

Top Ten Tips: How To Keep Your Job In This Economy

By Chris Kalaboukis

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- Chris Kalaboukis, CEO, AdviceTrader

If you've got a job working for someone else, and want to keep that job, here are ten essential techniques which you absolutely must follow in order to keep your job today.

1: Don't Excel

If you excel at your job, you'll get noticed. Your co-workers will notice that you are doing well and start talking to the boss about it. They'll gang up on you to try and take you down. They'll look for some evidence which poses you in some negative light, and use it as an excuse to get rid of you. Any excuse works in this climate. So don't excel. Excellence makes you different, and "difference" is a negative. Don't be different.

2: Don't Do Poorly

Don't let yourself slack off in any way either. They will use any excuse in a change in your job habits in order to red circle your position. Don't give them any kind of excuse. However, make sure that you also always follow rule one: don't do any more or less than what is expected of you, if you do you'll stick out, and that's the last thing you need right now. Keep on steaming at that exact same clip; don't vary your speed in any way.

3: Don't Complain

This is a sure job buster. Management is strung tight: stress is at an all time high. Money is barely trickling in, if at all. Now is not the time to complain. Bottle it all up, and never say a SINGLE word to anyone at work, or anyone who knows anyone at work, no matter how unfair or wrong things are. Management doesn't want to hear problems OR solutions. They'd like to hear NOTHING. Nothing is king. Silence is queen. They do like to hear keys busily tapping though.

WARNING: Don't be fooled by an "open door policy" or your boss asking you "How Are Things?" or "What's wrong?". Always respond to the former with "Fantastic" and never, never respond to the latter with anything other

than "Nothing! Everything's just great". In fact, don't ever give him the reason to say "What's wrong": see point 7

4: Use the Mantra "I'm just happy to have a job"

Every day, when you get up, in the shower, while you're shaving, on your way to work, just repeat, again and again. "I'm just happy to have a job, I'm just happy to be working". When your boss cuts your salary, just say "That's OK, I'm just happy to be working". When your boss gives that hot sales lead to another sales rep, just say to yourself "It's OK, because I still have a job". When your boss ask you to work the weekend, just say "No problem", and think to yourself. "I'm just happy to have a job." When your boss goes to Hawaii but you have to stay behind and work, remember the mantra.

5: Take a salary cut gracefully when offered

If your boss cuts your salary in order to keep the company afloat (or for his new minivan purchase) just smile and say "I know that its all for the good of the company, that's fine, we'll just get by with less". Even better, offer to take a salary cut, if you know that the company is in trouble.

6: Get politically neutral

Always good advice, but even more so now. If you ally yourself with the wrong crowd, you could be in trouble. If you ally yourself too closely with your boss, you could be in trouble if he goes. Be very aware of what's going on, but don't ally yourself with anyone. Remember your mission here is to keep your job at all costs. Look out for number one.

7: Wear a Mask

Every morning, before you go to work, put on your "work mask". Here are some key things to remember about your work mask. Keep a SMILE on that mask! It is never unhappy. At worst it's neutral, but never for long. Never, ever let down your work mask while you are at work, or while you are in the company of anyone from work, or anyone who knows anyone at work. Smile, be happy, and never give anyone a reason to say "What's Wrong". That, my friend, is the beginning of the end. You may as well get your resume out.

8: Work longer hours

You may think that this point conflicts with point 1, but its how you do it, not what you do. Make sure that you actually spend more time working, but not do more work. This may sound confusing but it's actually quite simple. Your boss doesn't usually care how much you produce, but they do care when you come in and when you leave (sometimes, they are simple creatures). Always, always come in before the boss and leave after. If you do leave before the boss, make sure that you send email to "the team" but copying your boss at 1am (or even better) 2am in the morning, so that he gets the impression that you are hard at work, even at 2am. Even though you're really only working hard at keeping your job, 2am emails are still pretty damn impressive to the boss.

9: Sacrifice everything for your job.

Now is the time to stay at work long hours, keep your head down and shut up. Don't miss your wife, don't miss your kids.

Don't miss the karate lessons, soccer games and Little League games. What you are doing is way more important than that right now. You are focused on keeping your job. That is all that matters. That is all your boss cares about, and this is tricky, no matter how much he talks like he cares, he really doesn't. Don't let your guard down. Not for a second.

10: Be a work-bot

When you work for someone else, you are not yourself. You are a robot. A cog in a machine. Sure, some of us are bigger or smaller cogs, in bigger or smaller machines, but we are all cogs. Do your absolute best to be the best cog that you can be. A cog that doesn't fit always gets replaced.

Now, do you really want to keep that job, or work for yourself?

You don't have to wear the mask anymore.

Now doesn't that feel better?

Chris Kalaboukis is CEO of AdviceTrader, a leading expert advice marketplace: <http://www.advicetrader.com> .

Chris has over 10 years of experience in internet, information technology and business development with high-end web design, wireless, high-speed internet deployment (via cable modem) and entertainment companies.

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