

# 10 moves you need to make now to advance your career in 2016

Holiday chaos got you sidetracked? Focus on these tips through year-end and you'll be approaching January in stride.

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Let's be honest. Right now, the only things running through your mind are your holiday shopping, travel plans for family reunions—and the stress that comes with it—and using up your remaining paid time off to get it all done in time. There's no denying that when the holiday frenzy ramps up your career takes a back seat.

Not so fast. Technically, this is one of the best times of year to focus on your managing your career. Year-end bonuses are approaching, department and personal goals are being evaluated, office parties scream "network, network, network"—and if new horizons are in your future, hiring ramps up with the new year. Now is a better time than ever to strategize all the right steps before year-end.



Wondering what you need to cross off your list? Start with these 10 moves to keep your career on track well into the new year.

1. **Schedule a review meeting.** Even if your company doesn't have a formal review process in place, be proactive. No one can own your career better than you. [Schedule a meeting with your boss \(//www.monster.com/career-advice/article/master-the-annual-review\)](http://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/master-the-annual-review) to review your performance.
2. **Set new goals.** Take time to reflect upon where you'd like to see your career soar in 2016. Maybe you're vying a promotion or external job or maybe you're looking to become more proficient in your current role. Whatever the goal, break it down to [action-oriented steps \(http://www.monster.com/blog/b/15-minute-exercise-that-will-change-your-career-for-better-2016\)](http://www.monster.com/blog/b/15-minute-exercise-that-will-change-your-career-for-better-2016) with timeframes attached.
3. **Network during holiday mixers to make deeper connections.** Go ahead, get out there! Enjoy the revelry of the season and strive for meaningful conversations at your company'—these relationships and deep connections will serve you well in your career. Genuine interactions will be easy to recall and are great talking points should you need to reconnect.
4. **Leverage the office holiday party.** Put in face time at your employer's function—you don't need to stay the entire evening, you just need to be strategic. Get there on time—if it starts at 6 p.m., literally get there at 6 p.m. Find leadership and introduce yourself before it gets too crowded, mingle with executives on your team, dine with your colleagues and then you'll feel accomplished, even as early as 7 p.m. If you want to leave early, go ahead—your mission has already been accomplished.
5. **Sign up for professional development.** Be strategic about the skills you want to develop and take time to create an

- educational calendar for the upcoming year. Look internally and research online courses externally, too. Check out industry conferences and professional organizations to attend—dates, locations and costs, then ask for approvals. In addition, identify organizations where you'd like to speak and make your mark as a thought leader or industry expert.
6. **Recap accomplishments from the past year.** Oftentimes we're caught up in the pace of moving forward that we don't always carve time to look back. Schedule time on your calendar, even an hour is sufficient, to capture accomplishments (<http://www.monster.com/blog/b/how-to-catalog-accomplishments>) from the previous 12 months. In addition, identify setbacks—these are accomplishments in disguise. What was the situation and how did you overcome it? These accomplishments will serve you well on future job interviews.
  7. **Revise your resume.** Even if you're not looking for a job, open your most recent resume and update it (<http://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/five-steps-for-updating-your-resume-hot-jobs>). We know you're thinking, "ugh." The mistake we make is doing this in one shot. Instead, break this task up into small increments. Your resume should be a living document that is constantly updated with additional responsibilities and achievements. Handling your resume in this fashion will help you avoid unnecessary stress when someone you clicked with at a holiday mixer asks for your resume. Voila! All you'll need to do is press send.
  8. **Clean out your desk.** When you're mentally checked out of working—yes, it happens to all of us—that's okay. You can be productive in other ways. A messy desk is a sign of a cluttered mind. Leverage downtime at year-end to make your desk truly sparse. This includes home offices as well—streamline your workspace (<http://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/get-organized-at-work>) by eliminating clutter and figure out what items can make you work more efficiently such as a standing desk.
  9. **Compile your kudos file.** Throughout the year you probably received praise from your boss, clients and colleagues. If you haven't organized them in one specific place, take time now to search your inbox and create a kudos file (<http://www.monster.com/blog/b/how-to-catalog-accomplishments>). This will serve you well during performance review time to show your boss the value added to your organization. In addition, it will provide anecdotes at your fingertips should you be preparing for job interviews.
  10. **Polish your online profiles.** Do you want to increase your Twitter following by a specific number of people as well as interactions? When was the last time you Googled yourself? Our point exactly. Take time to analyze your online profiles (<http://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/making-your-professional-comeback-digitally-hot-jobs>) and evaluate which social media sites are working the best for you and which ones are not, then tweak them accordingly. These online platforms are the best representation of you, your career and potentially where you want to be so make sure they're up to par.

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