

## Eight Practical Steps to Life After High School

### **Bottom Line**

In a day when education standards continue to plummet and the job industry has become glutted with a lackluster employee base, how can optimistic homeschool graduates not only dream of potential, but also achieve it?

In this insightful session, Woody gave helpful tips to prepare your students to launch into the next phase with vigor and confidence!

### **Woody's Story**

Woody started public school at the age of seven. His mom was a public school teacher. He started out as the angel of the class, but by the first grade, he became the bully of the play ground.

His parents decided to homeschool him from the second grade on and saw big changes. At 17, he went to Moscow, Russia for 3.5 months and then started working with IBLP (CI, Law, Assistant to the president, headed a department). At 24 and 25, Woody stepped back to seriously assess whether he needed a degree. He had job opportunities and didn't think college was possible (too expensive, too much time), but he was wrong.



**As a first generation homeschool graduate, Woody Robertson has been where most students are now and desires to help them wisely answer some of life's biggest questions concerning their future. A frequent motivational speaker at conferences nationwide, Woody thrives in rallying and organizing teams, families, and students for greater efficiency and impact in our culture today. In 2006, he earned his accredited BSBA in General Management in 18 months and now resides in San Antonio, Texas with his wife Gina: the girl of his dreams!**

# Being successful after high school takes a personal commitment.

## **The Myth**

The high school graduation gate swings wide open and, much like a stampede, students race into real life with starry eyes and determined tenacity to get ahead of the pack and win! They think it's going to be easy.

## **The Truth**

- There are lots of people who don't make it. Many compromise and turn from what they know is right. Being successful after high school takes a personal commitment.
- Life is not easy.
- You don't always get what you want.
- Life is unfair.

## **Raising Children vs. Raising Children to Be Adults**

### Current Stats

- More adults (ages eighteen to forty-nine) watch the Cartoon Network than watch CNN.
- The average video gamer was eighteen in 1990; now he's going on thirty.
- The National Academy of Sciences has redefined adolescence as the period extending from the onset of puberty, around twelve, to age thirty.
- Today, the average age for marriage is 28.1 (men) and 25.9 (women). It was 20 in 1950.

Today's Gen Y (Born 1980-2000) is a far cry from past generations. Here are some of Gen Y's key traits:

- Short-term minded
- Want things to happen fast
- Used to things being given them
- Coddled and idealistic
- Little commitment
- No long-term plan or vision
- Live paycheck to paycheck

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### **Looking Back**

The Founding Fathers

Our Founding Fathers provide excellent proof of children who were raised to be adults:

- Alexander Hamilton: graduated at age 18. He became Washington's Chief of Staff and a Lt. Col at age 22.
- Aaron Burr: graduated with his A.B. in theology at Princeton University at age 16. He was in law school 2 years later.
- Light Horse Harry Lee: graduated from Princeton at age 17. He returned home to prepare for war, was promoted quickly at age 19 and was 21 during the retreat from New York.
- Thomas Jefferson: graduated from college at age 16. He was 33 when he wrote the Declaration of Independence.

### **Changing the System**

Education over the past 100 years has remained unchanged. We are increasingly becoming less competitive in the global economy. There is an inflated breadth of focus. In 1890, a total of 9 subjects were taught. In 1973, that total had risen to 2,100.

Secondary school curricula have been homogenized, diluted, and diffused to the point that they no longer have a central purpose. It used to be that schools that were considered the best were those that offered the most opportunities to students. Now, in effect, we have a cafeteria-style curriculum in which the appetizers and desserts can easily be mistaken for the main course.

There have been disruptive innovations but they've been few and far between:

- 1900 with competition in Germany
- 1920s with the stock market collapse
- 1957 when Russia launched the first satellite into orbit
- 1981 when American companies were closing to Asian technology

Purpose  
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We need to shake up the system. We need to make some changes.

### **Eight Practical Steps to Life after High School**

Here are some great ways to shake up the system and make some changes.

#### **1. Identify Your Purpose**

There are two parts to purpose. Ask yourself:

- Who am I?  
Message—the burden and need identified.  
Medium—the method: How you're going to deliver your message.  
Audience—the group of people to whom you're burdened to deliver your message.
- How am I going to get there?  
Establish wise goals  
Plug those goals into a plan of action  
Short-term (6–12 months)  
Long-term (5–10 years)

A life purpose is not a desk, a hat, a position or a destination. Instead purpose drives, molds, and motivates you toward fulfilling God's purposes for your life.

Here's the Biblical concept of purpose in word pictures:

- Builder = build without a blueprint?
- Gardener = harvest without planting seeds?
- Warrior = battle without armor and ammunition?
- Christian = go into the world without clearly defined purpose?

#### **Bonus: Keys to Making Decisions**

- Run decisions through the grid of your purpose:
- "Will this help me better live out what God has called me to do?"
- Seek confirmation through:  
Circumstances and counselors  
Confirmation from Scripture  
Peace from the Holy Spirit

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focus on  
excellence,  
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will open.

## 2. Pursue Excellence

“Do you see someone skilled in their work? They will serve before kings; they will not serve before officials of low rank” Proverbs 22.29.

Main Point: We are called to be experts in our field. If you focus on excellence, the doors will open.

## 3. Build a Foundation of Character

It pays to work hard on developing good character.

- Diligence
- Creativity
- Initiative
- Enthusiasm
- Wisdom
- Honor

## 4. Develop a strong work ethic. Embrace responsibility.

## 5. Develop Communication Skills

Here are a few things you can do to enhance your communication skills:

- Learn to communicate a professional image
- “Dress for Success” says you have 5 seconds to make your first impression.
- Learn to engage in conversation with all people groups
- Learn to ask questions
- Look for public speaking opportunities
- Read great books, meet great people, engage in great discussions

The most  
literate, gifted,  
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#### 6. **Seek Internships**

How did our Founding Fathers learn? You will learn best through on the job training. The most literate, gifted, brilliant generation in our nation's history learned through internships and apprenticeships.

Look for opportunities in your field of interest. Ask your friends, relatives or people in your community or church.

Thomas Edison once said: "Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work."

#### 7. **Find a Mentor**

Mentors allow you to learn from the mistakes and successes of others. It gives you the opportunity to experience life to life impact. Find experts in subjects who can train you.

Mentors guide, question and give counsel. They also:

- Encourage
- Praise
- Shower advice
- Warn
- Set the example

Here are some great questions for you to ask potential mentors:

- "You've been successful at this field when so many others have failed. What made the difference for you?"
- "If you had it to do over again, what would you do differently?"
- "What are the five books you have found most helpful in this field?"
- "Do you have a yearly planning process? If so, how does it work?"
- "How do you manage your time successfully?"
- "What questions have I not asked that I should be asking?"

# Hiring decisions are made in the first 10-15 seconds of an interview

## 8. Know What Businesses Are Looking For

Here are some business statistics that might come in handy:

- Average job lasts 3.2 years (Bureau of Labor Statistics)
- 80% of grads do something different than what they majored in (Forbes)
- 60% of companies have 1–4 employees (Bureau of Labor Statistics)
- 98% of companies have less than 100 employees (Bureau of Labor Statistics)

### What Do Companies Need?

Companies want to create an engaged workforce, manage change, and develop potential leaders. They want:

- Performance Management
- Managerial & Supervisor Skills
- Customer Relationship Skills
- Innovation & Entrepreneurship

### Nine Secrets to Landing Your First Job

Resumes don't get jobs; interviews get jobs. You need to market yourself. Hiring decisions are made in the first 10–15 seconds of an interview; they are finalized within the first 3–5 minutes. Many times, opportunities are based on relationships and connections.

#### Interview Tip #1

Interview is won or lost in the first 5 minutes

- Bring you very best attitude
- Don't sit down until you're invited to sit down
- Introduce and work around the room shaking hands (remember names)
- Focus with your eyes and ears
- Make a solid opening statement (elevator speech)

Are you the  
best for me  
and my  
particular  
situation?

#### **Interview Tip #2**

There are four things a potential employer or prospective client thinks about when they first meet you:

- Do I know you?
- Do I like you?
- Do you understand my needs?
- Are you the best for me and my particular situation?

#### **Interview Tip #3**

Having great references, endorsements, and testimonials are your most powerful allies.

- Choose your references carefully
- Allows someone else to toot your horn

#### **Interview Tip #4**

94% of the time a candidate wins the interview over others of equal or sometimes even better talent simply because the interviewer likes you.

- Be careful not to try too hard and end up interrupting.
- Smiles and laughter help create a friendly, non-threatening environment and send the signal that you're relaxed and welcoming.

#### **Interview Tip #5**

Focus on that one thing.

- Each job has at least one key technical requirement for success. Know what that is before you get there.

#### **Interview Tip #6**

Tell stories but keep them short.

- Wrap accomplishments in stories.
- Long-winded answers usually have a negative effect.

#### **Interview Tip #7**

You must come prepared.

- "Prepare to win or lose to someone who is" (Jeffrey Gitomer).

Be authentic.

**Interview Tip #8**

Be authentic.

- Anything less and you lose.

**Interview Tip #9**

Ask a question or two at the end of the interview.

- Try this question: “If at the end of my first year, you’re high-fiving me for having knocked the ball out of the park—what specific things will I have accomplished for you?”

**Five Characteristics of a Finisher**

- A hunger for God: desperate for God
- A joyful spirit: intimacy with God
- A single-minded purpose: knowing God is your only option
- An overcomer vs. a victim
- Ability to make right decisions that will enable ending strong

**Three CollegePlus! Options for You  
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#### **College of Your Choice**

- You choose the college
- We'll research your options
- Save time (1–2 years)
- Save money (up to \$60k)  
Money savings guarantee

#### **For More Information**

- The Power of Who, Bob Beaudine
- 2009 Corporate Issues Survey, Ken Blanchard

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