

14 tips for avoiding the ax

By Kate Lorenz
CareerBuilder.com Editor

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The economy is showing some improvement. Almost 1 million jobs have been created since last year and, according to a recent CareerBuilder.com survey, more than 30 percent of hiring managers plan to add new jobs this year.

Although the job market is looking up, business is constantly changing and staff turnover is always occurring. You are always vulnerable to losing your job. In his book *Career Comeback* Bradley G. Richardson, tells us how to become bulletproof:

It's only logical to think that working hard and being productive is enough to keep your job safe. It is great in theory, but the truth is, sometimes that is not enough.

Or worse, it doesn't matter. The bottom line is no one is immune. It can happen at any time, regardless of your industry, job function, experience level, or competence.

Still, here are a few things that you can do to improve the odds that the ax doesn't fall on you.

- Be visible -- keep your name in front of people.
- Make a case for your value --know what value you offer the organization and, more important, know what the organization values.
- Know how you are judged and what is valued -- know and understand the criteria by which you are being judged.
- Document your results.
- Make your numbers, hit your goals, and justify your existence.
- Let your boss know that you want to be there. Don't let there be any question about whether you "love" your job, and don't assume that your management knows.
- Understand where the company is going -- try to see the big picture.
- Be on top of your game -- now is not the time to show incompetence.
- Be up on office politics.
- Pick your projects wisely.
- Maintain key relationships with clients. They can be great references if you ever need one, and they can even be great job leads.
- Develop your network beyond your department and immediate boss.
- Don't rely too heavily on your boss as your career savior.
- Stay away from "prophets of doom." Avoid negative people and negative information.

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