

## **SPECIAL SECTION: The Recession46: Forty-Six "Secrets" and "Strategies" for Dealing with the Severe Downturn of 2007++**

Developed for a seminar in Finland, these "secrets" are in fact anything but:

- (1) You come to work earlier.
- (2) You leave work later.
- (3) You work harder.
- (4) You may well work for less; and, if so, you adapt to the untoward circumstances with a smile—even if it kills you inside.
- (5) You volunteer to do more.
- (6) You dig deep, deeper, deepest—and always bring a good attitude to work.
- (7) You fake it if your good attitude flags.
- (8) You literally practice your "stage face" in the mirror each morning, and in the loo mid-morning.
- (9) You give new meaning to the idea and intensive practice of "visible management."
- (10) 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.
- (11) You shrug off shit that flows downhill in your direction—buy a shovel or a "pre-worn" raincoat on eBay.
- (12) You try to forget about the "good old days"—nostalgia is self-destructive. (And boring.)
- (13) You buck yourself up with the thought that "this too shall pass," but then remind yourself that it might not pass anytime soon; and so you rededicate yourself to making the absolute best of what you have now—character is determined, virtually in full, by one's reaction to adverse circumstances.
- (14) You work the phones and then work the phones some more—and stay in touch with, and on the mind of, positively everyone.
- (15) You frequently invent breaks from routine, including "weird" ones—"change-ups" prevent wallowing in despair and bring a fresh perspective.
- (16) You eschew all forms of personal excess.
- (17) You simplify.
- (18) You sweat the *details as never* before.
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- (20) You sweat the *details as never* before.
- (21) You raise to the sky and maintain—at all costs—the Standards of Excellence by which you unfailingly and unflinchingly evaluate your own performance.
- (22) You are maniacal when it comes to responding to even the slightest screw-up.
- (23) 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. (Naïveté can be a blessing.)
- (24) You learn new tricks of your trade.
- (25) You pass old tricks of the trade on to others—mentoring matters now more than ever.
- (26) You invest heavily in your Internet-Web2.0-Twitter-Facebook-"cloud"-computing skills.
- (27) You remind yourself, daily, that this is not just something to be "gotten through"—it is the Final Exam of Competence, of Character, and, even if you're not a boss, of Leadership. (People often make great leaps in a short period during difficult times.)
- (28) You network like a demon.

- (29) You network like a demon *inside* the company—get to know more of the folks who "do the real work," and who can be your most dependable allies when it comes to getting things done seamlessly and fast.
- (30) 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. (They can become, and will become, your most avid allies and champions.)
- (31) You offer thanks to others by the truckload if good things happen—and take the heat if bad things happen.
- (32) You behave kindly, but you don't sugarcoat or hide the truth—humans are startlingly resilient, and rumors are the real spirit-killers.
- (33) You treat small successes as if they were World Cup victories—and celebrate and commend people accordingly.
- (34) You shrug off the losses (ignoring what's going on in your tummy), and get back on the horse and immediately try again.
- (35) You avoid negative people to the extent you can—pollution kills.
- (36) You read the riot act to the gloom-sprayers, once avoiding them becomes impossible. (Gloom is the ultimate "weapon of mass destruction" in tough times.)
- (37) You give new meaning to the word "thoughtful."
- (38) You don't put limits on the budget for flowers—"bright and colorful" works marvels.
- (39) You redouble and re-triple your efforts to "walk in your customer's shoes."  
(Especially if the shoes smell.)
- (40) You mind your manners—and accept others' lack of manners in the face of their strains.
- (41) You are kind to all mankind.
- (42) You keep your shoes shined.
- (43) You leave the blame game at the office door.
- (44) You call out, in no uncertain terms, those who continue to play the "office politics" game.
- (45) You become a paragon of personal accountability.
- (46) *And then you pray.*

This document is #7 in a series of 48 highlights from Tom Peters' *The Little BIG Things: 163 Ways to Pursue Excellence* (HarperStudio, 2010). For more information, visit [tompeters.com](http://tompeters.com).

