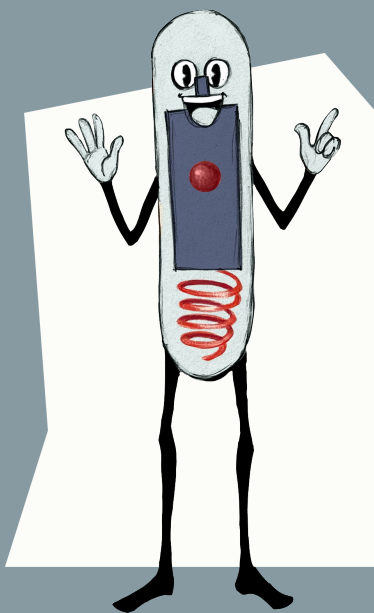
purpose is to soothe our employees who are dealing with emotional deficiencies. The Center is skilled and well equipped to help you free your mind and once again regain emotional stability. An appointment with the Wellness Center can be made through your department supervisor.



**Remember: a sound mind and a calm spirit are key to a strong work ethic.**

## Communication With Your Outie

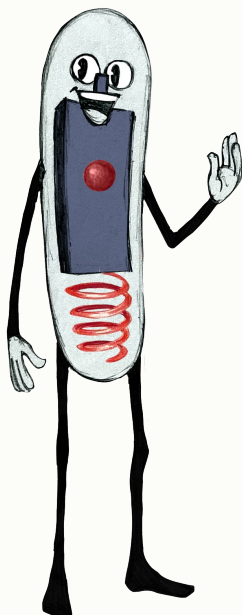
**Unsupervised communication with your outie is prohibited.** Each exit/entrance to the Severed floor has been fitted with the latest in code-detecting technologies. It is best to think of this technology as a metal detector, but instead of metal it is for written symbols. All notes will be confiscated followed by an immediate visit to the Break Room.



**Remember: your outie requested to join the Severance Program, so it's important that you respect their choice. Please help preserve their work/life balance.**

## Work Incident Notices

**Here at Lumon** we do everything we can to ensure the safety of our workers but unfortunately incidents in the work place can happen. If this does occur your outie will receive a notice explaining the nature of the incident. Discipline will be administered to match the seriousness of the incident.



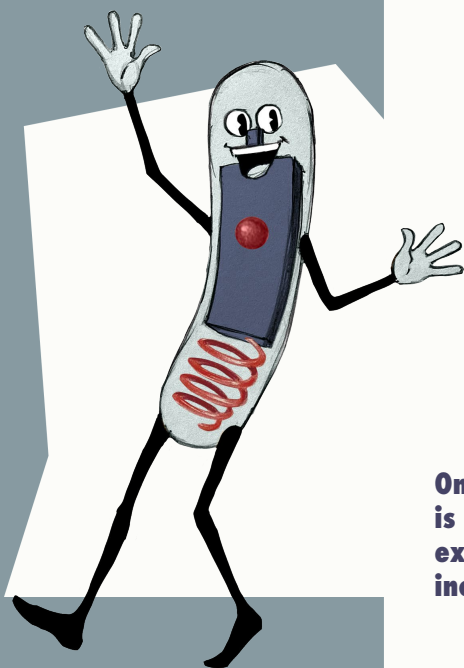
### Fun Fact:

**If you work hard and respect your coworkers, your experience at Lumon will be very rewarding.**

## Incentives

**Reaching 100% completion** is a win in and of itself, but we here at Lumon want to show you how proud we are of your progress by incentivizing!

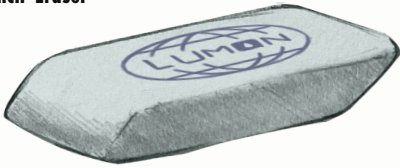
You will be rewarded incrementally based on the percentage you have achieved.



**On the next page is a handy chart explaining our incentives.**

## 10% Complete

Pencil Eraser



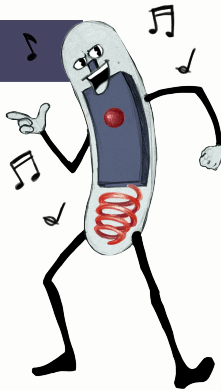
## 25% Complete

Finger Trap



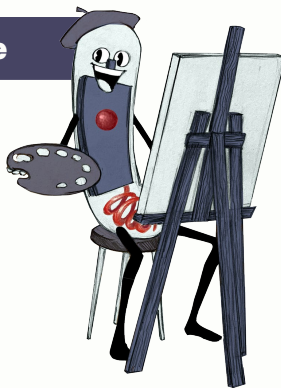
## 75% Complete

Music/Dance Experience



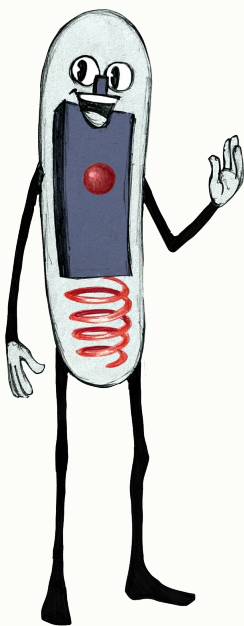
## 100% Complete

Caricature Portrait



**Bonus:** A refiner who performs exemplary work may be designated "Refiner of the Quarter" by their Department Chief. This individual receives a compensatory waffle party.

## Lumon Core Principles



**On the Lumon team, we are united by the core principles listed here.**

Although set out individually, these principles overlap and are intertwined - they should all be considered together. Note the emphasis on good social skills, because we are not just a team, we are a community; one could even say a family.

**1 Vision**

**2 Verve**

**3 Wit**

**4 Cheer**

**5 Humility**

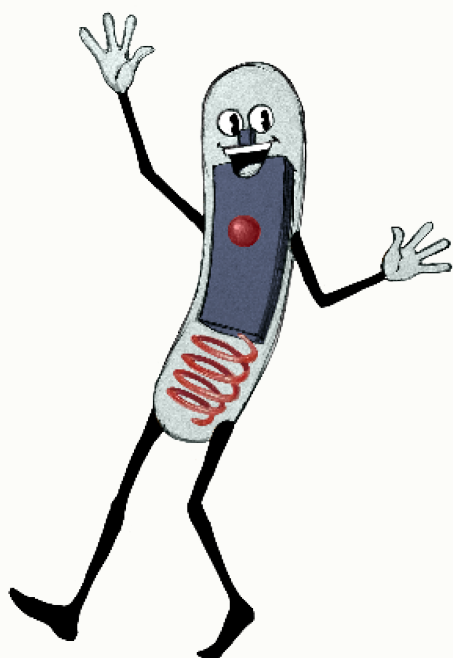
**6 Benevolence**

**7 Nimbleness**

**8 Probity**

**9 Wiles**





**Thanks for following along!**

**And welcome to the Lumon Family!**

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**DO NOT DISTRIBUTE**  
**DESIGNED BY CAT M, DANIEL A, AND TANSY M**

Directed by Ben Stiller

# Severance

Stream on Apple TV+

**An Apple Original series from director and executive producer Ben Stiller and creator Dan Erickson, *Severance* stars Adam Scott as Mark, the leader of an office team whose memories have been surgically divided between their work and personal lives. When a mysterious colleague appears outside of work, it begins a journey to discover the truth about their jobs.**

**Twitter: @appletvplus**

**Instagram: @appletvplus**

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and thriller titles on Apple Books**