

# 5 Strategies for Personal and Professional Success in 2013

Rita's Career Corner ...With Rita B. Allen

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As we begin the New Year in 2013, getting back to basics and revisiting our goals is an effective way to clarify our vision and set the stage for success. As with everything in life, the foundation for doing so is having a positive and optimistic outlook to moving forward. I believe this quote says it best, "**Success doesn't come to you — you go to it**", **Marva Collins**. During difficult times, it can be easy to lose focus and be distracted by the obstacles that get in our way. It takes a lot of resilience to stay true to ourselves and face the challenges head on. Each individual can have a plan that empowers themselves to initiate their development and take charge of their careers.

## **5 Strategies for Achieving Personal and Professional Success in 2013:**

- 1) **Focus on building relationships** – Having long lasting and solid relationships is the key to sustaining a fulfilling and successful career. It requires a long-term process to be viewed as laying a foundation and planting seeds for future growth and success. Do not expect immediate gratification – gain momentum and don't stop! Our relationships can sustain us through many phases of our careers and can be incredible resources. Remember that every relationship should be a two-way partnership that is mutually beneficial for each person.
- 2) **Identify the barriers holding you back** – Consistent self-reflection and assessment allows you to build inner strength and unleash your fullest potential. Identify your passion and purpose – stay true to your goals and motivations. In addition to self-reflection and assessment, positive energy is essential to release what's draining us and keeping us from excelling to our fullest potential. Get rid of the negative talk that can derail progress. Sometimes we allow our fears to play against our vulnerabilities rather than focusing on the positive, capitalizing on our strengths and allowing us to try new things and take a little risk. *Keep an open mind to seek out and embrace all opportunities that may be presented along the way – expectedly or unexpectedly!*
- 3) **Mentor and be mentored** – Seek out potential mentors and trusted advisors throughout the different phases of your career. In addition, welcome opportunities to mentor others throughout their careers. Having and being a mentor are two of the major milestones during a career and represent a critical part of managing a successful and sustaining career. We can all empower ourselves to initiate this process rather than waiting for mentors to be presented to us.

**4) Develop communication strategies** – We can never be too comfortable or confident with our communications skills and our interpersonal abilities. The rules keep changing with the technological advancements and multifaceted resources that are introduced to us every day. Create communication strategies that require high standards of excellence and most importantly exude enthusiasm and energy! Articulating our thoughts with conviction, passion, authenticity and truth along with sincere expression can make all the difference.

**5) Celebrate accomplishments and express gratitude!** – There are many victories we achieve, some small and some more grand. Be sure to acknowledge and celebrate these victories when they do occur. Sometimes they are milestones, sometimes they are full accomplishments, and sometimes they include helping others achieve their goals. Recognize these victories and be happy to celebrate them! It's also just as important to reach out and express gratitude and thank the people who played a role in helping you do so. During these challenges times, there are so many abundances we are blessed for which to be thankful. Optimism and gratefulness are part of the celebration process. Remember this great quote by **Benjamin Franklin**, "*Life is ten percent what you make it and ninety percent how you take it!*"

*It would be nice* if we all had crystal balls to see what the year 2013 will bring but given that we do not, it is in our power to be prepared by engaging in strategies that will enable us to succeed. These 5 Strategies for Personal and Professional Success will allow you to be ready, willing and able to embark on the New Year with purpose, drive and focus! Congratulations for beginning year 2013 and best wishes for much success this year and for many years to come!

**Ask Rita...**

Question: I have not had a strong mentor in my career up to this point and would like to change that in the coming year. There is a senior manager in another department within my organization whom I really admire and respect for her intelligence and her ability to build relationships. How would I even approach her or assume she would be open to being a mentor to me?

Answer: First, let me congratulate you for taking the initiative to identify her and recognize the value she could add to your career development. Before you even initiate any contact with her, do some preparation. Determine specific goals and objectives you'd like to accomplish and the role she may be able to play in helping you to achieve those objectives. Be prepared to articulate your value to her as well as how you could be a resource to her, not underscoring the importance of a mutually rewarding partnership. Be honest, sincere and genuine with your request. Ask for her feedback and input, show vulnerability and take some risks. Always express gratitude and appreciation. Good luck!

*Rita Balian Allen is the President of Rita B. Allen Associates, a provider of career management/talent management consulting and executive coaching services located in Waltham at [www.ritaballenassociates.com](http://www.ritaballenassociates.com) and the President of ACPI – NE (Association of Career Professionals International – New England), [www.acpi-ne.org](http://www.acpi-ne.org)*