

Business Tips for Business Majors

by dr thomas schwarz
finance professor

The purpose in writing this article is to share some of my thoughts concerning your education and your responsibility in it.

Most students with whom I talk are not properly planning their education and therefore their careers.

What I am to outline below is nothing more than applying the important decision making tools stressed within all of your business courses.

These tools are proper analysis and strategic planning.

"What do you want to do after you graduate?" Very few students answer this question straight forwardly.

The main reason is that they have not put forth the

effort required to properly analyze and plan for their future.

It is generally not until the senior year when pressure to obtain career employment is becoming more acute that students give the issue serious thought.

This strategy is as backwards as making an investment first and later conducting the analysis of profitability.

It's time to become serious about your education.

Your first responsibility is to know your competition.

No, it's not necessarily your classmates; they should actually become your allies.

Your competition is the marketplace.

You only need visit a large U.S. city to appreciate the extremely competitive environment

in which business is conducted.

Because of this competition and the vast wealth which is involved, business is extremely sophisticated. Your competition is the swell of well-trained and motivated BS and MBA students flowing out of universities across the nation and overseas. This is in addition to an existing stockpile of experienced and well polished talent graduated from years past.

How will you succeed? The more fierce the competition, the more motivated and prepared you must be.

My contention is that the more motivated you are, the better prepared you will be.

So what motivates you? Let me suggest a second choice to money, and that is enjoying your work. Without belaboring the

point, this latter choice becomes increasingly important as time passes.

Nevertheless, whether it be money, enjoyment of work, both, or other factors which motivate you, you must identify those careers early that will provide you the necessary motivations.

For many athletes, it is the motivation provided by the chance to represent our country in the Olympics that sustains them in their grueling years of preparation. Likewise, you need to be similarly motivated and prepared in order to compete within the corporate jungle.

Fine, how do I identify those careers which motivate me? This involves two parts, knowing yourself and knowing the potential careers available. It is the latter concern in which so much information is readily available and so little preparation is actually performed.

Why? I believe it is because you are not yet forced to compete in the marketplace and therefore don't put forth the amount of effort and time that is justified. In other words, it is a long-term investment and any costs due to a poor decision are difficult to estimate and far off.

This is true, but

remember you probably have 70 percent of your life remaining.

So, what specifically should I do? There are many things, only a few of which I will cover here.

First, get in touch with practicing professionals in careers you initially have an interest in. Visit the firms and see what the day-to-day operations are like. You would not be the first person to change your mind on careers after having seen the reality of it all.

A classic example is the finance student who wants to become a stockbroker because of the dream he has concerning what it is all about. When he finally learns that it is a highly demanding sales position, generally involving cold calling and solely commissions, the bubble bursts.

There are many ways to develop contacts with professionals in order to ask for career advice. First of all, ask your professors for contacts. Also, the University maintains a Career Placement Office in Beam Hall that is more than happy to counsel students and put them in contact with professionals.

Draw upon the alumni and supporters of UNLV from the Alumni Association. Actively participate in Career Day, which they sponsor each spring.

And last but not least, just go knocking on corporate doors.

Remember. You are not asking for a job, just for a little advice. It is a rare individual that will turn away a young student who is asking for career advice, even if he is a busy person. Talk to as many people as you can. They can summarize years of experience within a couple of minutes.

From this process, you will be better able to eliminate certain non-motivating careers as well as being exposed to some you may have never considered.

The bottom line is that you will be much better informed about what avenue you want to pursue and this will heighten your motivation. This leads to better preparation.

The preparation for the Olympic athlete is years of training. For the corporate executive, it is a college education. And as the athlete's training is purposeful toward his goal of competing, so is your education in competing in business.

It is the knowledge you obtain in school that gets you ready to compete. It is your responsibility to make sure you get that education.



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