

ASK THE COACH



**Executive Career Coach
Provides Insights on Mentoring**

**A Quarterly Column
By Robin Fogel,
Executive and Career Coach**

Q

With the economy in a tailspin I'm wondering, is there anything I can do to increase the odds that I will survive and that my job won't be eliminated?

A

As with most things there are no guarantees. I understand that these are stressful times, times that many have not witnessed before. Yet there are

some concrete steps you can take now that may help you through this challenging time. For starters it is important to be visible. Now is not the time to put your head in the sand. Be willing to take additional assignments that come to demonstrate the value you bring to the company. At the same time be honest with yourself and evaluate your performance and attitude. Are there ways you can improve your performance? Even in good times it is important to solicit feedback from senior management. Ask if they have any suggestions that would help you further develop your performance. And remember to be nice, this may not be the time to be a maverick; it might set you up as an easy target.

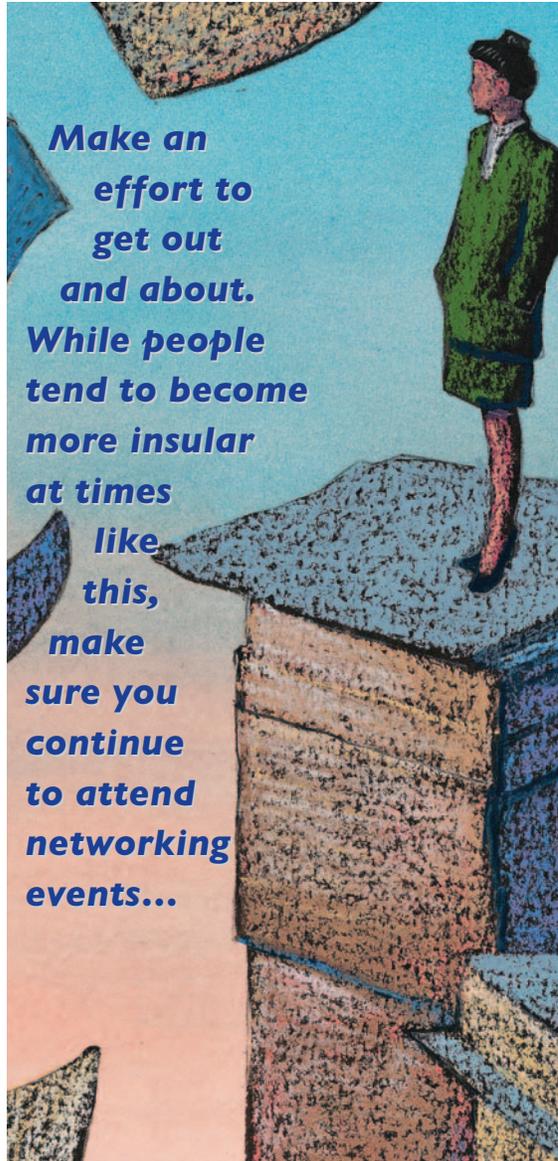
This is also a good time to build and

strengthen key relationships. You want to be seen as a valuable, team player. Women in particular tend to believe that the most important thing they can do is work really hard. While hard work is important, building those relationships is equally as important as your hard work. Make an effort to get out and about. While people tend to become more insular at times like this, make sure you continue to attend networking events or APIW lunches. Those connections may prove invaluable in both the near and long-term.

You might also want to consider using this time period to build your skills. Ask yourself: What can I do during this period to build or enhance my skills? For example, is there a course or certification that would be helpful?

Your greatest job security may come from being viewed as a star. Even in a really tough economy, bosses go to great lengths to protect their star performers, those they view as their most valuable players. They know that when the economy turns around they will need those folks on their team and won't want to lose them to the competition. Finally, as tough as this is, try your best to maintain a positive attitude. **■**

Robin is an executive and career coach who helps insurance women advance their careers, and make career changes & transitions. As an executive coach she provides advice on staffing issues, helps managers develop emerging talent and sharpen manager's individual communication and management skills. To learn more, visit www.coachrobinfogel.com or email her at robin@coachrobinfogel.com



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