

## Bulletin Board: Remain a valuable employee amid layoffs

by Amy\_Winter

Although workers can't control the economic downturn, they can try to keep a positive attitude and play a part in the optimistic influence needed to maintain a company's success.

Peter Barron Stark â€™ author of the forthcoming book, "Engaged: How Leaders Build Organizations Where Employees Love to Come to Work" â€™ recommends that workers attempt to envision what can be controlled in the office: the results from assignments, work relationships, etc.

"Remain positive and take actions to demonstrate your value," says Stark.

Stark provides tips for workers to remain valuable during the recession:

â€™ Take an encouraging approach. Stay positive and focus on trying your best. Don't let a negative environment bring you down.

â€™ Communicate on a regular basis with your supervisors. Managers usually discuss less with employees during a recession; they lack all the answers and are afraid to talk about possible layoffs. Build a relationship with supervisors by asking questions, sharing updates, providing ideas for problems and requesting feedback.

â€™ Continue to learn. Take on more responsibilities and be willing to increase your knowledge of the company. Become more valuable by being more broad in terms of workload and duties. You aren't limited to one specific area of the business.

â€™ Try the team player approach. Offer options for issues caused by the layoffs. Get creative and attempt to tackle the challenge.

â€™ Explain new roles for remaining workers. A clear explanation of current duties and expectations is needed.

â€™ Make new relationships. If you lose a friend in the layoffs, it provides the chance to meet new team members. Gain more friends to possibly help with a promotion or develop a new skill.

â€” Demonstrate how you add to the bottom line. Develop a connection between the company's results and how you play a part in adding to the revenue or cutting the costs.

â€” Keep internal and external clients happy. Make sure you are trying to create positive relationships with customers; go beyond their expectations.

â€” Remain grateful. Concentrate on what you have learned and be thankful. Grateful employees are easier to work with.

"It is a scary time, but these tips will help make a difference and make one more secure," says Stark.

## OFFICE DATING

Love seems to be in the air at the office. Forty percent of workers, according to a CareerBuilder.com survey that questioned at least 8,000 employees, say they have dated a co-worker at some point in their working careers. And 31 percent of respondents ended up marrying a co-worker.

Employees aren't limiting their dates to those in the same company positions; 34 percent of respondents have dated a worker that is in a place of higher authority. Of those workers, 42 percent have had relations with the boss. When it comes to dating the boss, female employees tend to do it more often (47 percent) compared to male workers (38 percent).

Ten percent of employees currently have workplace crushes, which they hope will turn into relationships.

"Employees spend many hours interacting with co-workers, so it's not unusual for romances to spark," says Rosemary Haefner, vice president of human resources.

The highest percentage (12 percent) of couples started their workplace romances when they saw each other outside the office. Other romances evolved when working late in the office, during happy hour and at lunch.

The downside of workplace dating may cause one partner to leave the company. Seven percent of workers decided it was best to find another job.

"While workplace relationships may be more accepted these days, with 72 percent of workers saying they didn't keep their romance a secret, it's still important for workers to keep it professional and not let their relationship impact their work," adds Haefner.

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