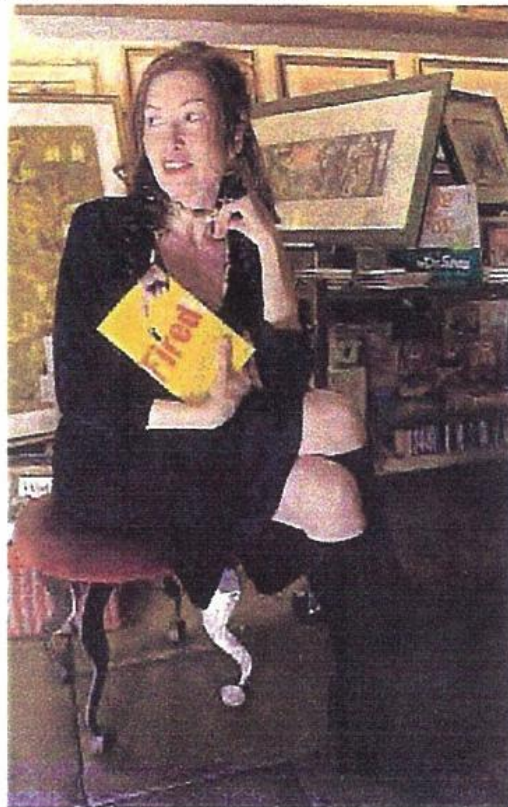


## FIRING HAS HOLLYWOOD ENDING

BY JEAN CHATZKY

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Julie Sullivan for News

'Fired!' author Anabelle Gurwitch at a recent book signing in Santa Monica, Calif. off-Broadway play, Annabelle Gurwitch went cathartic, not neurotic.

The actress, whom you may know from her years hosting "Dinner and a Movie" on TBS, wallowed in pity for a little while. But once she started to tell her tale, she learned that not only had pretty much everyone experienced the hatchet - and survived - many people were willing to talk about it. The result: Gurwitch's new book, "Fired! Tales of the Canned, Canceled, Downsized, & Dismissed" and the Showtime documentary that parallels it. "So many people are finding themselves out of a job these days. It's happening across the country, because jobs have gone overseas and companies are downsizing. It's really a universal thing," said Gurwitch, who interviewed dozens of interesting (and funny) people for her projects, including Felicity Huffman, Bill Maher, Bob Saget and "Super Size Me" documentary director Morgan Spurlock.

I've certainly been there. If you haven't - well, I hate to say it, but there's a pretty good chance you will be some day. In fact, even if you have, there's no guarantee it won't happen again. So why not be prepared? Think about these tips on how to handle it.

Being employable is every bit as important as being employed. You may have a job, but that doesn't mean you won't soon need another one, as Gurwitch and others have learned the hard way. So don't sit back and let your resume gather dust. Not only will constantly updating it be more effective than struggling to remember your accomplishments, but you'll have a clean copy ready and waiting for you if you ever need it. This also means you may need to take a class or two to maintain skills you have but aren't now using.

By the same token, keep in touch with your contacts.

"It's a smart strategy to keep your network going all the time, so consistently check in with old bosses and old colleges," advised Robin Ryan, career counselor and author of "60 Seconds & You're Hired!" Often old contacts are the best source for new opportunities. Since we often don't know when that dreaded day is coming, have a cushion for the blow. I