

Career Lecture Series

How to Be a Valued Employee in These Challenging Times

by

LaBarre Spence

WALDEN UNIVERSITY
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How to Be a Valued Employee in These Challenging Times



Steve Hardiman
Host

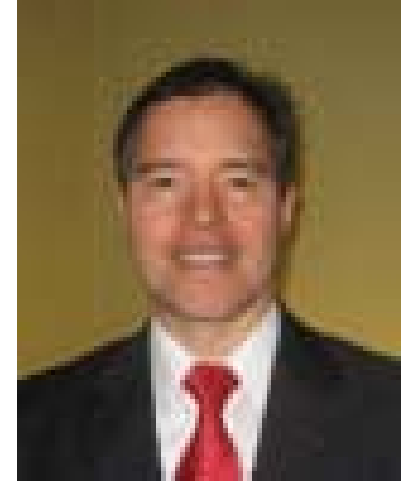


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About the Presenter

LaBarre Spence, M.B.A. and M.Ed.
in Human Resource Development

- Career Coach at Opus School of Business/University of St. Thomas
- Career and Leadership Coach at Carlson School of Management/University of Minnesota
- 15 years in corporate – quality, consulting, marketing services



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Question

Criteria for keeping a job – Ralph Turfus, Acetech

- Performance consistently meets or surpasses goals
- Demonstrated interpersonal skills; an ability to build long-lasting, beneficial relationships (internally and externally); ability to deal with difficult customers
- Delivers innovation and creativity which consistently leads to new approaches
- On a continual personal development curve through training and planning for career advancement

Has performed and has potential

Question

However,

**Just in case, are you
prepared?**



Overview

- Strategies for Success
- Be Prepared
- Getting Moving
- Summary

Strategies for Success

- Build and Promote your Brand
 - Internally
 - Externally
- Improve Yourself

Your Brand

- What is your brand?
 - The perception of you in your organization, your network, your world outside of work
 - When your name is mentioned, what comes to people's mind?
 - What others expect you to deliver



Building Your Brand Internally

- Overall, build your career capital; your value to both your current and prospective employers
 - Not the time to keep your head down, keep quiet, and try not to draw attention to yourself
- Become distinctive/indispensable – the “go-to” person

Building Your Brand Internally

- Be proactive. Volunteer for task forces, cross-functional teams and perform
 - Especially where enhanced revenue stream or cost savings are involved
 - Long-term project that is core to the company
- Demonstrate flexibility and versatility
- Build strong relationships with departments/companies/clients you serve

Building Your Brand Internally

- Solidify your relationship with your boss
 - Meet regularly to check in on how things are going
 - Manage your boss; understand what she needs and deliver
 - Make sure your results are what is valued the most
 - How can you make her look good?
- Revisit/solicit feedback – formal/informal
 - Be aware of how you are perceived

Building Your Brand Internally

- Carefully (and tactfully) showcase your accomplishments to management; don't assume hard work gets recognized
 - Follow up with your boss regularly so he/she knows your ongoing accomplishments – don't wait until an annual review
- Meet your boss' bosses and peers – let them know projects you are working on
 - Brief, factual, fit with strategy, results-oriented, optimistic



Building Your Brand Internally

- Become a company man or woman
 - Proudly show your loyalty to the firm
 - Never be heard or seen bad-mouthing the organization/top management – be a supporter – questionable loyalty = fired
 - Attend team-/morale building events; be on the committee



Building Your Brand Internally

- Identify a role model/mentor
 - Share her experiences and support your efforts
 - Who has overcome roadblocks you're facing?
 - How would this person act in this situation?
- Become a mentor
 - Give back; support those who need support
 - As long as not at your expense.

Building Your Brand Internally

- Demonstrate leadership abilities
 - Get along with and **motivate** others
 - **Take initiative and problem solve**; how can things be done better
 - **Think big.** Be seen as a big-picture thinker at a time when solving challenges becomes more critical than ever.
 - **Stay positive.** Your ability to remain constructive and positive during layoffs, cutbacks, or talk of downsizing speaks volumes
 - Be cool and calm under pressure; thrive in chaos, calm others

Building Your Brand Internally

- Watch your external voice
 - How are you projecting yourself through body language and words?
 - Conveying hope/confidence? Radiating a positive attitude?
- Watch your internal voice
 - Negative voice can unravel all the good you can do and spark self-fulfilling prophecies.
 - Recognize when your thinking is sparking self-destructive behaviors.

For Managers/Leaders

- Leaders must motivate themselves – draw strength from your personal pride; don't abdicate confidence
- Institutional pride; organization mission
- Keep connected to your people; don't avoid
- Envision challenge as puzzle to be solved not intractable problem
- Discover your “indomitable” soul; share it

Building Your Brand Externally

- Work to become better known in your industry/profession
 - Position yourself as an expert by writing articles for publications/websites; conduct webinars; participate in a blog
 - Focus all comments, quotes, blog entries build your brand/promote your current employer
- Network, network, network
 - Sharing of information; building your brand; building your network
 - Attend trade shows or conferences, Facebook or LinkedIn

Improve Yourself

- Focus on professional development opportunities – conferences, training, certification, degree
- Successful people never stop learning about profession, industry, career path
 - At minimum read industry trade journals and books
- Invest in yourself

Be Prepared

- Never stop networking; never stop growing/expanding your network
 - You're not asking for a job; sharing of information; building/promoting your brand
- Update your resume
- Stay active outside of work – volunteering
 - Gain additional work experience

Be Prepared

- It's all about **performance** – not just activity, but results connected to the bigger needs
 - How have you helped your organization
 - “Sales analysis identified underserved segment”
 - “Reduced costs of new product launch by reviewing..”
 - “Led quality improvement team; designed cost-saving process to assess...”
 - “Communication approach highlighted drive for greater customer focus”
- Work to define yourself as a specialist
 - Employers can hold out for the perfect fit
 - Short-term projects can help you specialize

Be Prepared

- Track your successes – CAR -- talk about
 - **Challenge** what was the problem?
 - **Action** what did you do?
 - **Results** who/what was impacted/how;
money saved/raised; process
improved/goals met
- 30 second elevator speech for networking internally and externally

Getting Moving

- “Humans are more likely to **act their way into a new way of thinking** than to think their way into a new way of acting”.
(Working Identity by Herminia Ibarra)
- Transitions occur through **small incremental actions**
- How do you start making these ideas happen?

Summary

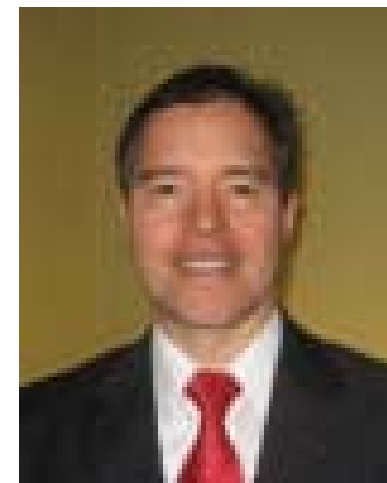
Marshal Goldsmith – Forbes top 5 executive coach

- Have to be mentally tougher than in the past, even though we know things will improve
- You have to reapply for your job every day
 - Boss is in the driver's seat – pay attention to his/her “hot buttons”
- Focus on what you're giving, not what you're getting – bring your “A” game
- Time to shine – notice what others are doing – others drag, you hustle; others moan, you smile
- Be stronger, tougher, more determined
- Keep positive, stay focused and do your best

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Thank You for Attending

Thank you for participating in this
online career lecture.

It will be available on the
Walden University Alumni Association website at
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*Information on career services at Walden University
is available through the Career Services Center:
careerservices@waldenu.edu
<http://careercenter.waldenu.edu>*