10 tips to recession proof your development career

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With the current economy it is important to know what will help you keep you current job or easily get a new one if you need to. Here are my tips for recession proofing your development career - let me know if you have any other suggestions!

1. **Have a positive attitude.** When a manager has two developers with equal technical skills but one is optimistic/"can do" and the other one is grumpy you can bet that grump will be laid off first.

2. **Keep your promises.** If you promise to complete a piece of code by Thursday make sure than you do. If you don't think you can make a deadline it is much better to speak up ahead of time and renegotiate what can be done, or get help, rather than say "yes" when you are not sure. If you have agreed to a deadline and things change tell your manager or client as soon as you know, so that you can both come up with a plan B.

3. **Keep your code simple.** Simple code is easier to read and maintain, generally runs faster and has fewer bugs. Clever code has a way of biting you or someone else in the rear end. Yes it sometimes takes more thinking to write something simple and elegant instead of complex -- and your future self will thank you for doing it!

4. **Communicate clearly.** The number one way projects fail is poor communication - misunderstandings with clients over scope, missing features, upsetting email threads. Confirm verbal meetings afterwards in bullet point emails. If a topic is getting heated in email then switch to an in person meeting or phone call to defuse it, then document what was agreed in email afterwards. Keep your ego out of the office and out of your code. Focus on what is best for the project and client.

5. **Bring up questions early.** If you get stuck on some code (and who hasn't some time or other) then bring up questions early. There is nothing worse than a late deliverable that could have been on time if the right questions where asked sooner. If being assertive doesn't come naturally to you read a book or take an evening class on assertiveness.

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