

# FINANCIAL POST MAGAZINE

## Time to shine

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Worried that your job might be on the chopping block? You're not going to save it by moping around the staff room or whispering at the water cooler. Instead, you should put in some extra effort to do your best work. "People are scared," says Linda Allan, a Toronto-based workplace consultant. "They see their portfolios tumbling, they see colleagues getting laid off. When we're stressed out, it's common to forget our regular behaviours."

If you want to stand out in hectic times, throw your hand up at meetings, or help an overloaded co-worker. But be careful, Allan warns. "You don't want them to keep piling on the work of laid-off colleagues." Taking on too much work may look good in the short term, but you won't see any real long-term benefits if you have a nervous breakdown. Ask yourself: Is it worth the extra stress?

Don't be afraid to speak up, but raise the issue tactfully, and suggest a solution or two. "Just remember to keep your cool," Allan says. "Nobody in the business world has the appetite for whiners or complainers right now."

Gossiping is a no-no, she says. Stay away from the "whose-job-is-expendable" mind frame and keep your work conversations on topic. "We tend to get overly emotional," Allan says, "but a true professional understands that business is about the bottom line."

So what about that promotion you were promised months ago? "Use your judgement," she says, "and ask if the same opportunities exist for you. But, honestly, this probably isn't the best time to ask for a raise." Your boss is being faced with tough decisions, and she's probably just as worried about her job as you are about yours. Make it easier for her: There's never been a better time to speak about new ways to save money, or to perform a task more efficiently. If it makes your boss look good, it makes you look good. Remember, now could be the perfect moment to shine.