

NEW YEAR MEANS NEW JOB SKILLS



A new year is upon us once again, and it's now time to get serious about the career resolutions that you have made. Is your current skill set where it needs to be so you can get the new job that you've always wanted? Consider all of these skills as you work to launch the 2012 edition of yourself. **Problem Solving:** Pat Partridge, who is the vice president and chief marketing officer at Western Governors University (WGU), asks the million-dollar questions: "What are you going to be able to demonstrate once you have gotten the job?" He cites higher-order thinking and problem-solving abilities-- which just so happens to be already incorporated into every online degree program at WGU--as keys to keep trying to impress the boss before you even get hired. Employers value the staff members who can rise to the challenges, so Partridge says you need to "think about all the inputs, weigh those challenges, and look at competing views." Work on it: Problem solving is more than just thinking outside of the normal box. It's more about trying to channel the creativity into a viable solution. "It's a process of juggling the challenge intellectually and arriving at a better synthesis," says Partridge. **Social Media:** Even if you haven't really tried out Twitter or Facebook in your personal life, you do need to recognize that the community is king in these days for many different industries. Social media isn't going away anytime soon. Work on it: If you are really someone who is new to using and analyzing social media, Mediabistro, which is an online resource network for media professionals, is offering some excellent online courses and a social media certificate program that can get you caught up to everything media related very quickly. **Soft Skills:** Here is the hard-to-hear truth: "Soft skills" are quite vital to not only trying to get a job, but also to ensure that it is going to be the most pleasant experience. Vicki Salemi, who is the author of *Big Career in the Big City: Land a Job and Get a Life in New York*, believe that when it comes to trying to find that oh so coveted new job or new promotion. Though the real question is: "Can you ace the lunch interview?" "People want to hire people they like," says Salemi. She also notes that a strong work ethic is always something that is going to be a plus in any industry, as is the ability to interact well with the clients--not to mention the co-workers. The employers look for people who "are well rounded, but don't just keep their head down at the desk all day." Work on it: How does one just brush up on the proverbial water cooler talk? Networking, networking, networking, advises Salemi. From industry cocktail parties to working at a volunteer organization, it is very important to get out there and find people who are like-minded.

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