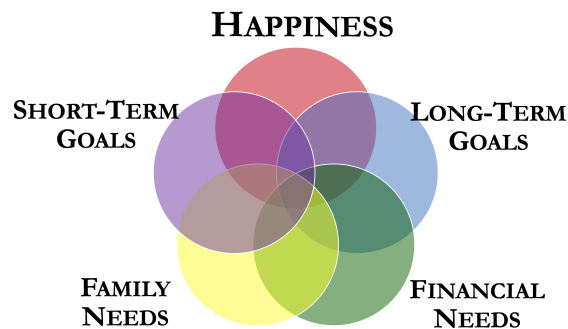


**PERSONAL FINANCIAL PLANNING**  
**STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**  
**CAREER PLANNING ISSUES & STRATEGIES**  
**APRIL 24, 2024**

RESOURCES IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR WANT MORE INFORMATION:

[brian.bolton@louisiana.edu](mailto:brian.bolton@louisiana.edu)  
<http://business.louisiana.edu/financepersonal>



**TOP 15 PERSONAL FINANCE TIPS FOR ALL COLLEGE STUDENTS**

**Budgeting: 5 activities to take better control of your income and expenses**

1. For 2 or 3 months a year, track every penny that you spend and that you earn. Analyze your behavior, judge yourself and make sure your actions align with your values and goals.
2. For 1 week a month, commit to not spending a penny dining out. No coffee, no fast food, nothing. Try it.
3. Analyze your insurance policies at least once a year. You can easily save yourself hundreds of dollars a year.
4. Cancel at least 2 subscriptions by the end of the year. You don't use them all – get rid of these tiny money pits.
5. Set financial goals. Set goals for the next 6 months, for the next 2 years and for the next 5 years. Once you identify your financial and personal goals, it's much easier to make a plan to achieve these goals.

**Debt Management: 2 reasons to prioritize good debt vs. bad debt**

6. Banks and lenders are extremely profitable – because we pay them interest. And then we pay them interest on our interest. It's your choice: give them your money or invest it in yourself.
7. Identify all of your outstanding debt and rank it from worst (most costly) to best (least costly). Make a plan to eliminate your worst debt as soon as possible.

**Saving: 2 strategies related to saving more**

8. Build an emergency fund with enough savings to cover 3-6 months of discretionary expenses. As artists, your income may be unpredictable at times; having this cushion can help you get from paycheck to paycheck.
9. As soon as you get any income, whether it's a recurring paycheck or a one-time gig, move at least 10% of the money into a dedicated savings account.

**Investing: 3 reasons why it's the key to creating wealth**

10. Compound growth – growth on growth – lets your money make money for you. Start using it early.
11. If you start investing a little in your 20s, once compound growth kicks in your money will go to work for you.
12. It's fun. And getting personally engaged in investing – whether that's in stocks or real estate ownership – gives you a personal connection to building wealth.

**Taxes: 2 things to get better prepared for April 15, 2023**

13. Get rid of your tax refund. It's your money, talk to HR and reduce your withholding so you get your money sooner and don't have to wait for a tax refund to get your money back.
14. Spend 1 hour reviewing tax policy to find 5-8 key deductions and credits that specifically apply to you and can save you hundreds or thousands in tax payments. We all have different situations that we can benefit from.

**Retirement: 1 thing you can do tomorrow**

15. Open an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) or Roth IRA and begin putting money aside for future-you. IRAs combine the benefits of investing and tax planning and will make your future much more comfortable.

## YOUR PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS & SITUATION

Before you can begin thinking about your future, you need to know where you are today. Briefly identify the characteristics that define your current situation, in order to begin thinking about what your personal, professional and financial futures might look like.

### Your Personal Characteristics & Situation

Age:

Family – Spouse? Partner? Children? Parents?:

Other:

### Your College Program or Major

### When Do You Expect to Complete College?

### Your Future Career Path

Take a shot at articulating your professional expectations here. If you aren't feeling confident about some of your answers that's ok. Continuously refining educated guesses about yourself and your situation is what this kind of planning is all about.

What job do you expect to have 1 year after you complete college?

What job do you want to have 5 years after you complete college?

Where do you want to be living 5 years after you complete college?

Where do you want to be living 15 years after you complete college?

*A GOAL WITHOUT A PLAN IS JUST A DREAM. MAKE A PLAN TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS.*

## WHAT ARE YOUR VALUES?

Our values are those ideals that are most important to us. You should have already worked through the Values Sort Exercise at <https://www.think2perform.com/values#start>. Now let's dig a little deeper and sort our values into "Personal" values and "Professional" values. We do this to think about the trade-offs we may make between short-term and long-term decisions.

### What Are Your Top 5 Personal Values?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

### What Are Your Top 5 Professional Values?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

The list below provides some popular values. Feel free to define your own values are not in this table.

Order	Fame	Faith	Pleasure	Decisiveness
Wealth	Power	Achievement	Spirituality	Flexibility
Honesty	Leadership	Competition	Philanthropy	Friendship
Freedom	Ethics	Money	Autonomy	Meaningful Work
Relationships	Cooperation	Excellence	Safety	Religion
Community	Competence	Creativity	Adventure	Family
Integrity	Recognition	Happiness	Play	Status
Stability	Health	Fairness	Diversity	Privacy
Challenges	Change	Service	Environment	Helping Others
Independence	Security	Excitement	Loyalty	Education

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## WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS?

Our values and personal characteristics define where we are today. Our goals define where we want to be in the future. Most of us have distinctly different personal and professional goals – and those goals will change and evolve over time. Think about your goals, what your personal and professional goals are.

### What Are Your Top 5 Personal Goals for the Next 3 Years?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

### What Are Your Top 5 Personal Goals for the Next 10 Years?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

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**What Are Your Top 5 Professional Goals for the Next 3 Years?**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

**What Are Your Top 5 Professional Goals for the Next 10 Years?**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

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## What Does Retirement Look Like to You?

For most of us, retirement eventually becomes a major part of our future planning. Of course, it's probably a long way away for you and you have an entire life to live before you retire. But thinking about what retirement looks like to you – and what you want your retirement to be – can help you think about how you live that life and what career options you pursue.

Take a few minutes to think about your future retirement; this is merely a thought-exercise to begin visioning what you will need to do have the retirement that you want.

**At what age will you retire?**

**What family will you have?**

**How will you stay busy in retirement?**

**What excites you most about retirement?**

**Where will you live?**

**How will you pay for retirement?**

**What else will be a part of your future retirement?**

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## YOUR PROFESSIONAL SWOT ANALYSIS

A SWOT Analysis identifies Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Businesses frequently use these in their strategic planning work. Personal or Professional SWOT Analyses can be a power tool to help you think about your future – what you can control and what may be more difficult to control. In the boxes below, try to list 3-5 items that apply to you for each category.

Your Professional Strengths	Your Professional Weaknesses
Opportunities for Your Professional Future	Threats to Your Professional Future

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## YOUR FIRST COLLEGE JOB PRIORITIES & PREFERENCES

You probably came to college for many different reasons. One of those reasons is probably “to get a great job.” As you think about that great job, what does it look like? When you begin applying for jobs, interviewing for jobs, negotiating for jobs or starting your own business, you will have to make a number of decisions. Some of these decisions will be directly aligned with your values and goals. Some of these decisions may involve trade-offs...because it may take a while for you to find “the perfect job.”

Think about the 10 most likely features of your first post-college job – salary, location, flexibility, opportunity, flexibility, culture... – and identify how important each feature is to you.

1. _____ _____	6. _____ _____
2. _____ _____	7. _____ _____
3. _____ _____	8. _____ _____
4. _____ _____	9. _____ _____
5. _____ _____	10. _____ _____

Are there any other deal-killers, must-haves or other key factors to consider for your next job?

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## Let's Revisit Your Future Career Path

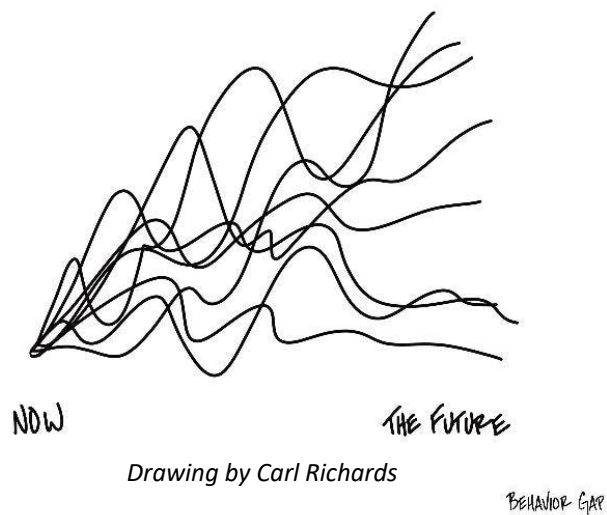
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## YOUR PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL VISION BOARD

You may have heard of *Vision Boards* in slightly different contexts – a lot of people create them to help visualize and prioritize different life goals.

That's exactly what we're doing here: we're applying this visualization and prioritization to the intersection of your education goals, your professional goals, your family goals and your personal goals.

Today's session has focused on your professional goals. But it's impossible for anyone to focus on their professional goals without also thinking about personal, family and education goals.

So, try to think about how all of these connect through the following questions – and then begin to build your *Personal & Professional Vision Board* in the tiles on the following page. We encourage you to continue this exercise on your own to make this *Vision Board* as creative and relevant as you need.

- What are your priorities to complete college?
- What do you hope to do immediately following college?
- What job(s) do you hope to have after college?
- How are you going to go about finishing college?
- How are you going to go about getting your next job?
- What are the top 5-10 criteria you want in that next job?
- What are your professional goals for the next 5-10 years?
- What are your personal, family and other goals for the next 5-10 years?
- Fast-forward to the year 2040. What experiences, accomplishments, values and other priorities will help you live your best life?
- What are the values – both personal and professional – that will be the foundation for all of your future decisions, experiences and accomplishments?
- Who is your team? Who is going to be responsible for helping you achieve your goals and live your best personal and professional life? Family, advisors, friends...who else?





VISIONING YOUR PLAN A....AND YOUR PLAN B FUTURES  
WHAT IS YOUR IDEAL PLAN B?

WHAT IS YOUR IDEAL JOB 1-2 YEARS AFTER GRADUATION?

- *What is your ideal job and job description?*
- *Where will you be living?*
- *Who are you with? What is your family situation?*
- *What are you working towards? What will your job be in 3-5 years?*

WHAT IS YOUR IDEAL PLAN B?

- *What could go wrong with the above Plan A? What is the biggest threat?*
- *What is your back-up job and job description? What is your ideal Plan B?*
- *What can you control? What can you do today to make sure this Plan B is an option?*
- *What resources or help will you need to make this Plan B an option?*

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