



Career Article: Managing Your Career through Turbulent Times

Navigating through the ups and downs of this economy is not easy. Many workers feel they are losing control over their career. By sticking to a few fundamentals, you can regain confidence and ownership of your professional future.

In today's difficult economy, even the best and most stable careers can get thrown off track. When news delivers constant stories of economic downturns, mass layoffs, and unstable markets, how can you stabilize your own career and still ensure that you succeed? Stay positive for yourself and your career.

Try not to focus on negative things and don't let yourself live in fear.

Don't obsess about what you have lost or what you are afraid to lose; focus instead on the good things you do have. Make a list of your blessings, and you'll discover you still have a lot to be thankful for. Regaining a positive outlook will not only help you feel better and more secure in what really matters, but it could also help you stay in the game. If your manager has to make tough decisions about who to keep, would he/she lean towards someone with a great outlook who keeps cool under pressure, or someone who is always stressed out?

Think about your goals.

A difficult economy means lots of doors are closing, but that doesn't mean you can't still get where you want to go. Think carefully about what your career goals are and know what you want. You may need to get creative about the path you take to get there, but your goals are certainly still attainable. Think of the detours as an adventure and a learning experience instead of disasters.

Get involved.

Volunteering inside and outside of work is a great idea for both networking and marketing yourself. If you can volunteer for extra tasks or planning committees at work, do it. You'll become more involved with your coworkers and also become a more valuable team player for the company. Volunteering in the community or through a professional organization can be a great way to network, and it could also give you a renewed sense of thankfulness and well being.

Stay connected.

Don't go off the grid during these rough times. Stay connected with coworkers and other people in your network. You never know who might surprise you with a great lead, and staying connected will keep you top of mind. Make sure to keep your list of contacts and their information current, and have a plan for staying in touch. Send birthday, holiday, and special occasion cards or e-mail every so often to ask how they are and let them know how you are doing.

Renew your sense of thankfulness as often as you can, maintain a positive attitude, and keep an open mind. Life isn't predictable, and you never know what great opportunities may come. Just make sure that when they do come, you are ready to receive them.