



Everything Jersey

## Career resolutions for 2011

Published: Sunday, January 02, 2011, 10:50 AM



By **Lee Miller/The Star-Ledger**

This is the time when many of us focus on how we can further our careers during the coming year.

Caroline Adams Miller (no relation), the author of "Creating Your Best Life," is a believer, not only in New Year's resolutions, but also in setting goals throughout the year. She advises: "always have a list of clear-cut goals, both short-term and long-term, for your personal and professional lives," citing a study of 3,500 people who were followed for 15 years which found that "the happiest people wake up every single day to clear-cut goals."

In making your resolutions this year, Caroline suggests that you concentrate on resolutions that make use of your strengths rather than on those that seek to correct your weaknesses. "The Gallup Organization has found that when employees use their top five strengths to carry out their jobs, they are more effective than when they are trying to always plug their weaknesses." She adds: "Not only will you be more successful, others will find you far more authentic because you will be coming from your best place."

According to a just released survey from ISI Translation Services, after weight loss, learning something new tops Americans' list of New Year's resolutions this year. While losing weight, dressing better and getting fit can help your career, in this rapidly changing world, learning new skills may well be the single best thing anyone can do for their career. Here are some other suggestions for New Year's resolutions that can help move your career forward:

Maggie Jessup, author of "Fame 101" offers the following: "attend at least one large industry event, not in your own industry, but relating to the industry where your business' most important customers/clients are situated. Once there, resolve not to be a wallflower." Expanding your knowledge and contacts beyond your immediate field can not only make you more valuable in your current job but also can open up new job possibilities in related fields.

Dr. Sandra Richtemeyer, Chair of IMA, an association for accountants and financial professionals headquartered in Montvale, recommends that volunteering for professional organizations be on everyone's New Year's career resolutions list. According to Dr. Richtemeyer, the benefits of participating in professional organizations include "keeping abreast of industry-specific developments and regulations; networking with other professionals which can help in one's job search and in discovering alternate career paths within the profession; and giving back to your profession to help improve it and the livelihoods of those people within it."

From Eric Sedransk, the founder of TheEarlyBirdie.com, a website which offers golf opportunities in a Tri-state area, suggests that you resolve "to network more and spend several hours each day doing so." Networking is one of the keys to business success and we all should resolve to do more of it. By networking, however, I mean not just

meeting new people but actually trying to help them. Networking has gotten a bad name because many of its practitioners view networking from the perspective of what they can get from the people with whom they network. The best networking resolution you could make would be not only to network more but to give more generously to your network without regard to how the people you are helping might be able to help you. Networking in that way will yield benefits to your own career in ways you cannot imagine. As Jeff Gitterman, author of "Beyond Success; Redefining the Meaning of Prosperity" and his partner Andrew Appel maintain: "It may seem like a cliché and somewhat of a paradox, but it does seem to be true that the more you give the more you will receive."

While it has been a difficult year for most people, for those of us in a position to, resolve to give something back to the community this year. Jersey City based lecture management agent, Saideh Browne, is doing just that. Beginning January 1, she is taking a year off to work on an initiative called SheEO's Rocks. This is an effort to help deal with the "increased unemployment, decreased job availability and heightened barriers to entry for women from underserved communities" that have resulted from the economic downturn we have just gone through.

Whatever resolutions you choose to make, stay focused on causing them to become a reality. One way to do that is to ask yourself every Sunday, what did I do last week, and what do I plan to do this week, to further the resolutions I made. Wishing you a happy, healthy and prosperous career in the coming year.

*A veteran human resources executive, Lee E. Miller is a career coach and co-author, with his daughter Jessica, of the recently released "A Woman's Guide to Successful Negotiating." Mail questions to **Lee@YourCareerDoctors.com***

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