

Recession46: Forty-six “Secrets” and “Clever Strategies” For Dealing with the Recession of 2008-XXXX*

I am constantly asked for “strategies/‘secrets’ for surviving the recession.” I try to appear wise and informed—and parade original, sophisticated thoughts. But if you want to know what’s really going through my head, see the list that follows:

You come to work earlier.

You leave work later.

You work harder.

You may well work for less; and, if so, you adapt to the untoward circumstances with a smile—even if it kills you inside.

You volunteer to do more.

You dig deep, deeper, deepest—and always bring a good attitude to work.

You fake it if your good attitude flags.

You literally practice your “game face” in the mirror in the morning, and in the loo mid-morning.

You give new meaning to the idea and intensive practice of “visible management.”

You take better than usual care of yourself and encourage others to do the same—physical well-being significantly impacts mental well-being and response to stress.

You shrug off shit that flows downhill in your direction—buy a shovel or a “pre-worn” raincoat on eBay.

You try to forget about “the good old days”—nostalgia is self-destructive. (And bores others.)

You buck yourself up with the thought that “this too shall pass”—but then remind yourself that it might not pass any time soon, and so you re-dedicate yourself to making the absolute best of what you have now.

You work the phones and then work the phones some more—and stay in touch with and on the mind of positively everyone.

You frequently invent breaks from routine, including “weird” ones—“changeups” prevent wallowing and bring a fresh perspective.

You eschew all forms of personal excess.

You simplify.

You sweat the details as never before.

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You raise to the sky and maintain at all costs the Standards of Excellence by which you unflinchingly and unflinchingly evaluate your own performance.

*As many were quick to point out, this list works just as well in good times as in bad!

You are maniacal when it comes to responding to even the slightest screw-up.

You find ways to be around young people and to keep young people around—they are less likely to be members of the “sky is falling” school.

You learn new tricks of your trade.

You pass old tricks of the trade on to others—mentoring matters now more than ever.

You invest heavily in your computer-Internet-Web2.0-“cloud” skills.

You remind yourself that this is not just something to be “gotten through”—it is the Final Exam of Competence, Character and, even if you’re not a boss, Leadership.

You network like a demon.

You network like a demon inside the company—get to know more of the folks who “do the real work,” and are/can be your most important allies when it comes to getting things done seamlessly and fast.

You network like a demon outside the company—get to know more of the folks “down the line,” who “do the real work” in vendor-customer outfits and can be your biggest allies and champions.

You thank others by the truckload if good things happen—and take the heat yourself if bad things happen.

You behave kindly, but you don't sugarcoat or hide the truth—humans are startlingly resilient and rumors are the real killers.

You treat small successes as if they were World Cup victories—and celebrate and commend accordingly.

You shrug off the losses (ignoring what's going on in your tummy), and get back on the horse and immediately try again.

You avoid negative people to the extent you can—pollution kills.

You eventually read the gloom-sprayers the riot act. (Gloom is the ultimate WMD at a time like this.)

You give new meaning to the word “thoughtful.”

You don't put limits on the budget for flowers—“bright and colorful” works marvels.

You redouble, re-triple your efforts to “walk in your customer’s shoes.” (Especially if the shoes smell.)

You mind your manners—and accept others’ lack of manners in the face of their strains.

You are kind to all mankind.

You keep your shoes shined.

You leave the blame game at the office door.

You call out the congenial politicians in no uncertain terms.

You become a paragon of personal accountability.

And then you pray.