

The UB MBA Exchange

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How to Choose a Career That Makes You Smile

MARY CLISTA DAHL

*** The following is an excerpt from an article that I wrote for the WSJ College Journal in 2001. Because it remains in cyberspace and still generates emails from readers, I believe its message is just as relevant today. May you all enjoy long, prosperous, and happy careers!*

Working most of my life with college students, I've noticed many reasons why they make career choices. Most involve financial rewards, job prospects, or pursuing a skill in which they excel. They often seek work based on their interests, abilities or personality types. Rarely do students select their life's work based on what they're passionate about or what makes them laugh.

Today's lifestyle isn't typically driven by humor and enjoyment. Many professionals work an average of fifty-plus weeks a year in unexciting jobs, setting aside a mere two weeks for play. Time off often involves expensive travel to faraway destinations to catch up with fun. Upon return, the vicious cycle starts again. The word vocation means a summons, impulsion to perform a certain function. It's a drive to carry out your passion. If this is suppressed when determining your career, sooner or later your purpose and, ultimately, happiness, will be challenged.

The great majority of us travel down a career path that dictates surrendering to mediocrity at the expense of fulfillment, content to exist in the comfort zone until entering that time warp known as retirement. It is during this life phase that we strive to do all the fun things we've put off for decades because work got in the way. There's nothing wrong with this concept, as long as you are guaranteed a long and healthy post-career life.

Anyone can escape this pattern, but students and recent graduates have a definite advantage. By carefully selecting a career based on passion, rather than tradition or other ill-considered reasons, much of the tedium of mid-career crises can be avoided. If you're excited about what you're planning to do with your life, be persistent and follow through. However, if graduation is approaching and you are not feeling passionate about your career choice, consider the following:

- Find out what you're passionate about. Do a thorough self-assessment. This doesn't have to be elaborate or structured, just sincere. Knowing yourself and what trips your humor trigger will produce positive results.
- Create a vocation. Explore occupational titles and descriptions. If you are having difficulty integrating your passion with an existing career, invent one. Nothing says you have to use your academic knowledge and skills in the traditional sense. Simply be true to yourself.
- Network to find people who will support you. Because shared interest sparks relationships, would-be mentors are everywhere. Contact those who are enjoying similar vocations and let them know your plans. The assistance and encouragement you gain will propel you a long way toward your goal.
- Avoid excuses and ignore negative feedback. This may well be the hardest task in your quest to do what you love. Making excuses for not pursuing your desire and listening to negative feedback from others will have you second-guessing your choices. Excuses and

negativity don't speak to you, they scream. Ignore them.

- Work relentlessly until you get there. Stay focused and be ready to act on whatever is necessary to live your vocation. This may require additional training, learning a new skill, or development of an underutilized talent. Never mind the extra effort. If you're working toward what you love, it will be fun and well worth it.
- Lastly, when you're having fun for a living, share your story with others. It's an important way to maintain fulfillment. You'll remain enthusiastic, energetic and thrilled about what you're doing. People will notice and inevitably have questions for you. Be open to sharing your experience and willing to serve as a mentor to someone exploring their path. And remember to thank those who have encouraged you along the way.

Noteworthy quotes

"People should make a life while making a living. We can be in search of excellence and in search of laughter at the same time." Joel Goodman, director, The Humor Project.

"Enjoyment is too easily cast aside to make room for perceived success. Fun should be priority, not a privilege, especially in selecting a career. Search for a job you only half care about, and you'll search for it with only half your being." Richard Nelson Bolles, author, *What Color is Your Parachute*.

- > Tuesday 10/21 Community Service Fair
- > Thursday 10/23 7:30p Speaker Series
- > Monday 10/27 UNYTS Blood Drive
- > Tuesday 10/28 7:30p Evening with Richard Floersch
- > Friday 10/31 Halloween Party
- > Wednesday 11/5 4:30p Executive Speaker Series
- > Monday 11/10 11:00a Conversation with the Dean for 1st years
- > Friday 11/14 Gusto at the Gallery

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The Raleigh Story: Island Time

RALEIGH LOVE

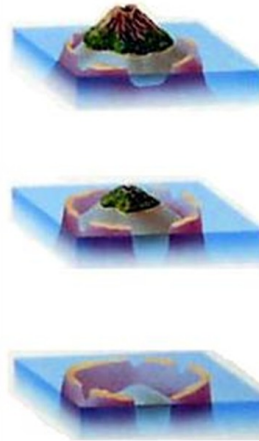
The man behind the story.



The cold weather is beginning to set in and we're all likely dreaming of warmer times and places. I know my own thoughts have trailed a few times to the Marquesas or the Tuamotu Archipelago. Just imagine the soft breezes, the warm sun and the cool waters. It's one thing to go to the beach. It's something else to visit an island.

Ahh, islands, they are wonderful places to be. Well, that is to say, they can be wonderful places to be provided you have the comforts of modern society. Without those, you need to be a bit more aware of your environment. So, I'll go over some of the common traits of islands, just on the off chance that you end up like the folks in "Lost" or Tom Hanks in "Castaway." Hey, you never know.

First, we'll start with island weather patterns. Yeah, some of you may be rolling your eyes, but this part is easy. You have two types of islands, high and low. High islands have sufficient elevation to produce their own weather patterns, like rain. Low islands don't have this feature, and are subject to whatever the prevailing weather patterns are over the ocean. If you ever find yourself stranded, this feature will be incredibly important because of the supply of fresh water. High islands generally have significant reservoirs defined by topography. Low islands have very little fresh water available and what little there is sits in a thin layer called a lens just below the ground surface. The freshwa-



ter lens can easily be depleted or contaminated without prudent maintenance.

Once you know your weather and water situation, it's time to find out what type of island you're on. There are three main types.

The first island type is continental. These are part of the continental shelf that would be mountain ranges if sea level were lower (such as during an ice age). Many examples of this type of island are large, like New Zealand, Madagascar, or Greenland, but it's not always the case. The islands of Fiji and Aruba are continental, but significantly smaller. One easy way to tell a continental island is metamorphic or sedimentary rocks, as the other types of islands aren't capable of the geologic processes necessary to produce these rocks.

Your second type of island is the "classic" volcanic. Mostly you find them near tectonic plate boundaries, like the Aleutian Islands or Guam. In a few places, though, you find Islands located over a magma plume (often called a

"hotspot") that burns a hole up through the crust. As the plate moves over the hotspot, more holes get burned through and a series of volcanic islands form. Easter Island and Hawaii are examples of this. Some try to classify all volcanic islands as "high" islands, but not all have sufficient elevation to produce weather.

However, as the plates continue to move, volcanoes get cut off from the hotspot and die. The ocean begins to erode them away and potentially develop the third island type. If continental or volcanic islands are located in sufficiently warm regions, coral reefs begin to build up around them. As the rock slowly erodes away, the coral continues to build itself up to remain in the warm, shallow waters. Various geologic and biologic processes can put coral above the actual water level, leaving a thin ring of land called an Atoll. Once that happens, palm trees and other plants can take root and start developing actual soil.

Atolls are generally low islands, but can potentially rise hundreds of feet above sea level. While they often lack the terrestrial biodiversity enjoyed by the other island types, Atolls generally surround a briny lagoon with all kinds of interesting things in it. That's a story for another time. Until then, here's to keeping your imagination well fed.



The Gerald S. Lippes Speaker Series Presents:

The Current Financial Crisis: How Did We Get Here? Where Are We Going?



Panel Presentation

Gaurav Patankar, Senior Sector Analyst
Global Financial Institutions Group at Millennium

Cristian Tiu, Assistant Professor,
Finance and Managerial Economics
UB School of Management

Jill Yellock, Bank Examiner
Federal Reserve Bank of New York

Moderated by Tom Disare, Clinical Professor, UB Law School

Thursday, October 23
7:30-9 p.m.

UB Center for the Arts Screening Room
Q&A to follow presentation
FREE FOR STUDENTS, ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

Lecture Sponsors:
The University at Buffalo School of Management and the UB Law School

BUFFALO BILLS UPDATE

Buffalo Bills (4-1) BYE WEEK



<http://www.ubathletics.buffalo.edu/football/>

BULLS CORNER

Saturday (10/11)

Bulls blow a lead
with 5 minutes left.

Bulls (2-4, 1-2 MAC): 28

Western Michigan: 34

Need Some Business Research Help? Give the Library a Try!

CHARLES LYONS, BUSINESS LIBRARIAN

When you think of the library, what do you think of? Books, right? Well, wipe that out-dated notion out of your mind! The UB Libraries provide access to an abundance of online business resources that can support your studies.

I'm [Charles Lyons](#), Business Librarian here at UB and the main library contact for students in the School of Management. I wanted to highlight some resources that you may not be aware of that can help save you time when doing business research.

First, the UB Libraries' main business page is located here: <http://libweb.lib.buffalo.edu/blog/bizbrary/>. An easy way to get to the page is to Google the word "bizbrary", as in business library, and click on the first result. Here you'll find a list of our major business resources, some guides to business research, and business library news. Here are some highlights...

Taking an entrepreneurship class or thinking about starting your own business? Check out the [Entrepreneurship Resources](#) guide for sample business plans, practical advice on starting a business, and theoretical research on entrepreneurship.

As graduation nears and you start

thinking about breaking into the "real" world, check out the [Career Resources for Business Majors](#) guide. Here you'll find resources on writing resumes and cover letters, interviewing, job profiles, and more.

Another popular guide is the [Business FAQ](#), a list of some of the most common business research questions I get from students.

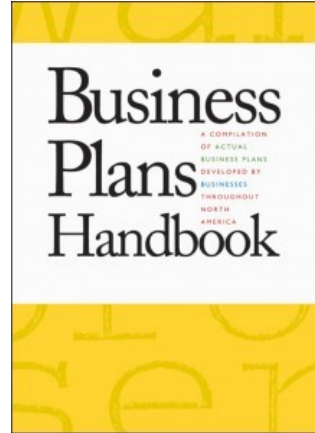
THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Did you know that the library provides free access to the Wall Street Journal? A database called [Factiva](#) provides access to the WSJ from 1987 to today. To browse current editions of the WSJ, click on the "News Pages" tab along the top of the screen. The print edition of the WSJ is also available in both Capen (1st floor) and Lockwood Libraries (3rd floor).

Harvard Business Review

The library also provides access to the [Harvard Business Review](#) (HBR) all the way back to the first issue. A database called [Business Source Complete](#) (BSC) provides access to the HBR and lots of other business magazines, academic journals and newspapers. Lockwood Library also

has print copies of the HBR on the third floor. BSC also provides access to tons of sample SWOT analyses.

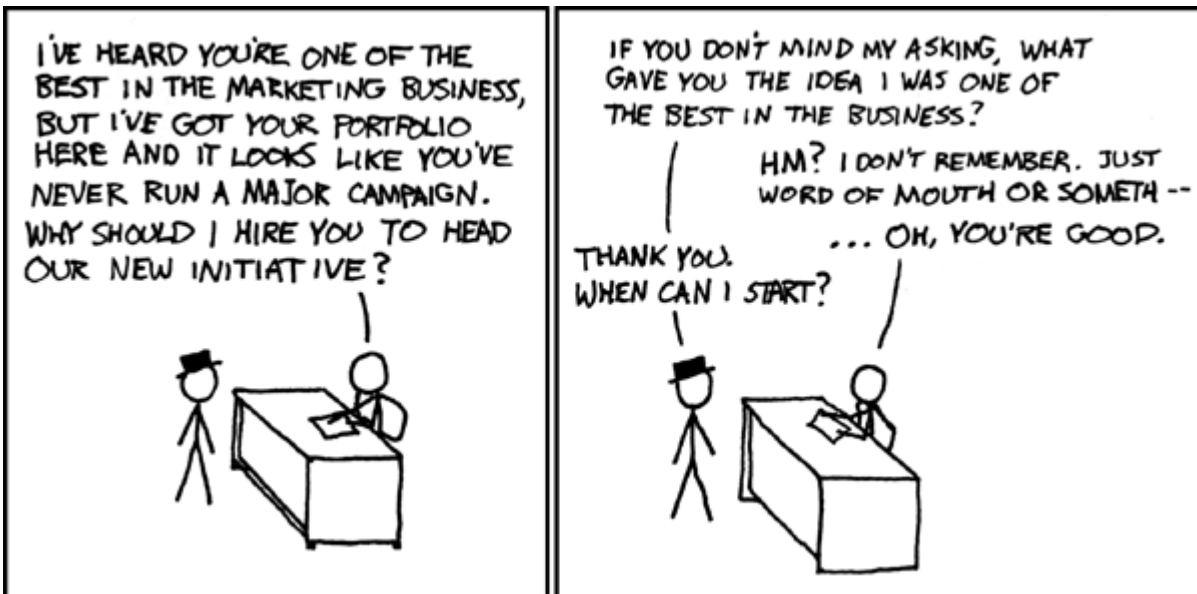


And finally, the library provides access to actual sample business for tons of different types of companies from a database called the [Gale Virtual Reference Library](#). Check it out and start it up!

Remember, I'm here to provide students with business research support, so don't hesitate to [contact me](#) with business research questions: Charles Lyons, cflyons@buffalo.edu, 222 Lockwood Library, 645-2814 ext 470.

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provide access to
an abundance of
online business
resources that can
support your
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Marketing Interview Tip:



Cartoon from <http://xkcd.com/125/>

Dave Anthony. The man with all the answers.



Ask Dave

DAVE ANTHONY

I have two classes where the professors try to elicit responses from students about the coursework. Often, it seems that I am the only student who answers the professors' questions. I try to let other students answer, but after having the professor glare at us for some time at and threaten to collect homework unless the class actually participates, I usually blurt out some response. Where is the line between being the contentious student and 'that really annoying person who just won't shut up in class'?

There is a very fine line between acting like either of those people. The annoying student will also often ask questions that are obvious or that would have been known if they read the assigned ma-

terial. If the professor is dying for participation and no one offers up anything, go ahead and answer all that you want. Your actions will be remembered by the professor when grading time comes around and will not have a negative effect at all.

If anyone makes a comment to you, just shrug it off because they either don't care to speak up in class or aren't paying attention.

Sometimes class time overlaps with meal time. Is it appropriate to bring food to eat in class, and if so, what foods do you recommend to minimize classroom distraction?

Sure, most professors will not mind if you bring food to class, but do so in moderation. A sandwich or snack bar

are fine as long as they don't stink the room up. Make sure whatever you bring does not have the aroma of being within three miles of a Jim's SteakOut and doesn't require a giant wad of paper towels to clean up.

I'd stay away from things like chicken wings and chocolate cake—they don't make for a crowd pleaser when everyone else is starving.

Please send questions to MBAXCHANGE@gmail.com

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Because knowledge is POWER