

## Avoiding the Pink Slip

You only have to visit your nearest shopping mall to know that the economic situation is precarious. Sales **abound** ... 30% off! 40% off! 70% off! Will we ever get used to paying normal **retail prices** ever again?

Forgive me for jumping **on my soapbox**, but if you're worried that your job **is on the chopping block**, then it's time to take action. There may be means **at your disposal** to help avoid **getting canned**.

Do what you can to make yourself more valuable than the average co-worker. If it's your job to work the cash register in the front of the store, learn how to take customers' money and sell the products. Showing **initiative** sends the signal that you can take on new responsibilities if the situation presents itself.

If there are voluntary working groups at your company, join them. Better still, become the committee chairperson.

When the boss needs someone to **step up**, offer to help. Making yourself known to top management lets you stand out from the **rank and file**.

If co-workers eat lunch in a big group, join in. Attend after-work social events (but remember if there's alcohol involved, take it easy). Being known on a personal level increases your likeability.

O.K., but this is not high school, you say. **Performance** and **seniority** matter most in the workplace. True, but when co-workers like you, they will **pull for you** when times get tough.

Now is a good time to remember the **subtle** role that interpersonal skills play in avoiding a **layoff**.

## Glossary

<b>abound</b>	to be many; to be great in number or amount
<b>at your disposal</b>	available to help you
<b>be on the chopping block</b>	be at risk; here: be at risk of losing your job
<b>get canned</b>	get fired (colloquial)
<b>initiative</b>	readiness to embark on bold new ventures
<b>layoff</b>	the temporary suspension or permanent termination of employment of a group of employees for business reasons
<b>on (one's) soapbox</b>	speaking one's personal views passionately or self-importantly
<b>performance</b>	any recognized accomplishment
<b>pink slip</b>	dismissal: official notice that you have been fired from your job
<b>precarious</b>	not secure
<b>pull for someone</b>	to use the influence that you have over important people in order to help someone
<b>rank and file</b>	the ordinary members of an organization
<b>retail price</b>	the price paid by a consumer
<b>seniority</b>	higher rank than that of others especially by reason of longer service
<b>step up</b>	take action
<b>subtle</b>	small but important; difficult to understand