

## Class Post-Test

Article: “Alumna Sues School Because She Hasn’t Found a Job”

### *Instructor’s Application*

Note: Some of the assignments mentioned below may not have been presented in your class. This list reflects all assignments made available to students in all classes I teach.

#### **List at least three unknown variables related to this article.**

- We don’t know what type of school this is (*liberal arts, state, vocational, etc.*) or its reputation.
- We don’t know if she has any real-world work experience.
- We don’t know what technical skills she acquired through her education
- We don’t know what, if any, pre-graduation training in “career & life planning” she received.
- We don’t know how much help she requested from the Career Advancement office.
- We don’t know how much she took advantage of campus resources to assist her in her job search process.
- We don’t know if those “4.0 GPA” students are really receiving more attention.
- We don’t know if she was applying for appropriate (*for which she is currently qualified*) jobs.
- We don’t know if she was internally or externally (*pushed by others*) to get her education.
- We don’t know if the journalist(s) writing this story misrepresented her or the facts to make her look like a fool.

#### **With the information given, list at least three attitudes you suspect contributed to her situation.**

- She has an attitude of expectation – the world “owes” her.
- She has an attitude, “If I jump through all the right hoops, the right door will magically open when I graduate from college.”
- She has an attitude that it is the school’s responsibility to guarantee her employment.
- She has an attitude that does not allow for a highly-competitive and tight economy; which will make her job search harder than normal.
- She assumes she is being discriminated against because of her GPA. She does not consider the possibility that the 4.0 students have different behavior and probably ask for more help.

#### **List at least three obstacles (*clearly stated and not stated*) interfering with her getting a job.**

- Bad economy
- Highly competitive job market
- Unrealistic Expectations
- No distinguishable qualifications for job search
- Not marketing herself effectively
- Not exercising critical thinking

- Filing a lawsuit will get her labeled “liability in waiting”
- She apparently has not learned much as a result of her education.

**List at least three assignments you were given in this class that addressed those obstacles?  
How do they address those obstacles?**

- **Career Planning**  
If she had a definite career plan, which included identifying her entry-level job, and knowing how to get it, she would have had more focus and more to offer while looking for her professional-level job.
- **“Who Am I?” Essay**
  - If she had a good sense of who she is, she would have a better sense of what she has to offer a prospective employer. Therefore, she would have a much better opportunity to set herself apart from the competition during her job search process.
- **Dream Chasers & Goal Setter’s Journey**
  - *Negative Internal Force “Unrealistic Expectations”* – Assuming that she will be able to get a professional-level position in a bad economy in less than three months when she has not properly prepared (no real work experience) or marketed herself.
- **Motivation**
  - *“Ticket to a Job”* - She assumed that the education would automatically open the door to her preferred job; but it hasn’t. Now she is dissatisfied with her education.
  - *“Jumping Through Hoops”* – She assumed that if she just gets that piece of paper, the doors will magically open.
  - *“Search for Knowledge and Truth”* – Going to graduate school because she thinks it will compensate for a lack of work experience. Lots of “head knowledge” without real-world application won’t pay the bills.
- **Goal Setting**
  - Setting short-range goals (*identify entry-level job*) to achieve long-range goals (*professional-level career*)
- **Reaching Career Goals**
  - She does not mention whether or not she bothered to get any real-world work experience while she was going to school.
  - What kind of job is she trying to get? She doesn’t specify if she is qualified for what she is applying for.
  - The examples of people who have undesirable jobs she mentioned are working in *Survival* jobs – until they can get their *Entry-Level* job in a tight economy. This is the right thing to do.
- **Identifying Your Transferrable Skills**
  - She did not identify what, if any, transferrable skills she has to offer a potential employer.
  - If she had identified her transferrable skills, she would have been able to present herself in a more marketable fashion.
- **Rapidly-Changing World**
  - She has an obsolete expectation that she can graduate from college, get a good job, and she’ll be set for life.

- The first five Coping Skills – She is trying to get a job in a rough market:
  - 1) **Recognize the world in which you live.** Ignoring it won’t make go away.
  - 2) **Develop good “life skills”** such as self-discipline, self-motivation, knowing priorities, healthy boundaries, stress management, money management (saving and budgeting) and coping skills, ability to focus on a task/goal, relationship management, respect for authority, etc. A lack of these basic life skills will interfere with you achieving the rest of these things.
  - 3) **Engage in continual self awareness** where you recognize who you are, how you are gifted, how you are not gifted, your interests and values, and what kinds of careers/jobs will suit you and what kinds will not. It also involves recognizing how we change and grow and adapt over time.
  - 4) **Accept responsibility for your own career development** (career self-direction).
    - a. Do not expect an employer to provide eternal job security. (*That institution may not be around when you are ready to retire.*)
    - b. Continuously maintain your employability:
      - i. Develop good job hunting skills (maintain an updated resume and network, know and where to find jobs in your profession, have good interviewing skills, know where to find “survival jobs”, etc.)
  - 5) **Be prepared to engage in lifelong learning** (*learning throughout your life*).
    - a. Understand the difference between transferable and technical skills”
    - b. “Develop strong transferable skills”
      - i. Critical thinking (information gathering, creative problem solving, and decision making), Communication (verbal and written), and Interpersonal skills (dealing with people – especially people who are different from you).
    - c. “Engage in life-long learning of technical skills”
      - i. (Equipment and operational processes – including computer skills)
- **Informational Interviewing**
  - She could have/should have interviewed someone who holds her Dream Job to ask them how she could prepare herself to enter this field.
- **Campus Resources**
  - She doesn’t mention whether or not she took advantage of the myriad of resources that her school offers to help students succeed.
- **Boundaries**
  - She does not recognize what is her responsibility and what is someone else’s.
    - She expects the Career Advancement office to do her job-search grunt work for her. – It is her responsibility to contact prospective employers.
    - She also blames the school for her not getting a job. They are there to provide an education – not a job.
- **Bloom’s Taxonomy**
  - **Application:** She has not mentioned how she has been able to apply anything she has learned in her education to help her identify what she wants and how to get it. What she does mention gives the impression that she has learned nothing from her education.

- **Analysis:** She mentions “peppering companies listed on Monroe's e-recruiting site with cover letters, résumés and phone calls.” But she does not mention whether or not she stopped and registered that her current job search strategy isn’t working and that she should develop some creative problem solving efforts to develop a more-effective strategy.
- **Analysis:** She has not stopped to ask herself is there is anything she is doing to prevent receiving call backs, or if there is anything she can do improve the odds of being called for an interview.
- **Analysis and application:** She has a business degree; but has she learned how to “Analyze” herself and register that she has not set herself apart from the competition? (*She would have learned this in her marketing classes.*)
- **Hidden Rules**
  - She did not apply the hidden rule of knowing what is her responsibility by taking advantage of the resources that were available to her:  
You are responsible for finding out what is expected of you through available printed and on-line resources (class syllabus, college catalog, websites, etc.). If it is in print, then you are accountable for what it says (*homework, rules, registration requirements, student conduct, etc.*), regardless of whether or not you bothered to read it.
- **Faculty Relations**
  - **“Minimum-Effort” Millicent** – She assumed that minimum effort would have prepared her for the “real world”.  
*You claim you want an education, but you are not willing to give it the time, energy, sacrifice and discipline that it requires to succeed, and you still expect to get all As in your classes. You always do as little (or less) as you can get away with.*
  - **“Excuse Making” Edie:**  
*You are never able to get anything done – but it is never your fault. The rest of the world is out to get you or to make your life miserable. However, in reality, you procrastinate and therefore can’t complete your assignments on time.*  
She blames other people (i.e. the Career Center and the school) for her problem (*lack of proper “packaging” and marginal qualifications*).
  - She does not consider that even if those “4.0” students are getting more attention from staff, there is likely a good reason: Typically 4.0 students’ behavior is much different from 2.7 students. 4.0 students almost always “go the extra mile” for their education. They tend to set higher standards for themselves, seek the help of faculty more frequently, and don’t stop asking until they get an answer to their questions. Whereas “2.7” students often put out minimum effort (except “Tries Hard Trevor/Tracy”), and thus receive minimum results.
  - She does not take the time to put herself in someone else’s shoes to realize that future employers will see her as a liability because of her current lawsuit.

- **Puzzle Hunt**
  - Her education is just one piece of her puzzle, designed to teach her something about herself.
  - Her first job, which she is trying to get, is just one piece of her puzzle – not the whole puzzle itself.
  - Spending three months “peppering” the market with resumes is a “bag” in which she may – or may not – find a piece of her puzzle.
  - If she doesn’t find a piece of her puzzle, then she should move on to the next “bag.”
- **Resume Preparation:**
  - If she had been skilled in resume preparation, she should have realized that an ‘Alright GPA and good attendance’ won’t set her apart in a tight job market where she is competing with people who could have up to 30 years of real-world work experience.
  - If she lacks practical work experience, she should use a Functional resume instead of a Chronological resume. This is one of several ways she could have used to set herself apart.
- **“Tell Me About Yourself”**
  - Her “selling points” have no direct relevance most jobs in her field. She does not mention any transferrable skills, relevant work experience, and only one positive attribute – a good attendance record; which won’t entice most prospective employers.
  - Highlighting an “ok” GPA (*that won’t even get her accepted into a public California university as an undergraduate transfer*) is not something that should be used to market herself for a first entry-level job.

**List at least three campus resources designed to address those potential obstacles. How do they help?**

**1. Student Life/Student Activities**

- She could have found some clubs or activities on campus where she could have gotten involved to develop her marketable skills and gained experience to put on her resume.

**2. Career Center**

- She could have sought help identifying if she was in the right major to begin with so that she would be willing and able to put out the extra effort needed while she was a student so that when she was marketable when she graduated.
- She could have asked for help with her resume and interviewing skills.

**3. Counseling Classes**

- She could have taken a class in career and life planning or senior seminar where she would have learned how to prepare herself for obtaining her first job upon graduation.
- She could have taken advantage of some classes offered by her Counseling (or learning resources) departments that are designed to give students the life skills they need to succeed in college and beyond.

**4. Job Placement Center** (*or may be known by another name on different campuses*)

- She could have taken advantage of their resources to help her get a Survival job while she was still a student so that when she was still in school, she could have developed some real-world work experience.

## Class Review and Application – Instructor’s Response

- She could have taken advantage of their resources to help her get an Entry-Level job (i.e. internship) while she was still a student so that when she was still in school, she could have developed some real-world work experience.

### 5. **Academic Department**

- She could have been more proactive in her time as a student in classes by asking her teachers for help when needed, thus getting better grades in her classes.
- She could have taken advantage of the networking and other resources in her department to look for internships, and other Entry-Level jobs.
- She could have taken advantage of relationships she developed with her faculty/department staff to see if they had any job leads.
- She could have taken advantage of relationships she developed with her faculty/department staff to see if they had any career advice to give her to help her with her job search.

### 6. **Academic Support Departments/Services** (*Learning Assistance Center, Tutorial Services, Supplemental Instruction, Learning Labs, etc.*)

- She could have taken advantage of the departments and services on campus that are designed to help her with difficult subjects.
- By taking advantage of such resources, she could have received better grades in her various classes to wind up with a higher GPA upon graduation.