

resolution

a firm decision to do or not to do something.

As one wild year comes to a close, it's time to look forward to the upcoming new year. For many, that means looking for New Year's resolution ideas and setting new goals. But if you're like most people, that also probably means seeing those resolutions fly out the window before Valentine's Day (if you're lucky).

It's great to make resolutions; they're a way for us to look forward to the new year with optimism that is active, rather than passive. It's a proclamation of how you want the new year to be better and how you're going to do it. ***The problem comes when those resolutions are too generic and impossible to measure.***

This year, look at your career and set some firm, measurable goals that you can actually track and achieve. Here are 8 workplace goals for the new year that will make it your best work year ever:

Do five things to stay healthier at work Everyone is concerned about health, and losing weight is one of the most common New Year's resolutions out there. Try to think of five simple ways to stay healthier at work. Pack a sensible lunch. Switch your office chair for an exercise ball. Think small and you'll find that those little things add up.

Learn a new skill No matter what field you are in, there are hundreds of new skills you can learn that could benefit your career. Is there one you've been meaning to learn? Set it as one of your work goals for the year and get it done. You won't regret it.

Read one career-related or motivational book Reading does wonders for your mind. No matter your job, there is a book out there that can improve your performance, your outlook, or your personal habits. Even if you think you already know what you need to know, reading a great book on professional development can give you a new perspective.

Create at least one new professional networking connection per month There's no downside to increasing the size of your professional network. You probably meet people all the time, but do you take the time to listen, grab their business card, and connect with them? Try to find at least one person per month to add to your LinkedIn connections and watch your network blossom.

Clean out your physical and digital file cabinets This New Year's resolution idea can double as one for home too! Many of us have file cabinets that are filled with old papers that are not remotely relevant to our work anymore. It doesn't take long to clean them out, and you'll be glad you did. Weed through those files, recycle what you don't need, and organize the rest. This goes for your computer files, too.

Measure your work-life balance We all hear about work-life balance, but how do you measure it? The first step is deciding that you want to see where you are at. Then, find a good, online survey to make it easy. Review your results and maybe discuss them with your family and friends. With the survey results and the feedback of your loved ones, you can work towards finding harmony in your work and personal lives.

Volunteer Volunteering is a great way to positively affect the world, and it's also another way you can feel good about yourself. Find a cause that is meaningful to you and sign up to contribute. You can feed the homeless, pick up trash in a park, raise money for a new local pool, whatever you like.

Get one new professional certification Is there an empty spot on your resume where you wish you could put "XYZ Certified?" Stop wishing and make it happen! This is a great idea for one of your work goals for the new year as it can advance your career. If it costs money, just think of it as an investment in your future. You can do this!