

# START COLLEGE SMART<sup>®</sup>



*For college & high school students on their way.  
What to expect. How to succeed.  
Find a career path.  
And more...*

**ROBERT R. NEUMAN, PhD**

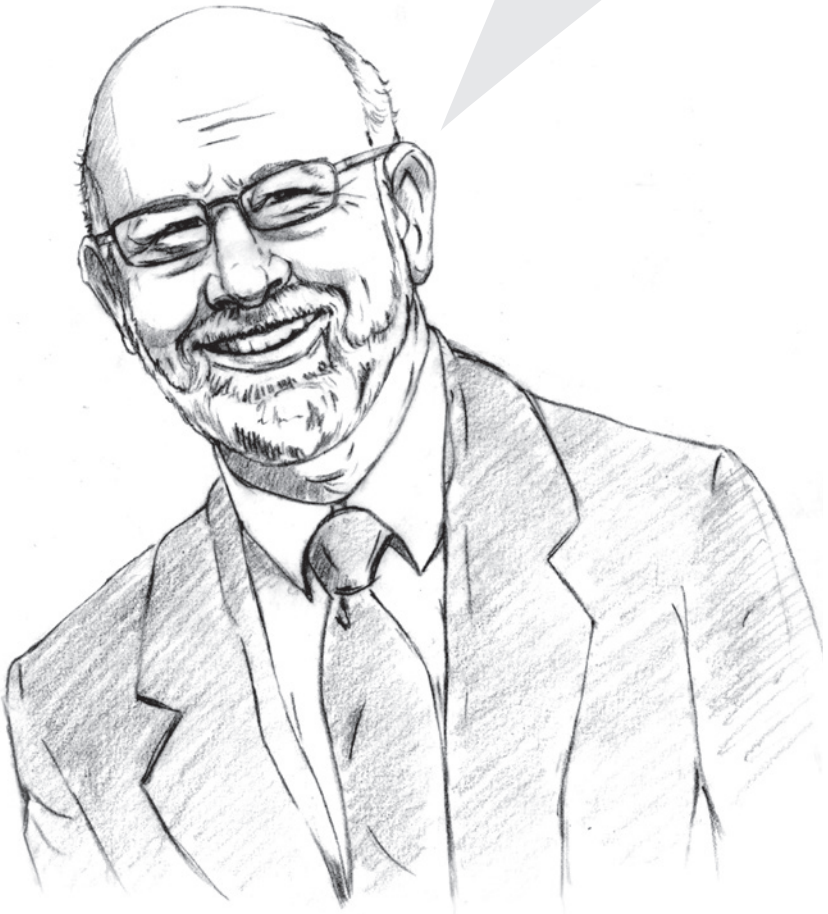
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I'm going to "talk" directly to you all the way through this book – sort of like having a conversation with you over a cup of coffee. Please listen to what I say. It's very important to you, your college success, and the rest of your life.



the crowds. Developing a code of ethics. How to live each day according to that code. (*Keep going... you're almost there...*)

Reading and writing. Talking and listening. What are the issues? How can you make things better? In short, you're learning to come out of yourself and discover your place in the world. You're learning *to be a human being that walks the planet.*

**In brief, you're becoming a person.** Later on, you'll use ALL of these many things and more to live the best life you can: in a career, in a family, as a person, both inside and out.

## **REASON #2: TO LEARN HOW TO LEARN. IT'S A LIFE SKILL YOU NEED.**

What does that mean? School is far more relevant than you ever imagined. If you do it right, it will teach you how to learn — a fundamental skill for survival in so many ways. Granted we're no longer in caves. But the cave people who were smart and learned about their environment are the ones who survived. Take a lesson from that. And you, too, will be able to adapt to change, survive and prosper.

### *Take Math, for instance*

What have you studied? Algebra, geometry, maybe even calculus. In those courses, you've learned how to "learn" mathematically. It's a life skill. I once used calculus to figure out whether or not a table in a furniture store would fit in our kitchen. What else?

Now you can —

- Do your taxes.
- Interpret statistics and charts.
- Budget your money; plan financially for your future.
- Know when it's the best time to borrow money to finance a house.

Because you know how to think mathematically, you can *really* control your life and make good decisions. Your life becomes easier because you

can think mathematically — whether you're looking for a good deal on electronics, deciding which car gives you best value, or investing in the stock market.

Your knowledge of math is necessary. It also adds more fun and excitement — want to figure out the odds of winning a lottery? And it gives you confidence in making all kinds of decisions about how to handle and make sense of this part of your life.

***Take History. This one may surprise you.***

You learn about what's happened in the past: the American Revolution, when it happened and why (what caused it). In the process, you're also learning **1) *how to learn history as a subject and retain it, and 2) how to use it practically, every day. Number 2 helps you throughout your life. How?***

Imagine yourself in a job. You've been given the task of deciding about how to grow the sales of a soft drink. How do you do that?

1. Well, first, you have to see what's happened in the past. You look into the product's history: what's worked and what's failed. When have sales risen? Fallen? You analyze what may have caused sales to rise and fall. You need to pinpoint causes to learn from them.
2. Then you have to look at what the company is doing in the present. How are sales now? What's causing them to behave in that way?
3. Your job is to change the present to get to where you want to be in the future.

**History is all about analyzing causes and effects. You're learning to segment actions, identify mistakes and understand eventual solutions. You're "dissecting" to understand. It's what you're doing with the soft drink sales. That's how you succeed.**



In short, if you learn about historical events as a student, you've learned HOW to learn about the past and its importance right now: in the present, as you move into your future. And that applies to your personal life in the career you may choose. For example, in life, understanding the mistakes you made in the past — either personally or professionally — you're less likely to repeat them in the present and the future. It all started with learning history.

**Yes, Foreign Language, too. Just to show you I'm serious**

You not only learn about a second language, but how to memorize different terminologies and new technical languages associated with all kinds of fields — computer technology, medical research, marketing terms, even personal communication technology. All change and grow daily.

**English. Think of it as communication. After all, we live in the Information Age.**

You'll always be reading, interpreting, and *writing about/learning about* new “stuff” that can be used in your job or your future. Where did that all begin? In English courses. There you learned HOW to read closely, interpret what you read, and communicate clearly. Then build a case for your point of view (like how to grow sales of a soft drink).

**You're a college student so you can get ready for life.**

You can go down the whole list of subjects that you've studied and will study. They all teach you—

1. That the ability to learn is as important as what you learn.
2. To improve your mind, your intellect, your brain, and your resourcefulness.
3. To launch yourself successfully and confidently into your life after college.



2. **Far too many students arrive at college without any sense of why they're really there — and what they intend to do after college.** They don't know what kind of degree they want. They don't know what to major in. Some high school — and even college — advisers have told them that they'll *eventually* discover an academic direction. *When is eventually?*

For these advisers, I have this question: “*Are you going to pay for the extra years in college for those students?*” For a small minority of students, majors will come to them — sort of like the story we told about a visitor to the Grand Canyon being drawn to geology. But most students have to *find* a major.

## **GOT A MAJOR? A PLAN? A DIRECTION? THE DETERMINATION TO SHAPE YOUR FUTURE?**

If you haven't settled on a major or degree when starting college, that doesn't mean all is lost. Not at all. It's just that in your first year you have to do a lot of thinking about your academic direction. You have to ask a lot of people for advice. That's a big job. But you can't put it off. You can't say, “*Later is fine.*”

## **DON'T HAVE A MAJOR? WANT TO PAY 25-50% MORE FOR COLLEGE? NO? THEN TIME TO START THINKING...**

College is really, really expensive. If you don't know what it's going to cost, ask your parents. **If you're in a private school, the cost is right up there with buying a house.**

**In fact, think about it like this.** Pretend you're buying a house, the house of your dreams. You settle on a price. But then, suddenly, after you've lived in the house for a year, you're told that you have to pay 25% more, or 50% more. Can families afford that? Is it fair? That's what suddenly happens to 60+% of families with college students.





**It's the Big Switch.** You and your parents settled on a college you like and can afford. You've worked out all the finances. Then, after a couple of years, you discover you have to spend or borrow even more money than you originally planned to. For a number of reasons, that's what happens to families whose students delay choosing a major. Once these students finally decide on a major, they typically have to add more courses to fulfill the requirements of that newfound major.

Right now (and the subject is in the news all the time), students who graduated from college are **overwhelmed with debt**. They may be paying off that debt for who knows how many years. It's not a good way to launch a life.

## THAT'S NOT GOING TO BE YOU. WHY?

When you start college, you're going to dive in and swim, not sink and take 6 years to graduate.

- If you have to work harder because you need to come up to college standards for studying and learning, you're going to do it. You'll know how because I'm going to tell you how.
- If you have to spend extra hours each week talking to profs and advisers to find and settle on a major or degree, you're going to do it.

Think about this. **So far your education has been pushed at you.** You *had* to be in school. You had no choice. Because you were younger, you needed a lot of pushing, a lot of guidance – from teachers, advisers, and, of course, from your parents.

I'm sure you've already guessed what I'm going to say next...