

**Guest Comment: How to weather a storm**

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**Philip Beddows, a partner at career mentoring firm IDDAS, advises how to ensure your career is well rooted before today's balmy banking job market comes to an end.**

A recent offsite at one of the large US banks reportedly included a session on "Preparing for the downturn." This may have been due to good future events planning, or it may be because they've read the runes.

Whichever the case maybe, now may be time for people in the City to spare a thought for survival strategies that just might ensure their personal career investments survive a downturn.

After spending many years helping City bankers to manage career transitions, I know that job cuts do not strike the least talented, as some would have you believe. The opposite can be true. Remember, we live in an irrational marketplace, where paradox can reign supreme.

If you are worried about the future and want to keep your career on track, then here are some tips that may help you.

- Know how you add value and be able to attach a financial figure to it.
- Keep your CV up-to-date, making sure you are continuing to develop your 'story.'
- Keep your finances well managed so that you have enough for a rainy day.
- Ask yourself whether you enjoy your job and the brand you work for. If the answer is no, then your performance has probably already dropped and you need to find a new niche.
- You may be in the right place but the wrong job... If so, consider a transfer into a role that plays better to your strengths, is more enjoyable and therefore more productive.
- Be clear on what you want to do, what skills and experience you bring to the table, the organisation and clients, the people you mesh well with; and how what you do fits with your longer term life and career goals and aspirations.
- If you have had a new boss within the past 6 months, then make sure that you have built a good relationship with them.
- Ensure you have an external profile, a support network and are known to good headhunters.
- Avoid being the only one who knows what wonderful work you do – if your contribution is not evident, then the exit door may already be opening.
- The New Year wipes performance tables clean, so park the glow of the bonus for 2006, you've just arrived back at the start to run another race.
- Make effective use of networking opportunities in the New Year.

If you are one of those whose role has already been 'impacted,' then do not doubt yourself – remember the parable of the seed; the ground you were on may have been fertile but it has now changed, and the goal posts have moved. Identify what earth nurtures you best, seek it out, plant yourself there and get anchored down well to weather future storms.

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**Beddows: Reach for the galoshes**