

THE FASTER[™] TIMES

How to Keep Your Job and Move Forward in 2010

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Are you one of the lucky worker ants who kept building hills all year without a pink slip? Congratulations. Maybe you're thinking about moving up in line, perhaps to VP of Marching One By One? That could happen. So could another round of layoffs. Here's how to prepare for whatever awaits over the next mound.

Rebrand yourself. Who are you? What image are you projecting - visually, verbally, and through your work? How well can you articulate, in 15 seconds, your differentiating traits? In contemplating a world where your job vanishes, think about how you can step forward on day one with a new image. "Toot your horn and be authentically you, while making sure you are the one in charge of defining who you are and how others see you," says career-advice author Beth Cohn.

Create a personal board of directors. This is a group of people to champion and challenge you, whether you're plugging away or seeking a new connection. During 2010, advises Cohn, connect regularly with each for explicit advice and suggestions.

Find ways to help others succeed. If everything you do at work is just to make you look good, you will be seen as self-oriented. In these economic times, leaders are looking for those who can help the team succeed and can help the business as a whole move forward. "To make yourself valuable to your company, celebrate everyone else's victories." says branding expert Thom Singer.

Be visible. This mix of self-promotion and team-building implies a strong upside to being easy to find. Think of every opportunity to join a local charity board or corporate task force as a chance to impress people you might not otherwise have contact with and build strong alliances across your organization. Sign up to provide presentations for conferences within your industry circle or trade group. "You are adding to the brand, providing exposure for your company and potentially attracting candidates for your

company,” points out Mitch Rosenberg of Workplace Confidential, who does c-level organizational management and development.

Ask for more. Even though you may have more on your plate than you can handle, as you’re doing your job and one or two of those who were let go, asking for more delivers a strong message. It can also make you more indispensable. “If you have a peripheral job, take on projects related to the core and avoid work not part of the core. Skip the holiday party planning team,” says career coach Duncan Mathison. But!

Don’t overpromise and underdeliver. “This makes employers crazy and is a sure way to lose your job,” says life coach Dani Johnson. Know too, that this is not the time to be slacking- only do your self-promotion after you’ve done right by the rest of your team. “If you are texting, tweeting, Facebooking or emailing to your personal friends on company time, you deserve to lose your job,” she adds. Treat your job as though it was your business. This year, it may be.

Stay centered. Have some daily practice of silence and meditation. Says Andrew Appel, creative director for Beyond Success Coaching and Consulting, “It doesn’t matter what it is or how long you do it, but take some time each day to quiet your mind and senses so that you can develop more control over your thoughts and interactions.”

Put another way: nobody wants to stay a worker ant for very long.