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Fresh Starts

By Anne Katcher

"Though no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending."

—Carl Bard

As I write this article, it is mid-December and holiday festivities are in full swing. Many of us will soon be making New Year's resolutions for 2018, which are often focused on personal or family goals, such as losing weight, exercising more or saving more.

By the time you read this article, we will be nearing spring, which often signifies growth, new beginnings, cleaning out and fresh starts. It's also a time when people may seriously start a job search, after having stayed at their employer long enough to receive their year-end bonuses. Whatever your own situation may be, it is always a good time for self-reflection on your current circumstances to decide if you want to make changes.

Sometimes the hardest part is getting started. One way to begin is to just write down what you would like to focus on in the next three months, six months and one year. Once you have some goals identified, the next step is to develop a plan to achieve those goals. One easy way to begin is with some research—a skill in which most actuaries excel.

Many tools and resources for career growth and development are available right on the Society of Actuaries (SOA) website, whether you are just starting out (Actuary of the Future Section), thinking about starting your own business (Entrepreneurial & Innovation Section), or recently retired (Social Insurance & Public Finance Section). Our Leadership & Development (L&D) Section offers many helpful resources on personal development topics, including articles, podcasts and webcasts.



Once your plan is in place, it is always helpful to ask someone to be your “accountability buddy.” This can be a current or former work colleague, friend or even a relative. Meet with him or her monthly to discuss your progress and challenges and to get feedback.

And speaking of fresh starts, I'd like to welcome our newly elected L&D Section Council members: James Clark, Brent Walder and Ying Zhao. We look forward to their fresh perspectives to help us develop insightful programs and content for L&D members.

Finally, I want to thank Scott Randles (former chairperson), Carrie Kelley and Tamra VanAllen for all of their efforts during the past three years on the L&D Section Council and wish them well in their future leadership roles. ■



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