

What Are Your Career Resolutions for 2017?

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As 2016 is coming to a close, it's often a great time to start reflecting on your career, and how far you've come up the ladder of career success. Was it a year of tremendous personal growth in a job that you love, and that continuously helped you grow your skills, or was it a year of feeling stagnant in a role that lacks passion or purpose for you?

Every year, I find it helpful to set aside time for self-reflection, and write down some of my work-related new year's resolutions. It keeps my mindset engaged with creative, action planning productivity, that propels me to unveil what goals I will set as the new year approaches.

So as you clink your glass, count down the seconds, and bid farewell to 2016, here are my 8 Career Resolutions that I want to share with you, to adopt for the New Year ahead!

1. I Will Keep Networking

Starting, and even maintaining a clever networking habit takes effort, determination and smart planning. Search for events in your industry that run throughout the year, schedule them in, and attend them with excitement. Introduce yourself to people who are aligned with your industry, and may be in need of your services. Networking helps you maintain your integrity and authenticity in your professional space, helps you 'test the waters' to know how your skill set is valued and to know what the job market is really like. Nothing starts your year off better than putting yourself out there! Whether you start off with a career coach, attend a conference that opens your world to a new career path, or updating your marketing emails, branching out is the first step to networking success!

2. I Will Manage and Update My Online Presence

Is it time to update your professional presence online? Whether it's your Resume, Profile Picture, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube or LinkedIn, the way you present yourself online needs to be carefully updated to continuously attract a specific online audience. Whether you blog about topics in your industry, create videos giving functional expertise, or driving your authenticity through posting podcasts, your online presence is the key to your brand's integrity, whether you are working for yourself, for someone else, or out in the job market!

3. I Will Keep My Mind Fit and Focused

One of the most common obstacles when reaching for a career goal is how to preserve your focus and strength, while maintaining your job hunt, your kids, and your dreams! Most of the time, the search for a more ideal job, the pursuit of a promotion or the transition to a new career is often what we really should be focused on. But often exhaustion takes centre stage to offset our "real" career aspirations. Some of are workaholics and simply burn out or have no energy to think of making a change. So to combat this lack of energy, we need to preserve ourselves with strong relationships; giving back - for example through volunteering; exercise; meditation; sleep; and good eating habits to give you the stamina to push and take action to plan your dreams.

4. I Will Organise My Workspace

Keeping your workspace keeps your mind clear and will finally allow you to take charge of your career path. Whether it's deleting old emails, sorting through the myriad of files and folders on your desktop, or keeping track of deadlines and appointments in your diary or planner, instilling some order will keep you on top of things. Tidy your workstation, file or put information online so there is less need to for storage and clear out your in/outbox trays. Organise your workspace, as it is an extension of you, and reveals more to others about your competency than you think!

5. I Will Redefine My Personal Image

Personal presentation is key in today's working world. Just like your desk is an extension of you, so is your wardrobe an extension of your self-image, and how well you present yourself to others. Do your clothes fit well and flatter you? Is your hair neat and tidy? Is your posture hunched over when greeting a client, or are your shoulders set back, and your head held high? Whether you work in a corporate, casual, or home environment, all efforts must be taken to create groundbreaking first impressions to succeed in the working world, so your customers and clients can take you seriously.

6. I Will Take A Career Health Check

Holidays are the perfect time to perform a career health check on yourself. You may have lapsed into professional complacency, losing motivation and focus. Whether you're a recent graduate or a seasoned professional, the time to take stock of your career is now. Start by making a list of the pros and cons of your job, which aspects of your job make you happy, and which leave you unsatisfied? Is your current job what you really want to be doing? Is it time to consider a career change? Checking the vital signs of your career is essential for self-reflection and self-care. This will give you the clarity to finding a clearer path to career success.

7. I Will Take On A New Challenge

Feeling a bit complacent and bored with your day to day routine? Make the new year your time to shine, and step outside your comfort zone! Learn a new skill that adds variety to your day – it might be a hobby or new work skill. Taking on challenges that are outside your comfort zone can open up your mind to new creative ventures. Adopting new interests can subconsciously give you the confidence to talk to your manager about taking on new responsibilities, or expanding on your current role! Push yourself a little, take the initiative and rise to new challenges. You can be sure it won't go unnoticed!

8. I Will Take Initiative And Ask For What I Want

There is a famous motivational saying, that "If you don't ask, you don't get". If you are looking to get promoted, then perhaps you need to muster up the courage and have a conversation with your boss about it. Or perhaps ask for feedback so you can identify areas to develop and strengths to build on. Standing up and being able to ask for what you want is a critical career skill, and taking the plunge and asking for ways to improve your professional standing is the only way you'll start to climb the ladder to career success.

So if your career feels stagnant and your job leaves you empty, there's no need to grin and bear it for another year longer. As you count down the seconds to 2017, and watch the bright and bold embers of the fireworks streak across the sky, imagine that the professional passion inside of you is being reignited as well. Take these resolutions and start planting your professional seeds. Follow my simple tips for career development, and come this time next year, you could find yourself looking at a hugely improved professional picture. Maintain your vision, action your goals, and let 2017 be the year of your career!

About the author

Kerina Alter is the founder, director and principle career coach of Altered Career, a career coaching, career management and job search advisory consultancy. She is an experienced and qualified career advisor and corporate trainer. Her passion lies in supporting and guiding you every step to your career path, so you can grow your future with optimism and confidence.