

Being resolute!

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Are you one for making New Year's resolutions, or do you ignore this tradition as you know you'll have lost all motivation to stick to it, a few short weeks into the new year? How about we shift the focus from individual, to organisational resolutions?

One thing I'm regularly asked in January, is whether I've made any New Year's resolutions. I'm not a New Year Resolutions person! Ok, in the past, I've said I'll lose weight, get fitter, decorate various parts of the house or overhaul the garden, cut out chocolate, attempt a 5k "fun run" (in my opinion, never has an activity been less accurately named!) or some other such personal ambition – only to either fail to start them completely or given up only a week or two (if that) in to the new year. Willpower was never my strong suit!

However, I'm not alone in this. According to research, only about 16% of people are able to stick to their resolutions, with the majority giving up within 1-6 weeks of starting. Despite our best intentions, it can be difficult to persevere, whether it's to start a new good habit, or give up a bad one – it comes down to motivation and opportunity.

However, perhaps we in the voluntary and community sector could consider instead, the opportunity to make some "organisational resolutions" – plans to create better habits for our organisation, our people and ultimately, those we support.

Here are a few organisational resolutions that we could all think about:

1. Know my worth

Organisations

2. Value others

Our staff and volunteers are the very lifeblood of our organisations. Without them – things would most likely grind to a halt! Feeling as if you are a valued member of the organisation It's therefore really important to ensure we recognise and value our people – a simple "thank you" can go a long way, a

3. Know my limits and ask for help

Collaborate, cooperate

4. Plan my workload

Preparing for the year ahead

How to identify priorities

Learn to say no (helpfully)

5. Take care of ourselves

Some stress is good and can challenge employees to better themselves. But it's important to be wary of limits. There could be more going on that you are not aware of. Managing stress effectively is crucial for supporting good mental health in the workplace.


Starting a conversation with simple, open and non-judgmental questions, in a private and confidential setting, can encourage an employee to open up. From here, you can look for ways in which to support them.

6. Plan our finances

7. Look after our health

The beginning of the new year is a great opportunity to assess the overall health of your organisation and your team. One idea to consider, is to invite team members to help assess the overall health of your organisation. This is an exercise that can be done quickly, perhaps in a team meeting – and the results can be used to help you identify what areas of work or behaviours you need to work on, to maximise your organisational health.

With your team, read the definition of each attribute (displayed below) of healthy, high-performing teams out loud. On the count of three have each person rate how they feel the team is doing compared to each definition (thumbs-up/green, thumbs-sideways/yellow, thumbs-down/red). Record the results of each attribute team rating on a Health Monitor grid.

						
	1	2	6	4	5	6
Balanced team	3	2	3	3	3	2
Team cohesiveness	2	3	3	2	1	3
Shared understanding	3	3	3	2	2	2
Values and impact	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Decision making	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
One pager	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Managed dependencies	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
GSD	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Balanced team: You have the right people, and they know what is expected of them. Team roles are explicit and who is accountable for what is well understood. The team is the right size to be effective.

Team cohesiveness — staff proactively provides their skills, experience and insights to support others and to make the organisation more effective. There is trust and respect across the team.

Shared understanding — The team has a shared vision and collective purpose which they support, and confidence they have made the right strategic bets to achieve success.

Value and impact — The group is clear on their unique value proposition for growing the business and they can measure the intended impact. Success is defined, and measures identified.

Decision making — Decisions are made at the right level with an appropriate degree of urgency and discussion in considering both short and long term implications with trade offs actively considered. Decisions are timely and effectively communicated.

One-pager — Each member stands behind the organisation's vision and values, and this is documented in plain English for others to understand.

Managed dependencies — Clear communication between team members to share insights, knowledge and learning which could lessen risk, complexity, resources, effort, and timelines facing the team. You are viewed as "easy to do business with" from your key stakeholders.

Velocity — The team reflects on, then leverages lessons learned and success to make more effective decisions faster. The group is renowned for and has established patterns for GSD (Getting Stuff Done).