

Ho! Ho! Ho! Saint Nick is almost here...

What are you planning to achieve in your career next year?

CAREER EXPLORATION: EVALUATING YOUR CAREER GOALS AT THE END OF 2013



As we are approaching the end of year, we look forward to the sights of jolly old Saint Nick and decorating our tree. However, we tend to unconsciously expect that Christmas bonus each year in our "career stocking." The end of the year is when employers organize office parties and conduct a thorough review of next year's talent pool, and who is contributing to fostering greater business growth, productivity, and morale.

Research on Compensation

An article entitled, "Want more productive workers?" in *The Spectator* (Nov. 16) by Jena McGregor highlights a study, revealing that a 20% increase in higher productivity occurred when employees received a surprise bonus. Interestingly, bonuses were even higher for workers with the most experience. Bonuses actually encourage workers to perform better, especially if they are given when totally unexpected.

According to *Organizational Psychology*, when we are certain that we will be compensated a certain amount, then we may work less diligently because we know that it is expected. However, the structure of compensation is a critical element that affects productivity and morale of workers. Therefore, employers need to evaluate not only what employees should be paid, but the structure of that pay, which has the most impact on increasing morale and productivity. The pay structure then must consider balanced incentives encouraging intrinsic motivation as well as extrinsic motivation. Thus, employees who are motivated and exhibit a natural passion for their work tend to exceed strategic objectives more so than those who are not driven towards their work. This means that choosing a career that you are passionate about will lead you to the most personal satisfaction and success!

How do you implement change?

Aside from compensation, many people often find themselves at end of year evaluating their career goals and wanting to make a change, but are not really certain what change they should make. Career change? Updating further their skills? Updating their resume? Seeking more challenging responsibilities? Asking for a raise? In this economy and competitive market, one often finds themselves learning to align their particular goals and needs according to the flow of the market and economy. This often means being cautious about changing jobs before evaluating all the options and choices, as well as pros and cons. Do your research!

While career changes do not occur overnight, you can enlist the help of a *Certified Resume Strategist* and HR professional to help you formulate a concrete plan for change through career exploration/decision making. Start evaluating school programs or courses that will help you upgrade important skills to further your objectives. If you require obtaining additional skills in QuickBooks, or in a second language such as French, why not take a course through an accredited college or university. Many employers tend to hire employees who are bilingual, even trilingual, as this added value proposition increases opportunities to enhance one's skill set and career growth.



Interesting discoveries & strategies for fostering change

What people do not often recognize is that small steps help us gradually reach our goal. Employers look for candidates who are forward-thinking, proactive change agents, and initiators to creating change, which means that they will utilize those skills and competencies and apply them in the organization and position at hand. These employees look for innovative ways to improve organizational efficiency, problem solving, and decision making. This could mean suggesting changes in policies, office procedures, or contributing to socially improving the morale of the organization for greater leadership and success!



Tying up loose ends at the end of the year?

Do not forget to tie up any loose ends or incomplete goals if possible by year's end. Remember that course you vowed to take months ago, but keep putting it on the back burner because of other responsibilities? Now is the time to make a commitment to completing such goals so you can start the New Year on the right foot.

Perhaps you want to go back to finish school part time while working, upgrade your certifications, or you want to verify old references to better leverage credibility and increase your supportive network. If you do decide to leave your job for whatever reason at end of year, ensure that you leave on good terms with your employer. Otherwise, this could face some challenges in your job search when a prospective employer consults your past employer about references. What about completely stepping out of your comfort zone by pursuing a position that promotes challenge, greater responsibility, and freedom to set your own schedule? What you can visually conceive, you can achieve!

Taking the steps to complete these goals means a lot in the long run! Employers appreciate candidates who take the next leap to shaping their own success!

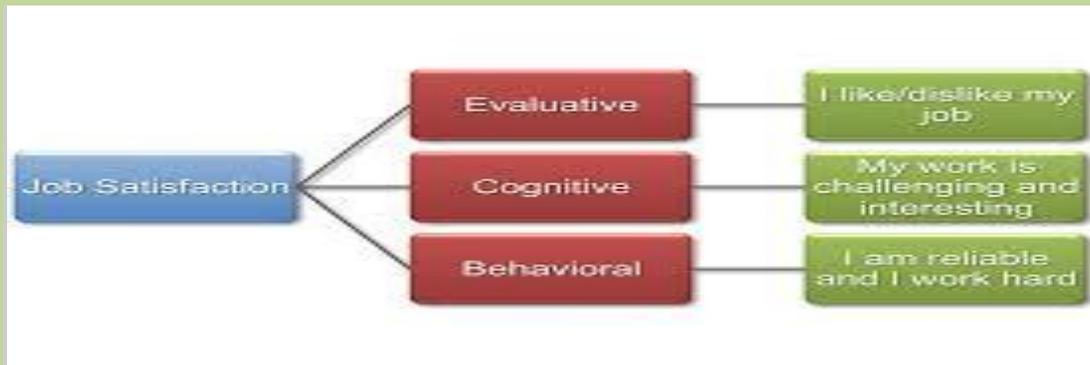
Job-Hopping?

Job-hopping or changing jobs, is a familiar term we sometimes hear at end of year, and one that raises some eyebrows by prospective employers through visible gaps and job changes appearing on resumes. Before deciding to change positions, weigh your goals and objectives with the pros and cons of staying in your current position and take the necessary steps forward. Frequent job-hopping is actually a response to experiencing frustration in achieving growth-oriented career goals or not having your professional needs met in your particular position.

Know what is it that you are looking for in a career before changing jobs, which could actually present a cause for concern among future employers. Do you need higher pay, or are you willing to be paid an average salary until you improve your expertise, or "prove" your skill set? This is the reality that many highly educated and skilled employees encounter when job-searching.

Do you need a collaborative team environment free of "office politics"? OR Do you desire total independence and creativity? Do you require a challenging fast-paced environment, or one that is moderate, supporting a "go with the flow" pace? The answers in these questions reveal your needs

and preferences when it comes to your ideal and most suitable career that will lead you to optimal success and personal growth and satisfaction.



Time to Update your resume

Regardless of what change you decide to create, you can never go wrong with updating your resume so you can start the year fresh with a set of concrete, but realistic goals to achieve step by step. Having an updated resume helps you to see your achievements and skills in a whole new and positive light. Remember that your resume reflects your particular skills, experience, and achievements. It is more than just a piece of paper, with your duties and skills, but an effective marketing tool!

Remember advocating "change" does not need to be perceived as a difficult time of trying to overcome obstacles and knocking on countless doors, but an inspiring path to success if you are focused on your goal and simply take action! Start networking and continue upgrading your skills and experience.



Creative horizons.....experience the path to taking charge of your own success!



Wishing all clients a Happy Holidays and a prosperous New Year 2014 filled with joy, peace, greater job satisfaction, and success!

P.S. Remember to inform me about your career successes!

Ask me about my December specials on updating your resume. Customized Cover letter packages and LinkedIn profile specials are also available for clients.

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