

To Find Success After College, Excel in Three Areas

by Bob Roth

The “College & Career Success” Coach

Success, during and after college, is the goal of nearly every college freshman. They understand that good college performance can open doors to jobs and further schooling. However, few students are clear about what this actually means.

So let's clear it up. Every student can dramatically improve his/her chances for greater success when he/she excels in three areas:

- Academics
- Participation
- Preparation for the Job/Grad School Search

These things work together like the legs of a three legged stool. When all three legs are strong and of the same length, you have a suitable seat. However, when one or more of the legs is weak or the legs are of differing lengths, the effectiveness of that seat is greatly diminished. Few people buy stools with weak legs or with legs of differing lengths.

The same idea works here. Students who devote a strong effort in each of these three areas will attract more positive attention and will be more successful in achieving their goals (land a great job or get into graduate school). Just like the example of the stool, few employers or graduate schools seek out students who complete college with a weak or unbalanced result.

Academic Performance - Every student understands that grades are important. They are one indicator of the student's knowledge in their field of study. As students complete each semester, they build their cumulative average. The higher their grades, the more attention they may receive from employers and graduate schools.

The best employers and graduate schools have minimum grade requirements. Only the students who have earned grades at or above those requirements will be considered. So, the first challenge is to get the best grades that you are capable of achieving.

However, most employers are not interested in grades alone. They want to know about a broader range of capabilities. Those capabilities are demonstrated when students participate in campus, work and community activities.

Participation - Students make themselves more interesting and attractive to employers and graduate schools when they are able to provide powerful examples of their skills and accomplishments. Every employer and graduate school would like to learn about an applicant's leadership, communication and people skills. They want to know that a

candidate is self-confident, accepts responsibility, solves problems and gets things done.

Students who have made an ongoing effort to get involved in campus, work and community activities will put themselves in a position to obtain the experiences that employers and graduate schools want to hear about.

The best candidates compete by participating. As they participate, they accumulate an array of useful skills and pertinent accomplishments that can be used to build their resume and should be discussed in their interviews.

Preparation - An effective job search requires an extraordinary amount of preparation. That's why I believe that the senior year job search actually begins in the freshman year. Since most students will not be chased by employers and graduate schools, students will have to do the chasing.

The short process goes something like this: Research and identify target employers and graduate schools; Evaluate and rank them; Investigate their requirements and expectations; Develop a plan to meet or exceed those requirements and expectations; Accumulate impressive skills and accomplishments; Build an impressive resume; Prepare for the interviews; Apply to employers and graduate schools; Interview with employers and graduate schools; Evaluate offers; Have a backup plan if things don't work out.

Students who pay early attention to these three legs of college success will have a significant advantage, as they compete for employment and advanced educational opportunities.

For more information visit Bob's web site: www.The4Realities.com. Bob Roth is the author of *The 4 Realities Of Success During and After College*. Bob's newest book *The College Student's Guide To Landing A Great Job* is now available.