

## Career Tips for the New Year

### THE TOP 10 WAYS TO KICK INTO HIGH GEAR

BY JOHN AMBROSE

**L**ooking for ways to get ahead in 2008? In the grand tradition of late-night TV talk-show host David Letterman, here they are, in reverse order:

**10 Don't forget to tap into your company's training resources.** In 2006, U.S. employers budgeted \$55.8 billion for formal training. Be familiar with — and take advantage of — the training that is available in your company. Don't be afraid to step outside of your comfort zone to learn and experience more than you thought was possible.

**9 Dress for the job you want.** This means more than just making sure your clothes are clean. Be professional in your actions and appearance whenever you are in the company of co-workers.

**8 Ask your boss to lunch.** When was the last time you talked to your boss about your goals? Ensuring that your objectives and ambitions are communicated to your superiors will help set expectations and establish a path for career growth and success.

**7 Find a mentor, or be a mentor.** Many companies establish mentoring programs to encourage greater learning and development. Having someone you can turn to for advice and information is important in life — and in your career development. Learn from their experiences while letting others grow based on your guidance.


**6 Join a local professional organization.** Building strategic contacts and networking outside the office can create opportunities that wouldn't have been accessible otherwise. Local professional organizations offer an array of benefits, like training, networking events and expert panels.

**5 Know your company's industry and market.** Show that you have interest in your field and keep up to date on what's happening by reading trade and business journals that discuss changes and trends in the industry. Sharing this sort of knowledge shows initiative and passion for your work.

**4 Be an expert on your company's business.** Knowledge is power. Reach out to your counterparts in other areas of your organization, and if you're feeling like you want or need more training, don't be afraid to ask for it.

**3 Get back to the basics.** Don't overlook basic skills required to do your job well. Once you have the basics mastered, you'll have the foundation set for growth and will be equipped to tackle greater challenges and responsibilities. The little things *do* count!

**2 Be proactive good; reactive bad.** Showing your eagerness to learn and grow demonstrates that you are a hard worker and committed to the job. Don't be afraid to ask for greater responsibility if you think you can tackle more.

**1 Be the complete package.** Mastering soft skills in addition to technical skills will provide you with the well-rounded experience that will allow you to efficiently manage projects, people and expectations. Constant learning is the key to success in the workplace. 

— John Ambrose is SkillSoft PLC's senior vice president for Strategy, Corporate Development and Emerging Business.