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 Joy Conley Kacik
 Career and Leadership Coach
 Team and Leadership Consultant

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Taking Advantage of Professional Development Opportunities

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Professional growth, and personal as well for that matter, significantly contribute to career growth.

Lest I repeat myself, I'm going to refer you to two prior articles I've written with lots of tips about growing your career.

First, my article from December 2018 –
(Click on this title) Be Your Own Champion!

This article focuses on ways to be noticed, develop a favorable impression and reputation and make other people aware of your skills and accomplishments. Many people falsely assume that just doing your job really well gets you noticed, but often that's not the case. You need to find ways to help people notice

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you.

Second, my article from September 2019 – (Click on this title) [Tips for a Successful Year-End Review!](#) This one shows you what to focus on during the year to uncover your strengths, your value to the organization and have a record of your accomplishments. It's also important to pay attention to things that didn't go well and think through what you learned from it and what you would do differently. Your year-end review is also the appropriate place to let your career goals be known and discuss opportunities and what you need to do be ready when the opportunity arises.

In this article, I want to talk about taking advantage of professional development opportunities.

- **Find out what professional development opportunities already exist within your organization.** Who do you ask? Your HR department would be the best place to start, and then you can ask colleagues, superiors, mentors, etc.
 - Some have existing classes, webinars or online self-study programs at no cost to you
 - Some have CRG's (Colleague Resource Groups) with varying interest who individually bring speakers into their groups on a wide range of professional topics
 - Some have professional development funds available for you to take advantage of in a variety of ways
 - **There is a range of ways you can use professional development funds that may be available to you.**
 - Take a class in a different area than your current role to explore options for career paths
 - Explore what certifications could help boost your qualifications for directions in which you might want to go
 - Work towards a degree, an advanced degree, a degree that complements one
1. Handle Difficult Conversations with Confidence
 2. Quick-Start Your New Leadership Role: Position Yourself for Success
 3. Be a Strategic Thinker and Decision Maker
 4. Stress is an Inside Job!
 5. Coaching & Mentoring Skills
 6. Everything is Negotiable - Do It Skillfully!
 7. Results Leadership (Part I & Part II)
 8. Leadership Skills
 9. Public Speaking & Presentation Skills
 10. Effective Time Management Skills
 11. Running Effective, Time-Saving Meetings
 12. Working Effectively With Your Manager
 13. Networking - Opportunities for You Personally and for Your Organization
 14. Transitioning Into Retirement
 16. Get Them There Better and Faster; Coaching & Mentoring Skills
 17. Thoughtfully Choosing Your Approach to

you already have or even a degree in a totally different area that could lead to a career path change

- Join a professional association or organization
- Attend a conference. There are conferences held by professional associations, public conferences and a wide range of organizations that hold conferences particularly for women. Network and begin asking what conferences other people recommend.
- Ask people who are already in a role you might be seeking what additional education would be most beneficial for getting into that job. Sometimes, it may not be a degree, but a variety of classes or certifications.

- **WHY should you focus on professional development?** Maybe you already feel qualified for the role you are seeking and you are just waiting for the right opportunity. Whether you are in-line for a promotion, in waiting or simply hopeful, you always serve to gain more recognition and credibility from employers if they see you are continuing to seek opportunities to grow.
- **Keep a list of the professional development you have done** and make sure to note it on your resume – and remember, even if you are applying for a job in your same organization, you can prepare an internal resume or portfolio so that you can put yourself out there in all the ways you want people to know about.

There are so many great opportunities out there to grow, learn and build your network and to help you see the skills you have and what else you might want to learn. Professional development is invigorating and encouraging and gets you out of patterns you've fallen into and helps you start thinking in new ways. Personal and professional growth is renewing! Take advantage of the opportunities that are available to you!

Conflict

18. Mediation Skills for Employee Conflicts

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Intellectual growth should commence at birth and cease only at death.

Albert Einstein

“Learning is not attained by chance, it must be sought for with *ardor* and *attended to with diligence.*”

– Abigail Adams

“

One quality of leaders and high achievers in every area seems to be a commitment to ongoing personal and professional development.

Brian Tracy

If along the way, you'd like to have a conversation with me to chat about something on your mind, my offer is always open for a complimentary one-hour call.

Best wishes for your career growth!

Joy Conley Kacik

Joy is a conference speaker, team and leadership development consultant, customized trainer and facilitator and a Certified Professional Coach with expertise in personal career coaching, job offer and salary negotiations and leadership coaching.

As an Insights Discovery® licensed practitioner, Joy provides clients the added value of the Discovery® Portfolio of tools when working with individuals, teams, leaders and organizations to create inspiring visions for collaborative, cohesive teams to produce superior results.

www.kacikconsulting.com

joykacik@kacikconsulting.com

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"Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower."

– Steve Jobs

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2408 West Street
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