

## Church Office New Year's Resolutions



- **Every day, I will prioritize God first, others second, myself last** - This is a good one to start with just to ensure that everything falls into place knowing that God is in control of your office. In Mark 12, a scribe asks Jesus, "Which commandment is the most important of all?". In verse 30, Jesus answers, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, and with all your strength." The second is this, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself - There is no other commandment greater than these". So, this resolution coming straight from the mouth of Jesus is the simplest, most difficult and most crucial to have on our list. If God is your absolute goal and priority then your year will be successful regardless of which minor goal(s) you did or did not accomplish.
- **I will strive to improve my personal and work relationships** - Healthy relationships help us attain our goals for the year. It's much more difficult to stay on track with the love and support of those around us every day. 1. You can send a Thank You note every month to either someone in your family or a coworker, etc. 2. Take your spouse on a vacation just the two of you. 3. Dedicate extra time to help a coworker or family member in some way. 4. Commit to getting to know the staff members better.
- **I will commit to the development of my professional skills** - Just as important as it is to grow spiritually, it's also important to spend time learning and improving on a professional level. The best office personnel are constantly evolving and seeking wisdom to better themselves. This in turn will help everyone in the office and the office runs smoother. You could sign up for a continuing education class to learn more about the computer programs you use, etc. Identify any mistakes you might have made last year and try to outline a strategy to avoid it this year. Depending on your job duties you might even try to attend at least one conference in the year. From personal experience, this will pay off because when I started learning more about a database program that I was using in my office (Microsoft Office Access) this is when I created **Shepherdbase (church membership database)** to track our contributions, generate Annual Contribution letters easily every year along with Contribution Statements that was due by January 31st and much more for my church. It didn't happen overnight but all of the hard work paid off and saved me and everyone in our office lots of valuable time and made our office run smoother. Also, I was able to share Shepherdbase on my website and made it available for a super low price to help small churches out.

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- **I will get my office organized** - It can be very hard for your goals to remain attainable when things get messy in your office. Let's be honest, life will always get messy at some point so make this goal a priority to regain your focus when and if your office gets messy. These goals you will have to set for yourself and your needs but here is a few to think about: 1. Try to leave your desk clean and organized at the end of the day before you leave. 2. Download a task-keeping app or print a calendar to keep track of what the to-do-list is for the day, month, etc.
- **I will strive to find ways either by learning more programs or some other way to do my job better and more efficient in my office** - If you make time to take some free online classes on programs you use every day or even programs that you don't but benefit you to take...this will save time and you will get more work done. Example: If you work every day in Microsoft Office Word then taking some free online classes at least once a week for approximately an hour or two will help you to save time in your daily tasks in this program. There are short cuts and much more that teach you in these classes. You can also add these classes to your resume to show your accomplishments
- **I will strive to manage and improve my time in my office** - Meeting deadlines are extremely important to having success in the office. If you're all the time missing deadlines then normally everyone else in the office suffers also along with you. The only way to meet those deadlines is to work on your time management skills. This can be done in many ways by:
  1. **Figuring out how you're currently spending your time** - Write down what you do every day or every week and the time it takes you to do it. You can do this as you are doing them by just logging it in when you start and logging it out when finished. Determine how much you can feasibly accomplish in a day. Identify those times that are getting sucked into the "too much time" and write them down. Focus on activities that provide the greatest returns.
  2. **Create a daily schedule and stick with it** - This is absolutely crucial for learning how to manage your time. Don't start your day without an organized to-do-list. When creating your list remember to leave enough time to meet those deadlines. You may have to move around the tasks to fit in but it can be done. Remember you will have to stick with this schedule no matter what. By the end of the day, create a list of the most pressing tasks for the next day. This will ensure you're ready to go when you get to the office the next day.
  3. **Prioritize wisely...** - As you organize your to-do-list, prioritization is key for successful time management. Put them in the order from most important on top to least important on the bottom and eliminate tasks that you shouldn't be performing in the first place - that way you make sure to finish your essentials.

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4. **Group similar tasks together** - If you have two or three tasks or more that are very similar then put these in a group together to work on them before moving on to the next task. Example: Create separate times for answering emails, making phone calls, filing, etc. and don't answer emails and messages as they come in because this is a major distraction. Turn off your phone and email notifications to completely eliminate the temptation to check at an un-appointed time.
  5. **Avoid the urge to multitask** - This is one of the simplest time management tips, yet it can be the hardest to follow. Focus on the task at hand and block out all distractions. It can be tempting to multitask but you're just shooting yourself in the foot when you attempt to do so. You lose time and decrease productivity when switching from one task to another. Stressing over your list will not make it shorter so breathe in, breathe out, and take it one task at a time.
  6. **Assign time limits to tasks** - When creating your schedule, set time limits on your tasks instead of just working until they're done. To-do-lists are great but sometimes you feel like you will never get to check anything off. If you want a steady pace of your work flow, put them in 25-minute intervals taking short breaks in between each of them and then a longer break (go for a walk, etc.) after completing 4 tasks. If you prefer, just set your own time limits - whatever works to save time.
  7. **Learn to say no** - You will never learn how to manage your time if you don't learn to say no. Only you truly know what you have time for, so if you need to decline a request in order to focus on more important tasks, don't hesitate to do so. If you take on a project that is obviously going nowhere, don't be afraid to let it go. If you can't say no, delegate it.
  8. **Get organized** - For effective time management, this tip needs to actually go onto your to-do-list. If you have papers scattered all over your desk, finding the one you actually need will be like finding a needle in a haystack. It's very frustrating wasting valuable time trying to find misplaced items. Create a filing system for documents, etc. will ensure organization.
  9. **Eliminate distractions** - Social media, web browsing, co-workers, text messages, etc. - these distractions can be limitless. A key to personal time management is getting rid of these. Shut your door to limit interruptions. Close all tabs except the one you are working on. Turn off messaging notifications and leave your personal phone calls for lunch break.
- **I will keep my Church Office New Year's Resolutions** - This will be the most important goal to make. Staying strong and consistent with your goals is an important part of starting a new year.