



**TREND**

# SURVIVING THE MODERN WORKPLACE

As full-time jobs disappear, the new workplace mantra is all about flexibility. Be prepared by following these rules



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**I**f you haven't already noticed, the workplace has changed dramatically in the past 10 years. Full-time positions that were once considered normal are now on the decline, as more people move into contract roles and part-time jobs. For some, this shift is a welcome trend as project or casual work offers flexibility, but for others the reality is that not having the security of a full-time job comes with some disadvantages.

"We are in the early stages of austere times," notes Mike Roddy, account director from recruitment specialists Randstad. "As a result of this, there will be job shortages, reduced hours and redundancies, and we'll see outplacements taking over. A traditional job for life is old hat now. We're in the information age and technology is leading this shift away from full-time work."

Here are some steps you can take to prepare for the transition:

**RULE: SET ASIDE THREE- TO SIX-MONTHS SALARY**

Having money saved will give you peace of mind through the periods when you're not working. It's important to have at least three months salary saved until you land your next job. Not only will this help cover your bills, but you won't feel pressured to take the first job you're offered.

**RULE: GROW YOUR SKILL BASE**

"A great portion of the workforce does not invest in upgrading their skills," observes Roddy. Keep your skills up to date and stay abreast of technology as this increases your options when you start looking for work.

**RULE: DON'T BE AN OSTRICH**

Be across what's happening in your company and your industry. "This is critical in the event there is a downturn. The last thing you want to do is turn up to work one day to learn your hours have been scaled back, or worse," warns Roddy.

**RULE: WORK THE ROOM**

"While jobs are advertised, a lot of the time it's who you know," points out Roddy, so ensure you have good networks - personal and professional. Regardless of your qualifications and skills, always have a number of other avenues to pursue, and keep professional networks such as LinkedIn and Facebook up to date. And don't forget you have a responsibility to help other people as well.

More than **40%** of the Australian workforce does not work in permanent employment.

**RULE: START MOONLIGHTING**

A burgeoning side business can lead to opportunities. Many successful operators started working on their business after hours, providing a source of income and, potentially, a safety net.