

# 'Tis the season to advance your career

Can you feel the excitement of the holiday season? Did you know the holidays can be the perfect time to boost your career? Between gift-giving and office parties, there are plenty of opportunities to get people to remember who you are and where your career interests lie. Here are a few potential opportunities.

**Office party:** More than three-quarters of companies will hold holiday parties this year. Attend, but remember a few things: watch alcohol consumption, don't talk shop the entire time, and don't over- or underdress.

**Cards:** Sending holiday cards is a great way to acknowledge those who've helped your career in the past year and to reconnect with business associates. If you're uncertain about religious affiliations, think about sending cards that eliminate any religious references.

**Gifts:** A little caution here. Determine who you want to give a gift to (clients, co-workers, managers, outside business associates). Make sure they are allowed to receive gifts. (Some federal positions are banned from accepting gifts from groups or individuals that could have a conflict of interest.) Then use your best judgment on getting an appropriate gift that serves as a token of appreciation.

## Bonus

Add this annual check-up to your routine to make sure you're not neglecting the health of your career. As one year ends and we embark on a new one, this is a good time to reflect. Ask yourself these key questions:

1. Am I achieving my job objectives?
2. Have my career objectives changed?
3. Am I doing what I'm good at and enjoy doing?
4. Are my skills up to date for this job and organization?

Wishing you a happy holiday season!