



JOB SECURITY - HOW DO I GET IT?

By Kimo Look

Job security traditionally meant showing up on time and doing a good job; as long as the company had work, you had work. Recently though, huge economic change (likely spurred by the Information Revolution) shifted responsibility for job security from the employer to the employee. (For more explanations, read the previous article, “Job Security – Where did it go?”)

Now more than ever, you are responsible for your own job security and career.

What to do? What should and what can I do?

If you'd like to experience a measure of job security in this new era, then take a proactive, rather than reactive, approach to career management. Though there are many actions one can and should take (and future articles will address these), here are a few basic steps that will lead you to security:

- Keep in mind that job security, like a career, is now more than ever your responsibility.
- Understand that job security comes from your own marketability and employability.
- Keeping these high priority, being an individual who adds value or is a valuable asset to any organization, makes you highly desirable, highly employable, and quite secure. To have a high marketability and employability factor, obtain and maintain these:
 - Strong, desirable skill sets - good technical, management and people skills
 - A strong professional network
 - Solid work experience (resume) on projects that highlight your expertise
 - A positive attitude toward change

Although all these steps are important and future articles will explore them, our focus today is the professional network—particularly the important role professional societies play in your career and job security.

I cannot stress enough that a key element in your security is building and maintaining of your professional network! When you build a relationship with a manager, peers, clients, and vendors, maintain it after the project ends. Stay in touch with these people, for they know your value in the marketplace and will often help you find your next position. (Of course, you will also provide them leads and support when their time comes.)



The professional society provides an excellent opportunity to:

- Establish and maintain relationships, not only with your peers, but with future customers, employers, and friends
- Despite the size of the Los Angeles area with its millions and millions of people, civil engineering is really a small world... even smaller when you consider the specialty area in which you work.
- Connect with others in your field and stay abreast of technical and policy events.
- You must be conversant in the hot topics and key areas in your industry.

So, consider taking these actions...

- Explore the “Engineering Community” pages of this site. Sign up for the Engineer’s Network and stay on top of all the issues and opportunities in your profession.
- Join or rejoin and become active in any professional society that relates to your area of specialty or interest. It may be more important to your career than you imagine!
- Continue to keep your eyes open and your mind sharp on all the changes that are occurring.

Remember, you want a Career by Choice, not by Chance.