

New Year, New Job? Well, Maybe

Dear Stephen:

Every year around this time I sit down to make a list of New Year's resolutions. Usually, I write down some of the normal stuff like working out more or losing a certain amount of weight. I am not very good at following through on these resolutions (Is anyone?). As I see it, the point of a New Year's resolution is to make a change that sets you up to grow and improve over the next year.

This year, I want to try something different. I am only going to put one thing on my list, and I am going to get it done! My resolution is to find a new job. I have been in the same inside sales position for almost a decade, and I can't help but think the best way to commit to self-improvement is to take a step forward in my career. What do you think? Does this plan make any sense? Is this a smart way to go about a job search?

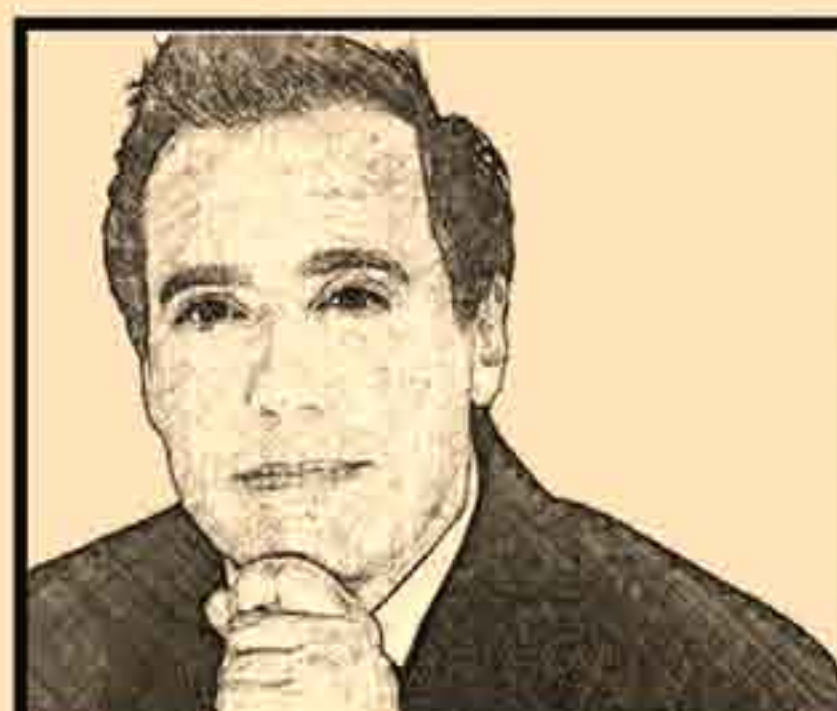
I want to stay in sales, but step up — make more money, sell to bigger clients, etc. I haven't had to look for a job in so long, though, that I don't even know where to start. How do I begin this process?

New Year, New Job, New Me

Dear New Year, New Job, New Me,

I love this idea! I know from experience how tough it is to stick to resolutions. Every year we say this year will be different, this year we'll be good, this year we'll stick to the plan, and then slowly, over the cold, dark winter, we return to our old ways. Our new goals became too difficult, too inconvenient, not really worth it. We start making compromises. We tell ourselves the resolutions were never really that important in the first place. And then, by the time the flowers begin to bloom, we can't even remember in what ways we resolved to change ourselves. It's a sad pattern, really. And I am all in favor of finding ways to shake free of this trap. Yours is a great solution!

A new job truly can change the way we experience the world and think of ourselves. Especially if you are gunning for a promotion or a position with more responsibility, changing roles can



You can send your workplace questions to Stephen at: StephenSays@bellow.press.

Questions selected to be answered, will appear in this column. Please use the Subject: Stephen Says for all emails. Stephen Viscusi is a bestselling author, television personality, and CEO of The Viscusi Group, global executive recruiters located in New York. Follow Stephen on Twitter @WorkplaceGuru, Like Stephen on Facebook; and follow him on LinkedIn.

be as exciting and enriching as anything. Here is my one caveat. Instead of resolving to get a new job, resolve to explore a new one. Half the people who start exploring find their options are not as wonderful as they might have guessed and appreciate what they have more. And others who poke around and get an offer from a different company can leverage that offer into a promotion with their current company, which is often ideal. All these are good strategies.

All of which is to say, do not start with the thought you will definitely be leaving your job, unless you just hate it. Instead, think about exploring all your options, see what develops, and make a decision with all the information.

A new job truly can change the way we experience the world and think of ourselves. Especially if you are gunning for a promotion or a position with more responsibility, changing roles can be as exciting and enriching as anything.

The most important step in any job search is deciding you want to explore your options and committing to that idea. Making this process a New Year's resolution is as good a way of formally committing to a job search as any. And like I always say, the best time to look for a new job is when you don't need to. Looking for a new job is almost a full-time job in itself.

So you've made up your mind. You've written EXPLORE A NEW JOB in big, bold letters on a piece of paper and hung it on your fridge. Now what? Well, there are a couple of things to do. The first is to figure out what type of jobs might be a good fit for you. Start looking at some of the competitors in your industry, and research their openings. Figure out what they're looking for in a candidate, and try to determine whether or not you'd be a good match. With all of that research, start building your personal narrative. Work on refining your resume (especially if you haven't had to work on it for a decade)

and crafting compelling cover letters about who you are and what you have to offer.

Then start applying! Go straight to these same companies' websites, and send in your resume and cover letters. You'd be amazed how effective this can be (believe me, as a recruiter, I get no joy in saying it). Hopefully, this will lead to some interviews, but if it doesn't don't be discouraged. Reach out to some friends you've made in the industry, and see if they know of any positions. You also should consider reaching out to some recruiters and placement agencies if you aren't having much luck on your own.

Even if you get to this point, though, don't stop applying online — it really is the best option. You also shouldn't be discouraged if they don't list an opening that fits your skill set. Send in your resume and cover letter anyway. Just like you are searching for some options, every employer is always searching for new, good employees, they just

do not usually list or announce it.

In all, it's important to understand the process will likely take many months, at least for any job worth taking. If you get an offer very quickly, wonder why they are so desperate. Throughout the process, remember to keep your spirits up, and don't lose sight of the goal, which is simply to get an offer. Don't let this just be another resolution that falls by the wayside. Stick with it, and I guarantee you'll be in a new role by the time you need to think of a resolution for 2019! It could be a new role you have parlayed in your current job, or a totally new job, but either way you made it happen. As a thank you to you and all my wonderful readers, I'll even take a look at your resume free of charge. This is an open offer to anyone who wants to find a new job in the New Year. Email it to stephen@viscusigroup.com!

Have a happy and healthy New Year!

Stephen