

Three Questions Lead To Student Success

by Bob Roth

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Most students would like to be successful in college, career and life endeavors. However, not nearly enough good students approach those important goals in a manner that will pay off. The solution is to ask three questions that will show them what they need to know.

Although the questions are simple, the answers to these questions are more complicated. Remember, few good things happen without a solid effort. Ask these three questions to see for yourself.

What is it that you want to achieve?

What steps will get you there?

What price are you willing to pay to achieve the desired results?

1. What is it that you want to achieve? - Write it out. To be effective, the goal statement must be clear, concise, easily understood and limited to one written sentence. The sentence should incorporate clear information about the goal (what?), the size (how much?), the timing (by when?) and how it will be measured (numbers and milestones).

Then, tape the statement to your computer where you will see it every day. Critical goals should never be out of sight. Keep them in front of you, so your mind will keep working on the steps and solutions.

When a clear target exists, the chances of success are significantly increased. Fuzzy goals and objectives make it difficult to know what success means and when it is achieved. Weed out and eliminate any goals that are fuzzy or low in importance.

Additionally, you must learn to focus on the limited number of goals that are critical to your success. (Pareto's Law: 20% of your time will produce 80% of the results. Also, 20% of your activities will yield 80% of the value.) When you are spread too thin, deadlines are missed and quality suffers.

A fuzzy goal: Tony Robbins tells a story about someone who came to him and said he wanted more money. As Tony tells it, "So I gave him a dollar and told him to go away!"

Success requires a goal, a plan and a passion. -- Bob Roth

2. What steps will get you there? - To achieve your goal, you must figure out which path to take and what steps will enable you to achieve that goal.

The path you choose is critical to your success. In effect, you select a path when you select your field of study, the courses you take and the jobs you will pursue. Steven Covey once gave an example of a person who climbed the ladder of success only to find that the ladder was leaning against the wrong tree. That's why so many people end up making career changes later on.

Once they select a path, wise students lay out the steps that will lead to their goal. If your goal is to land a Sales Job with a Fortune 500, Consumer Products Company by the time you graduate, you should identify and write down the steps that will help to ensure success. Multiple steps should be displayed on a timeline.

The difference between a dream and a goal is a timeline. -- Dr. Phil McGraw

Your first question should be, "What is it that Fortune 500, Consumer Products Companies look for in the new Sales Reps. they hire?" If you can identify the preferred qualifications and experiences they seek, you can begin to work on each of those steps.

After some research, you find that these employers prefer or require things such as:

- A GPA of 3.0 or higher
- A Business Major with a Sales Minor
- Work experience in the Consumer Products Industry
- Exceptional References
- Superior Communication Skills
- A Friendly, Courteous, Outgoing Personality
- A Positive Attitude
- Customer Service or Sales Experience
- Examples of related Accomplishments

Students who identify these employer preferences, early in their college experience, can write out the steps and work on them over a two or three year period. Then, when you conduct your job search, during your senior year, you will have already accumulated many of

the experiences and accomplishments that recruiters will look for.

In the long run, men only hit what they aim at. -- Henry David Thoreau

3. What price are you willing to pay to achieve the desired results? - Everything worthwhile has a price. However, only you can decide if you are willing to pay that price.

Let's say that you would achieve a 2.7 or 2.8 GPA with your normal effort. However, you now know that the most desirable employers in your field would prefer candidates with a 3.0 or higher GPA. After some thought, you decide that you can probably pull your grades up, if you drop out of intramural sports to spend more time in the library.

Are you willing to pay that price?

Now, you begin to think about your communication skills. You know that people in Sales must have good writing and presentation skills. Recently, you learned that your college will offer a course titled "Presentation Skills," next semester. After that, a course called "Business Writing" will be offered. You could take these courses as electives but, that would mean that you couldn't take those "Relic Hunting" courses that everyone is raving about. Are you willing to pay that price?

A friend mentioned that his employer is looking for part-time help to perform both Sales and Customer Service work. It doesn't pay very well but would give you experience in two areas that are important to future opportunities. Additionally, the job requires that you work on Friday evenings, the night when all of the college basketball and hockey games are played. Are you willing to pay the price?

Everything degenerates into work. -- Peter F. Drucker

Students who are passionate about their goals leave little to chance. They outwork, outthink and outperform the competition. They make sacrifices, in order to move closer to their goals. When opportunities present themselves, they take advantage of them. These students constantly work to stack the odds in their favor, so success follows naturally.

When you answer these three questions, you almost certainly

determine your outcomes. And so, the question becomes, "How important is it for you to succeed?"

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.