

President's Corner

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Richard Dolewski

I'll take the corner office!

You are told that you are so successful in your work and you have total control of your career. Sixty plus hours a week to get ahead. You're driving in the fast lane of success. The sky is the limit. Today work is more personal than ever, you are what you do. Work becomes a deeper satisfaction than ever. We ultimately do it for the money I suppose.

Every one of us starts off with the same valuable commodity and that is time. All work NO play makes us overworked, stressed out, and ultimately less productive. Not to mention dull and boring. There is nothing more dangerous than having no time on your hands. Or is there!!! What about too much time on your hands. Most people would say automatically, "I would love to have this problem." Do not get too comfortable in your work... look in the rear view mirror once in a while. Check your blind spot. It may be HR coming to see you. Go on get noticed.

Rapid deployment of new technologies and use of best practices have led many technical departments to become very lean with staff. Today there is little room in the average organization to take on additional workload unless the

cost benefits and effort are clear and there is a high degree of success. Senior management demands for cost reductions and improvements in service seem endless.

How do you get one without the other? Instead of adding staff monthly, many companies are shrinking their payroll. Layoffs have become fairly significant in the high-tech sector. A day does not go by without hearing some discouraging words about more layoffs. Hearing all this negative information about layoffs, firing, etc. demoralizes people. It destroys self-esteem. These layoffs lead to many repercussions in the economy. I certainly do not see much loyalty in the high-tech industry these days. The notion of being loyal makes you naive in the eyes of the employer. It is too dangerous to build our lives around a job.

When layoffs are imminent, it's tempting and natural to lay low. This is not a smart career move. Many companies/departments make down sizing decisions based on perception. If you have made yourself invisible, you could get the "AXE" or lose any chance to move up or stay alive. Always be ready to give yourself a plug, in an indirect way. Keep your resume current even when you are not looking for a job. This exercise will help you keep thinking about current accomplishments. How many of us really cannot explain what we do when asked by a family member or worse – our boss? We say, "Well it's too complicated to explain." Always be prepared with a 20 second speech on what you do if someone asks you, so you will not be at a loss for words.

Access your skills and your experience. Conduct a thorough audit of your skills. It's important to identify your strengths, weaknesses, ambitions, and preferences

so you can focus on your job. Too often we get side tracked and focus on our weaknesses. Oh I can't do that, or they want someone more qualified than me! So they will never keep me around! Get yourself up to speed. Use the internet. All the high-tech companies we work with every day have WEB sites full of information to improve whatever you might be lacking. You need to accurately evaluate your abilities because the role with IT is broadening – which of course raises the bar on the skills that are in demand. Do not short change yourself. Remember, those individuals that demonstrate initiative and willingness to learn along with a positive attitude will find themselves highly marketable within their current organization.

Build a rapport with people in different departments of your company to increase your competitive edge. In good times, networking is viewed as just being social (in moderation of course) but it's crucial in the meanest of times. You will be less likely to be a victim. You are building an in-house network. Join and get active in professional organizations such as TUG. This raises your visibility within your company and more importantly in the industry. This reflects well on your employer.

Remember small companies want to grow their business and truly do want you to be a part of the success. So when a general meeting of the entire staff is held and the President announces that there will be many layoffs pending, don't put your head down. Instead raise your hand and ask him "When can I move into the corner office?" TUG

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