

Make a New Year's Resolution

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EVERY DECEMBER WE ARE deluged by the media and social media, and in some cases by our friends and families, to make resolutions for the next year. We are encouraged to lose weight, join a gym, stop smoking, spend less, save more, eat better, sleep more, or read more. Every year we try. Some succeed. Others, well, we set those same goals again next year. This year, I challenge you to make a **WORK RESOLUTION**.

As examples, commit to:

1. **Learn a new skill:** Look around the unit. What is one skill that someone else has that you rely on consistently? Is it computer expertise? Is there someone who is an electronic medical record superuser? Someone who excels in working with difficult patients? Pediatric patients? Intensive care unit (ICU) overflow patients? Take the opportunity to seek out a new bullet on your resume.
2. **Take on a patient population that you typically avoid:** We all have patients we like taking care of. Some like ICU patients; others pediatric patients; others patients with chronic pain; others obstetrics (OB). You might have to take those patients you typically avoid when you are on call, but in a typical day, rather than planning an overdue bathroom run or lunch break, decide when you look at the schedule in the morning that you will take on certain patients.
3. **Volunteer instead of being “volun-told”:** Rather than finding out that someone is needed on a practice committee, or to create a new policy, approach your manager or supervisor and volunteer for that role or experience or job. Volunteering sure beats being “volun-told” that something is now your responsibility. Choose, don't wait to be chosen.
4. **Taking a class:** This does not have to be a return for a degree, although that is a great goal. Consider taking one class at a local college or even at your own hospital in staff development. Retake the electrocardiogram (EKG) course to remind yourself what a bundle branch block really looks like. Take an Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) or cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) instructor class.
5. **Looking for a work improvement:** Think of the one thing that frustrates you the most in any given day. Then make it your mission to fix it by discovering a better way, or a workaround, or an improvement that reduces your frustration. Chances are, if you are frustrated, so are others.
6. **Wearing someone else's shoes:** Think about what you might do to help a preceptor, a charge nurse, a unit manager. Look at the world from their perspective and think about one thing that you could do personally to ease their load just a bit.
7. **Performing a random act of kindness:** Almost 30 years later, I can remember one night nurse bringing in a picnic dinner for all of us working Labor Day. She arrived with precooked steamed hotdogs, buns, condiments, potato salad and chips for the unit, so that regardless of when you sat down for dinner, we all celebrated just a little. She even brought in red and white tablecloths and lemonade! Thirty years later I remember that night. I worked with an anesthesiologist who bought ribs every Christmas Eve for those of us working that night.

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These are just a few of the ideas for a work resolution. Ask others on the unit to join you. Support each other in reaching your goals. Celebrate every

goal reached. Weight loss, exercise and quitting smoking are goals worth making, celebrating and supporting, so support any colleague who sets these goals and reaches them. Making a work resolution benefits not just you, but your entire unit and hospital, and even patients! Remember the triple aim of health care? There were three goals: Improved patient experience, improved population health, and reduced cost. The quadruple aim has now replaced the triple aim, with the addition

of care team well-being (also called improved provider satisfaction).¹ Making a work resolution will help make you a more satisfied provider and will enhance your professional wellbeing.

I wish you a Happy New Year and great success on your work resolution. I gave up on mine last year: Achieve a better work-life balance. If any of you have that one figured out, please share!

Reference

1. Feeley D. The triple aim or the quadruple aim? Four points to help set your strategy. Available at: <http://www.ihl.org/>

[communities/blogs/the-triple-aim-or-the-quadruple-aim-four-points-to-help-set-your-strategy](http://www.ihl.org/communities/blogs/the-triple-aim-or-the-quadruple-aim-four-points-to-help-set-your-strategy). Accessed October 8, 2019.