

# New Year Resolutions and Best Wishes

## SMT Prospects & Perspectives

by Dr. Jennie S. Hwang, CEO, H-TECHNOLOGIES GROUP

Happy New Year to all! I hope each of us, whether or not we resolve to do something new in the New Year, will have a fantastic 2018! As the New Year is moving ahead, some of us are accustomed to thinking about new goals, personally or professionally, and resolving to achieve them.

This custom of New Year's resolutions, according to *The Economist*, dates to the Babylonian festival of Akitu, which occurred around 2000 B.C., and celebrated the renewal of life. It marked the beginning of the agrarian year. During Akitu, people keen to curry favors with the Gods would promise to repay their debts and to return borrowed objects they had in their possession. Since then, individuals and groups from various cultures have resolved to renew allegiances or set new goals each New Year. According to polls, around half the population of Britain and America make resolutions—though fewer than 10% keep them. Well, with that, are you in that 50% and then the subsequent 10%?

In the context of New Year's resolutions, I particularly appreciated some wise words from

The Wall Street Journal's column (December 30-31, 2017) entitled, "Set the Bar High for Your 2018 Resolutions." "Listening to what someone else is saying without hearing what you already think is one of the hardest challenges for human mind. When you listen, listen as if your life depends on it. Otherwise, you will just hear your own words coming out of someone else's mouth."

These words couldn't be truer! I wholeheartedly concur. The article refreshes and energizes the mind, as well as offers some humble tonic—a good start of a new year!

A book on the same topic, *When: The Scientific Secrets of Perfect Timing*, is also thought-provoking. It explains how we can keep our New Year's resolutions to be healthier, happier and more productive. New research on timing can help, from when to exercise to the best time to do focused work.

Timing is really a science. Researchers in various fields have been unearthing the hidden science of timing. In randomized controlled experiments, field studies, and the analysis of massive data sets, the select questions that



span the human experience are explored (e.g., how do beginnings, midpoints and endings alter our actions and memories?). Time, the studies have discovered, shapes our productivity, health and well-being in powerful but often invisible ways. From big data analyses of 500 million tweets, research has shown that we generally experience the day in three acts: a peak, a trough and a rebound. Most of us experience the pattern in that order. But roughly one in five of us are night owls and tend to proceed in reverse order. The study illustrates the scientific measures of the effect of the time of day on human brain power, in turn the brain performance and productivity.

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The New Year stands before us, like a chapter in a book, waiting to be written. We can help write that story by setting goals. We are the authors of our destinies. Among the many and diverse New Year's resolutions, the most popular one, "lose weight," is statistically way up on the top. I found the most interesting and pragmatic ones included in the book were: save money, exercise, learn something new, get organized, spice up the mundane, develop a positive approach to life, terminate the tantrums, enrich vocabulary, be sincere about punctuality and commitments, live each day with zest, grow empathy, work towards a goal, own your mistakes, lend your successes, celebrate successes, and call you mom!

As the goals are set, the true challenge is to keep these goals from falling into a wish list and to know how to stick to those goals and when. I hope that in this year to come, goals give us direction in whatever we do, be it on AI, 5G, mixed reality and quantum computing or the next chip design.

### My New Year greetings and best wishes to all:

May the New Year see you in the best of health as the old saying goes, "Health is the best wealth that a person can have."

For you who are recently affiliated with new ventures, I wish you an ever-growing and profitable business.

For you who are associated with established enterprises, I wish you the accomplishment of personal and organizational goals.

For you who are seeking new challenging opportunities, I wish the road may rise to meet you.

For you who have family illness or discomfort, I send you get-well thoughts and prayers.

For you who have joyful family news, accept my congratulations and good wishes.

For all who are broadening their horizons, I wish your vista remains ever-bright, wonderful and rewarding in 2018. SMT007



**Dr. Hwang**, an international businesswoman, international speaker, and business and technology advisor, is a pioneer and long-standing contributor to SMT

manufacturing since its inception as well as to the global lead-free electronics implementation. Among her many awards/honors are induction into the International Hall of Fame-Women in Technology and National Academy of Engineering, an R&D-Stars-to-Watch and YWCA Achievement Award. Having held senior executive positions with Lockheed Martin Corp., and others, she is CEO of H-Technologies Group and serves as Chairman of Assessment Board of DoD Army Research Laboratory, Commerce Department's Export Council, National Materials and Manufacturing Board, Board of DoD Army Science & Technology, Assessment Board of NIST, various national panels/committees, international leadership positions, and the board of Fortune-500 NYSE companies and civic and university boards. Author of 500+ publications and several books, and a speaker and author on trade, business, education, and social issues. Her formal education includes four academic degrees as well as Harvard Business School Executive Program and Columbia University Corporate Governance Program. Further info: [www.JennieHwang.com](http://www.JennieHwang.com).