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New Year's Resolutions

By Nancy Huang

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by: **Nancy Huang**

Ah, the start of another year! In a groggy haze on New Years Eve, I promised someone (or was it myself?) that I would be good this year. I said I would draw up my New Year's Resolutions - particularly after the roller-coaster year I had last year. Well, a promise is a promise. I can't very well start the New Year by breaking the resolution that I was going to write my New Year's Resolutions, can I? So, here it is, broken down into months being the control freak that I am.

JAN - Donate old PC to a Deserving Relative

After all, to give is more rewarding than to receive (but not quite as rewarding as to buy). So I guess it's au revoir to my X86 sitting in the corner of my study. Now, who should I give it to? Who will appreciate my very first, very own PC? My 91 year-old Gran so she can learn to type? Or my 5 year-old niece so she, too, can fall in love with Frogger and Pacman I grew up with instead of playing with her PlayStation 2?

FEB - Start RDO (Rostered Day Out)

Negotiate with The Boss to work (offline, of course) in the park one day a month. I want to feel the breeze in my hair, the green grass underfoot and the occasional bird droppings on my head. I want to feel free as I prepare my daily status report. I want to pretend I'm unshackled even if the price I have to pay is grass stains on my suit. Just for once, I want to live like the lucky b!@#\$\$%^s on those TV ads.

MARCH - Test Drive a Hot Spot

I can be savvy. I can be cool. Just because I don't have the latest 3G video bluetooth-enabled combined PDA/Phone (yet) doesn't make me a techno geek. I am techno sleek! In the month of March, I shall borrow The Boss's Centrino laptop and test drive a Hot Spot. I shall sit at the café

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downstairs from work, sip coffee, pick at my friand and surf the net to check my share portfolio performance (yeah, as if). This will be the ultimate testament that I have lived - no, that I am really living – because I can work without being bound to power cables. I can say to the rest of the world, I have a WiFi lifestyle.

APRIL - Turn Multimedia PC into Karaoke Machine

In April, I shall make real use of my all-in-one multimedia PC. I won't be content just using it to tape shows from TV, watch DVD with 7.1 channel output and play all my shoot `em up games. I will go one step further. I will transform it into a karaoke machine...in time for Australian Idol II. It used to life be in it. Now, it's singing be in it. I even have proof. The Google 2003 Year-End Zeitgeist showed that Australian Idol was the most popular internet query in Australia (www.google.com/press/zeitgeist.html). See, I've right there with the in-crowd. I contributed to the incredible stats. Go, Cosima! You go, girl!

MAY - Clean Up Electronic Files From Network/CD/Floppies

Yes, like Autumn pruning, this housekeeping task is boring but necessary. Also, I can't afford to wait until Spring to commence the electronic file Spring Clean. At the rate I'm archiving, triple backing up and ghosting my files, I'll accumulate another filing cabinet full of CDs between Autumn and Spring...on top of the three cabinet fulls I already have. Maybe I'll get a 200 GB external hard disk...

JUNE - Stop End of Financial Year Madness

Oh, how I'd love to hate June...but all those end-of-financial year bargains! "Buy something now for a final chance to claim tax deductions this year!" I can already see the advertisement headlines. This June, I will not succumb to temptation and buy/upgrade a mobile phone, PDA, laptop or digital camcorder. Must tell self: "contrary to self-imposed belief, I will not spontaneously combust from a mild dose of STAS (Sensible Technology Adoption Syndrome)". I will sponsor a World Vision child instead. At \$35 a month or \$420 a year, it's cheaper than a new PDA, laptop or camcorder. And tax-deductible too!

JULY - Expand My Horizons...Outdoors

There's no reason to huddle myself in the house just because it's cold. I must stop playing those video games. After all, it's hardly healthy to pretend I am any of the following: James Bond, Lara Croft, Tony Hawke or Harry Potter. Go outdoors and enjoy the fresh, chilly air. I will ride a bike, bushwalk or hike. I will try bungy jumping, sky-diving, parasailing, absailing...Yeah, right! Who am I kidding?

AUG - Take Time Out to...Organise Photo Album

Something tells me the extreme sports challenge from July will not take. So this month, in my winter of house-bound discontent, I shall take to organising my photo album. I still have photos from my 1998 trip to Europe in three different shoeboxes (unsorted). I suppose that's hardly surprising since I still have the 1999 Paris (my favourite) calendar hanging in the kitchen. So this month, I shall organise and scan all my photos from the last century...and take down the Paris calendar (sob, sob).

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SEPT - Install PC Security...Properly

Install the latest virus–protection, firewall, surge protection, backup software and vigilantly check for updates. I know I've been lucky so far...goodness knows I've committed too many "install and ignore" sins. Better not push my luck. After all, I wouldn't want my 23 episodes of 24 to be wiped out in one foul swoop before I've had the time to indulge in my round–the–clock Kiefer–Sutherland–thon!

OCT - Subscribe to Something Useful

I will stop compulsively subscribing to sites offering the latest bargains. As we head into the last quarter, I need more motivational sites that give me tips, advice and quotes on how to feel better, work better and be better. I need inspiration delivered straight to my inbox (since technology still can't deliver it directly to my head). Inspirational messages like this Walt Disney quote: "If you can dream it, you can do it." Hmm, fast–track promotion, here I come!

NOV - Get Rid of Techno Junkie Addiction

As the year starts to draw to a close, I must curb my addiction to all the techno gadgetry. Last year, I failed miserably and ended up with three mobile MP3 players: a standard 128MB MP3 player, an improved model with voice recording (a feature I've not yet had the opportunity to use) and a 1.5GB mobile juke box (just because I need something to hold more songs to take on a planned 10 hour trip up the coast...which I still haven't booked). This year, I must do better. I heard there's no better way to cure an addiction than taking up a...hobby. Now, is there anything non–tech I want from eBAY?

DEC - End of Year Appraisal

As with any good New Year's resolution, we must track our progress and compare actuals to our plans. Month by month, I want to know whether I've kept to my word. For example, by 31 Dec 2004, I don't want to see that X86 still sitting in the corner of my study. Wait, I seem to recall saying something about getting rid of that X86 last year, or was it the year before that, or was it 1994? Whatever. There's always 2005.

I hope you've had a chance to draw up your New Year's resolutions. All joke aside, a wise woman once told me: "A goal is a dream with a deadline!" So, what are you waiting for? Get out your PDA, fire up Word, plug in the camcorder and set those goals. Most of all, enjoy the 2004 roller–coaster ride!

Nancy Huang works as a business analyst and project manager. She is keen to build her writing profile and welcomes any requests for her write on demand service.

Resolutions in the Job Search Just Don't Work!

By Marilyn J. Tellez, M.A.

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New Year's Resolutions in the Job Search Just Don't Work!

Let me explain about why I think resolutions to find a new job don't work. New Year's resolutions are too ephemeral! They are a signal that something needs to change within a person, but the dedication to change isn't really there. It's a lot of wishful thinking, isn't it?

How to make a resolution work for you?
Here are my tips.

1. Write them down. Refer to them often. Make any small changes as you move along.
2. The resolution needs to be realistic. Concrete resolutions that need action can't be ignored for long.
3. Make something happen that is on your resolution list. Take one of the items on your list and diagram or write what you must do to make the change. (Calling on employers could be on the list).
4. Keep moving. Your resolutions need to be fulfilled. Don't take your own "no" as the answer. Persevere, start over as need be.
5. Be successful in achieving a goal.

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