



Building the Best Organizations in the Insurance Industry

7 WAYS TO MAKE YOURSELF INDISPENSABLE

Tips for Keeping Your Job When Everyone Else is Losing Theirs

By Cathleen Carlos, Salary.com

Be An Essential Part of Your Company's Plans

As companies downsize and jobs are lost, many people wonder why they're let go while other employees remain with the company. Although there are always many factors to consider -- political, economic, etc. -- it often comes down to being considered indispensable.

Having worked at several companies that have downsized in the past, I've learned these seven things that can help ensure your company is happy with your performance and holds onto you at all costs.

Be EXTRAordinary

Do at least one thing every day that someone didn't ask you to do.

One thing every day adds up and shows management you are someone who gets things done. Not that you shouldn't get your regular list done too. But there are often small amounts of time throughout the day that can be filled with an extra task that shows you are willing to go the extra mile.

Make Management Look Good

If you are making your boss' job easier, then he/she is likely to fight to keep you if the topic comes up. Having someone on your side is very important when management needs to make cuts. If they see you as someone who makes their job easier and makes them look good, you stand a much better chance of being spared.

Work on Your "Phone Voice"

Answer the phone like you're talking to your next new client.

It kills me when I call a company and the person I get on the other end sounds either annoyed or angry that I called. The first person you speak with gives you a first impression of the company, and there are no second chances for first impressions. If you are answering the phone or greeting someone in person, sound happy to do so.

I had a boss who told me I have "a phone voice." It was cheerful and helpful, no matter my mood. If the clients like you they might mention it to your boss. And any time you can cast yourself in a positive light, do it. Practice having a good "phone voice" and people will look forward to speaking with you.

Stay Upbeat & Friendly

Good attitudes are addictive and can do wonders for how people view you. Unfortunately, so can bad attitudes. It's pretty simple: if you walk around in a bad mood all the time, people won't want to be around you. End of

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Sales: 233 S. Wacker Drive, Chicago, IL 60606 312.922.6664

Administrative: 13368 W. Heiden Circle, Lake Bluff, IL 60044 847.735.0525 Fax: 847.735.1205



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story. A smile can go a long way, and if you've always come to work with a positive outlook and willingness to do your part, that will be noticed and remembered by management when it's time to decide who stays and who goes.

What Have You Done for Me Lately?

Stay up to date on everything, especially technology and trends.

It's so important to keep fresh and innovative ideas flowing from you to your managers. If you don't keep up, your contributions will start to sound dated. And if you don't sound up to date, they might start to think there are people out there with more knowledge and upside to add to the organization.

Find Happiness & Passion in Your Work

Do what you are good at and what you love.

Your ideal job is the one you enjoy and can do well. Keep that in mind as you look for a job and/or move through your current career. If you don't use your strengths and skills to the fullest, why should the company keep you during hard times?

Don't Sink Your Own Ship Via Email

While in-person meetings and phone calls are still preferable, emails are such an integral part of our everyday business lives that you must make sure you are portraying yourself in a professional and positive light.

Think before you send a negative or scathing email. Think about what you want to say and -- more importantly -- whether or not you really want to hit the "send" button. Remember these emails are written in pencil, not ink. And it can easily be forwarded to someone else and can get stored in your employee file, coming back to haunt you during performance reviews or when management looks at organizational restructuring.

Be smart. Before you send, sit on it. It used to be that people would hand write letters and it would take a lot of thought to craft them. Then you would address the envelope and mail it. That allows for a lot of time to reflect on the wisdom of sending it. Emails, on the other hand, are instantaneous and there is no "unsend" button.

Stay Ahead of the Game

By examining these tips and taking them to heart, you're doing your part to guard against job loss if things go south. Simple things like keeping a positive attitude, always being polite, showing passion for your job and constantly displaying your value to management are all great ways to stay employed, even when your company is letting people go.

Good luck!