

# Forefront

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## MAGAZINE

## New Year's reSolutions: Recognize Opportunities for Change

**Identifying the small areas that have large impact will be the theme for CMO Don Lee's 2015.**

By Don Lee

As the year draws to a close, it is natural to reflect on the past 365 days and think about what the year ahead may hold. From a personal perspective, my goal is to embrace the concept that small changes can make a big impact – personally and professionally.

For me, it comes down to taking the time to slow down and have a real conversation with the people you care about most. Namely, I try to focus on being mindful and present in moments big and small.

This seemingly simple act can be difficult to make time for, but has significant returns when you invest in the people you love. I'm talking about genuine dialogue, authentic conversation. Making time to engage in sincere conversation is a small thing we can all implement into our daily rou-

tine, which has infinite benefit.

My family is spread out across the world – a son who serves as a missionary in India, a daughter away at college and a high school age daughter who is constantly on the run. Our family has to actively make time to stay connected and we do. Using



Clark Hill's Don Lee

technology like Skype, Viber and text messages, we consciously commit to communication and sharing words of encouragement to help us each reach our goals. Each New Year, just like in my professional life, my family gathers and purposefully drafts goals and objectives for the coming year, being mindful of what we want to accomplish collectively and individually. It's a way of keeping us committed and accountable to fulfilling our life's goals and ambitions.

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I also resolve in 2015, to continue our family tradition of “island time,” which consists of family, friends and whomever might be in our house, gathering around the island in our kitchen and doing something to stimulate thought and discussion. We might watch a TED talk or play a game, but this “island time” is always focused on engaging with each other, rather than passively spending time on the couch. This type of engagement goes a long way in getting to know each other as human beings – applicable in all of our personal and professional lives.

Professionally, this concept of being present manifests itself in the little pockets and corners of our business every day, we

simply have to learn to recognize them and seize the opportunity. I am committed in 2015 and beyond to searching for those areas within our business where adjustments and a new way of approaching a problem can have a ripple effect across the organization.

When you dedicate yourself to recognizing opportunities for change, you can see small modifications that make a big impact from a personal communications perspective. Nowhere is this more apparent than in mentoring and developing talent within an organization. Identifying strengths and long-term goals of less senior members of a team can pave the way for growth in the long run. We all

remember a time early in our career when we felt unsure or apprehensive by the opportunities ahead of us. It’s often difficult to forge a career path without the benefit of experience. Connecting with team members or offering insight on challenges you’ve faced in your career can have a meaningful influence on those that are finding their way. Small changes, big impact.

I encourage all of us to use this New Year to identify the small changes that can make a big impact in life and business. Commit to being mindful of others and being present in each moment – you never know who you might inspire, what you might learn about the world around you or yourself.

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