

## 7 Ways to Safe-Guard Your Career During Tough Times

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Now is not the best time to start looking for a new job, so consider a couple techniques to make yourself more valuable in your current job. But, then again, if a job search is in your future, relax – here are some sure fire strategies to make it less stressful.

1. **Do More Than What You're Told** - Look around your workplace, what critical tasks are falling through the cracks because a key employee left, for example, or because there's no budget for them? Performing additional tasks at work *without waiting to be asked* will help make sure you are seen by co-workers and your boss as "one who takes the initiative," and "someone who wants to see the success of the team in hard economic times."
2. **Show Your Company the Money** - When the overall economy is taking a beating, organizational leaders of companies focus more diligently on financial matters. You need to do the same. So *Ask Yourself* "Have I saved the company money?" If so, how much? Who have you shared the news and good idea(s) with?
3. **Become Your Own P.R. Rep.** - Become more visible among your colleagues at the office. Toot your own horn—at least enough to let your bosses pinpoint you as a *doer* that gets results. Send key people weekly or biweekly emails that briefly sum up your recent accomplishments. In other words: do whatever it takes to be seen (and heard) as someone the organization can't afford to lose.
4. **Be the Likeable, Professional Person Everyone Respects** - "It truly is the little things that count," says etiquette consultant and trainer Jodi Smith, "If a manager has two employees who both do their jobs well, the manager is going to keep the employee who is *easier* to work with, the one who comes to work on time, is pleasant, and dresses appropriately. It really isn't rocket science."
5. **Keep Your Finger On the Pulse of the Job World** - stay clued in to the latest trends and changes in today's job sectors by researching websites like the New York State Department of Labor ([www.labor.state.ny.us](http://www.labor.state.ny.us)) and others. Keep abreast of which industries continue to be stable, even during a rough economy, and even more importantly which employers in those industries are growing and hiring.
6. **Create a Personal Networking Plan**- whether you are ready to start a job search now, or just want to prepare for the possibility of a job loss, consider initiating a Networking Plan. As a job-seeker, the more people you know and interact with professionally, the greater your chances are of finding out about a new job opportunity. Networking is all about relationship building, and in the complex job market of New York, networking is a particularly important skill to have. Create a contacts list of people you work with presently, people you worked for or with in the past, and consider joining a chamber of commerce or a professional trade association in order to get to know more people who might be able to help you out in a pinch.
7. **Know Thyself to Find your Dream Job** – just in case you do end up in the job market, prepare now by taking the time to conduct an inventory of your skills and spend some time important time thinking about what you like to do. Finding a job that offers you fulfillment and the right challenges is the first step to a rewarding career. Consider reaching out to a career counselor or doing a couple career inventories on-line. Personality tests like *The Myers-Brigg* can tell you a lot about your personal work style and what kind of jobs may be best for you based on your personal preferences.