

January 2012 eNewsletter: Feature Article

Annual Checklist for Job Seekers and the Happily Employed

You might already be plugging away at a job you enjoy and the thought of looking for a new job is as far away as the thought of next Christmas – but even if you fit that description, there are at least five things you should be checking off the annual to-do list.

1. What's my job?

Make sure to add in details about your current job into your resume and update the description at least once a year. The best time you'll remember exactly what your job responsibilities entail is when you're actually working in the position. If you stay with a company for five years, and then try to update your resume, you're likely to forget important details that might impress your future employer.

2. Problem: Your resume looks like it was updated in the last century.

You might not realize it, but just as a bad haircut can instantly date your look, the same can be said about your resume. If you haven't changed the style and layout of your resume in the last five years, it's safe to say that the format you're using is probably a bit dated. Do a quick search on the Internet for modern-looking resume templates; then use your favourite templates as inspiration to customize your resume. Don't plug in your information straight into a template because it probably will end up looking like everybody else's resume. Be original! While you're at it, clean up your resume and toss out those lines in your resume that brag about the Athlete of the Year award you won in grade 9 or the Most Improved Math award you took home in grade 11.

3. Say hello.

If you find it hard to keep in contact with people when they're not a regular fixture in your daily life, you're probably not alone in your struggles. However, this year, make it a goal to pick up a phone and call your contacts or send them a friendly "How are you doing" email. If these are the people you would call to network with or ask to be a work reference, you need to ensure you keep them up to date with your life. What's more stressful than getting a [job interview](#) then frantically leaving messages with your references that you haven't talked to in three years and wondering if they'll even remember you?

4. Job alerts are good.

Sign up to receive job alert emails from your favourite job boards. It's not hard – all it takes is a couple of minutes to fill out your job preferences, and the job boards will do the rest of the work! If you don't want to get inundated with emails, sign up for an email account with a free email provider like Yahoo or Hotmail and use it as your secondary email. Then you're free to check on your job alert emails whenever you want! You never know when the perfect job will come up, so it's always good to keep an eye out on available opportunities, even if you're perfectly content in your current position.

5. Don't neglect your online profile.

Updating your resume is important, but don't forget that you probably have an online resume that you'll want to update as well. Take some time to work on your LinkedIn account and other social media profiles so they reflect your freshly updated and modernized resume. In fact, consider buying a web domain for your name and linking it to your LinkedIn profile. Small changes can make a huge difference when recruiters and hiring managers are online looking for the perfect candidate to approach about a great opportunity!

