

Ask the Career Coach: Staying Current

You've been in the same job for quite some time, but how do you keep current with developments for people in your type of position?

By [Lisa Chenofsky Singer](#)

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Dear Career Coach Lisa,

I've been steadily employed for 18 years. How can I find out what skills are wanted today for my role? I am interested in looking for a new opportunity.

GK
Millburn

This is a good question. Staying on top of your skills and current market trends is so important. It is so easy to focus on daily tasks without keeping a more strategic perspective in mind of what is happening in your industry, in your functional area and the environment including social, economic and regulatory to name just a few.

To keep up to date, affiliate yourself with professional associations and join discussion groups on various social media sites. Read industry and function-related journals, magazines and news articles on topic. Set up Google alerts for key words to make it easy for you to track information.

Go on the job boards and search your present job title to see what qualifications employers are looking for in new hires. You may also want to do an advanced search based on key words to see what other job possibilities exist with your qualifications. Look at what degrees, certifications and experiences are desired from an employer's viewpoint.

If there is a certification, find out who provides it and how you can earn it if this is a consistent theme in the job requirements. Determine who offers the certifications, what is involved and how is it valued within your career field by speaking with others in your field. If a certification is valued, consider asking your present employer if they would consider sponsoring you on an effort to earn one. This may stir up a conversation about career opportunities within your present company.

Sometimes, an employee is held in a static evaluation. This occurs often when an employee and their manager tend to speak about job related tasks without discussing career related development in their industry or function.

Look to see what other training you can consider over a longer term strategic view. Placing yourself in a learning environment is important. Create a group at work where you can select a topic or a book and generate a discussion group.

After reviewing the job postings, review your resume for key words and rephrasing in today's language what you have accomplished. Terminology changes in most fields over time. It is important to pick up on today's lingo.

About this column: "Ask the Career Coach" is a column dedicated to those who may be in transition or wrestling with a career dilemma by providing a forum for advice. We welcome your questions. Please send them to CareerCoachLisa@gmail.com. Lisa Chenofsky Singer is a Millburn-Short Hills resident and the founder of Chenofsky Singer & Associates LLC. She offers Executive and Career Management Coaching and Human Resources Consulting, writes and speaks on job search and career-related topics. Her web site is www.ChenofskySinger.com.