

Only You Can Make the Changes You want to Make

New Year's resolutions tend to be reactions to things we want to change in our lives. Many people go into a New Year with resolutions or goals for their career. It's fairly common to begin implementing our plans and have career-related New Year's resolutions because work is such an important part of our daily lives. The end of the year is always a great time to reflect on what has worked and what hasn't worked for us, and to think about what we want to do differently next year.

It is very easy to make new year's resolutions or resolutions at any time of year but most of us find it much harder to keep them beyond a few weeks or months. It's possible that it's not so much your will power or desire to change as it is the resolutions themselves. Many people make overly ambitious resolutions that are almost doomed to failure from the start. So one should have career resolutions that you can keep, positive things that you really want to do. Some can be in reaction to things you want to change, but you should also consider some aspirational, desirable resolutions. Let's look at some of resolutions that can help you achieve career success in the coming years.

Stop taking criticism personally: It's easy to take criticism as a personal attack or as a signal that everything you've done right isn't appreciated. It prevents you from truly hearing feedback that will help you in your career, and even discourages people from giving you valuable feedback in the future.

Track Your Accomplishments: Sometimes you need to toot your own horn in a subtle and tasteful way to get ahead. Tracking your professional accomplishments is one way to broadcast your value to those who can shape your career. Keeping a log or portfolio of your achievements can help document your value in your career path.

Be Willing to Take Risks: If an opportunity comes up, take it. Don't let any inhibitions hold you back, try new things and volunteer to partake in tasks you have not done before. You will not only learn and grow from this a great deal but will also get noticed along the way.

Expand Your Skill Set: Know what your strengths are but also look to develop areas which you perceive as weaknesses. A weakness can always be

turned into strength. Make sure your CV reflects development and strategic planning of the path you are taking towards a more fulfilled career.

Polish Your Communication Skills: Strong communications skills is often what separates great employees from good ones and is essential in nearly every job function. While poor communication skills can undermine your credibility and your chances for advancement.

Organize Your Personal Workspace: Make sure you prioritize important jobs on a daily basis. Too much time is occupied by things that keep us busy but are not a priority and prevent us from using our time in the most beneficial way. You will reap the rewards of planning in the long run

Be Proactive: Attend all the possible training and professional development that is offered. Make a note of all areas you wish to progress in and jump at any chance to receive professional development in that area at work. Take an interest and actively look for material and people that share your interest area and get involved.

Be Happy: Look and feel good. Make sure you get enough time for yourself and make sure you rest. That way you'll be on better form at work. Also, always dress well, it is better to be smart. Remember the importance of the image you reflect in a professional environment.

Reduce stress.: Ask yourself where is the stress coming from or if it's self-induced. Perhaps you're putting too much pressure on yourself. You can't do everything so don't try to. If you are reactive, don't be surprised if you also are more stressed out, juggling more than you can handle.

Improve your relationships: You really need to work on to improve the relationships with the people who you are or will be working with. Make an effort to get to know your co-workers better and offer your help when they need it.

Have a better attitude: A positive attitude can bring you great career success. Everyone likes people who are proactive, positive and enthusiastic. A good attitude will likely attract more people and opportunities your way. Learn to appreciate what you have.

Request and accept support: When possible, enlist the emotional support of your family and friends to give you the additional willpower and determination to stick to your plan and achieve your goal and help your resolve to succeed.

Prepare yourself for setbacks.: There will be circumstances that will cause you to lose a little ground toward achieving your goal. If you're mentally prepared for such a scenario to happen, you're more easily able to accept the setback and move forward rather than the more typical response of using the setback as an excuse to give up on your goal.

Forgive yourself if you lapse. Mistakes and slip-ups are going to occasionally happen. Take a moment to analyze why the slip-up happened and what you can do in the future to prevent it from happening again, and then move on with your life. Don't punish yourself for being human. Forgive and forget and keep your focus on achieving your goal.

Only you can make the changes you want to make. Don't create resolutions to please others. Once you make a resolution to change something about your career, accept the responsibility and demands that such a change will take if you truly want to succeed. Finally, remember that you can make changes to your life at any point in time. While the new year is certainly a traditional starting point, don't wait for an arbitrary date to make the changes you need to improve your life. Like the old saying, "Today is the first day of the rest of your life," it's never a bad time to start moving your career in a better direction