The background of the entire page is a photograph showing the silhouettes of four business professionals in a modern office. Two people are seated at a table on the left, and two others are standing on the right, one holding a laptop and the other papers. They are positioned in front of large floor-to-ceiling windows that look out onto a bright sunset or sunrise, with the sun low on the horizon creating a strong glow and lens flare. The office furniture, including chairs and tables, is also silhouetted against the bright light from the windows.

**MINORITIES &**

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*Fall 2018*

**Federal Fiscal Year End Starting-  
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# Federal Fiscal Year End Starting - Strategize Now to Win

By: Gloria Berthold Larkin

Every government agency operates on a fiscal year that is different from our calendar year. This is one of the key reasons that doing business with the government is very different from private sector business.

Government agencies operate on very specific, tight budgets. Yes, they have literally billions of dollars to spend, but they must budget these dollars, indicate what they will be spent for, and spend them before

the end of the fiscal year or risk having the budget reduced for the following year.

It is your job as an informed vendor to research the appropriated budgets and know what the agencies are planning to spend. In addition, it is important to market your company to the appropriate people within each individual agency so that they know who you are and what you have to offer.

## What are the fiscal year end dates for the different government agencies?

The federal government agencies follow a fiscal year beginning October 1 and ending September 30. Most states and local governments follow a fiscal year beginning July 1 and ending June 30.

While many private sector companies are struggling to ramp up after enduring a long, non-productive

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summer, savvy government vendors are actually going full speed ahead right now with targeted, aggressive marketing and sales campaigns to position themselves for the federal end of year spending rush. The concept behind this process is that any federal agency that has not spent their budget must find appropriate purchases to spend all the monies allotted to them before September 30 or risk having the next year's budget reduced. If they do not know who you are and what you have to offer you will never get any of this business.

Vendors successfully selling to the federal market will now change their strategy from the approach of targeting large contracts to a narrowly focused strategy that leverages relationships to make quick sales. It is critical to have the appropriate contract vehicle specific

to your targeted agencies, and price your products and services to fit within a simplified acquisition strategy. If you have socio-economic certifications that are important to the agency in that they need to reach their small business goals, now is the perfect time to stress how you can help them.

*Those vendors selling to the state and local agencies that have just started their fiscal year know that now is the time to contact all the appropriate procurement personnel to discuss upcoming agency plans, schedule one-on-one meetings and set up a consistent contact schedule so that the vendors are well-informed about the upcoming larger contracts and the government procurement personnel are well-informed about the vendor's capabilities.*

## Recommended Marketing Strategies For This Month

### Federal:

1. Identify your targeted decision-makers at your key government agencies.
2. Contact each person and ask for a capability briefing to discuss upcoming contracts for your products or services. Repeat as often as needed!
3. Ask to be notified of all fiscal year-end buying needs.
4. Ask about any sales opportunities below the \$25,000 threshold.
5. Consistently market your existing contract vehicles and easy purchasing process.

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## State and Local:

1. Identify your targeted contacts at specific agencies with a budget for your products and services.
2. Contact each decision-maker through email. Include an updated Capabilities Statement including any certifications and special products or services that make your company different from your competitors.
3. Follow-up with a phone call, ask for a phone or personal meeting to discuss how you can help them with your products and services.
5. Set up a schedule of contacts to touch base with each buyer or end-user on a regular basis.

Begin your targeted marketing campaign now to capture fiscal year-end purchases at federal agencies and open the door to new fiscal year opportunities at your state and local agencies.

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# 10 Things Your Competitors Can Teach You About Women in Business!

By: *Bernadette Boas*

Several months ago, during a discussion on women in leadership with the CEO of a billion dollar plus company, I asked him why he didn't have any women (not one) within his leadership structure.

He responded: They don't ask!

I was floored; dumbfounded actually. I thought to myself; I know many seasoned female professionals in his industry, and very few of them are shy to taking on new challenges, risks, or big assignments. Many of

them, not all, are scratching at the bit for the opportunity.

Though I challenged him, I had a better opportunity to serve him. As if by fate, later that week I was due to speak to a roomful of women in his specific industry. I closed our call by offering him the feedback from that room, as both learning and a business case development opportunity; should he want it to use it as he moved forward.

One week later, I posed his challenge

to the room. Any woman reading this can guess the response received: "Of course I would ask"

"Trust me, I ask!"

"That is just an excuse for not wanting women at the table."

and others...

A few other women commented:

"Our business was founded by a woman. They get the advantage

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women have, and there are a number of them in key roles”.

“Our primary customer is women, so it only makes sense we would have a strong female presence.”

“Though it hasn’t always been, management has indicated a change in how we operate since putting in leadership roles; in a good way. So it is a primary focus. “

Then it hit me. A company’s competition can provide a wealth of information of what they are or aren’t doing for women in business; and how those things are impacting the morale of their female employees, the dynamics of their teams, and the overall productivity and profits of a business. All of the things successful CEO’s and leaders want most.

Following that speaking engagement, I continued to ask similar questions of other competing companies, industries and segments: would you make changes to your business model if you knew your competitors were gaining a competitive advantage and market share, and attracting top talent... as a result of women in key roles/ leadership?

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It garnered a wealth of information companies can use for and against their competition.

Here are 10 things your competitor(s) value in women within their business:

1. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, women account for over 80 percent of consumer spending, or about \$5 trillion dollars annually. Therefore, it is only logical women would contribute greatly to leading the design, marketing, selling (to name a few) of a company's products and services.

2. Women are great multi-taskers but more so efficiency experts, therefore women excel at streamlining processes, procedures and overall operations of a company.

3. Women consider all of their different perspectives on business

ideas, decisions and approaches they take: being a woman, mother or daughter, friend or community member, consumer, and professional, thereby providing exceptional 360 degree value to everything they do.

4. Women want it all despite believing it is possible. Therefore they try, work and achieve harder.

5. Women love to talk, share and provide recommendations of their favorite (and least favorite) products, services, companies, brands and just about everything else; inside and outside of work. They fully get team play, relationship building, social networking and marketing.

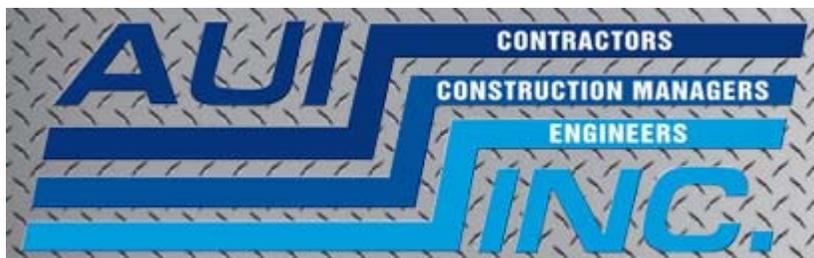
6. As a result of #4 they will also pay a premium for something they really want, or bargain shop until they find the real value of a product or service. As a result, they understand the numbers behind products and

services and budgeting, therefore are great contributors to designing, developing and selling at the best profit and least expense.

7. The business climate and employee demand has changed - calling for less hierarchy and bureaucracy, and more connection, collaboration and empathy.

- Tony Schwartz says it best in his Harvard Business Review Blog - "An effective modern leader requires a blend of intellectual qualities - the ability to think analytically, strategically and creatively - and emotional ones, including self-awareness, empathy, and humility. In short, great leadership begins with being a whole human being. I meet far more women with this blend of qualities than I do men, and especially so when it comes to

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emotional and social intelligence.”

8. On similar note, your competition is realizing that women focus on both their personal and professional development; calling for more work/life integration, which contrary to popular belief adds significantly to their productivity, effectiveness and achievement; from the book, *How Women Lead* by Sharon Hadary and Lauren Henderson.

· Companies with the highest representation of women in top management achieved a **35% higher return on investment (ROI) and 34% higher total return to shareholders** than those with the lowest representation. (Catalyst)

· Companies with women on their boards **out-perform** those with all male boards. (Credit Suisse Research

Institute)

9. Women excel in traits and qualities of a leader. According to a survey by Jack Zenger and Joseph Folkman, of 7,280 leaders, in 2011:

“Specifically, at all levels, women are rated higher in fully 12 of the 16 competencies that go into outstanding leadership. And two of the traits where women outscored men to the highest degree - taking initiative and driving for results - have long been thought of as particularly male strengths.” List of competencies/ratings -

10. Above all... your competition understands the value of diversity; not only of gender, race, and age, but diversity of ideas, solutions and thought processes. To put limits on that due to outdated hierarchical structures, belief systems and cultural norms, is simply allowing your competition to eat you (and your

market share) for lunch.

#### **LEADERtips to stay one step ahead...**

- Take on an ‘abundance’ culture: engage with your competitors to determine how you can improve not only your company, but your industry, and the world economy as a whole. You may find an opportunity to ban together as a community for change.
- There is enough business to go around; provided you are giving, not only to your customers, but your own people what they want and need to succeed.
- Research, study and learn the facts and statistics behind effective, productive and profitable initiatives, such as Women in Business and

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Leadership programs - schedule time with me to discuss.

- Don't bury your head in the sand, or avoid doing something because it is not popular, or will create issues. Build a business case and present it. Any real leader will find it hard to overlook the facts.
- If you or your company is not completely bought in, prove out your position. Hire, promote and reward the women within your company and analyze the results. You will be surprised.

You can learn a great deal from your competitors, but you need to have an open, learning and humble mind to do so. If you are reading this LEADERtip Weekly, you are those things... so best of luck on outsmarting your competition!

About Bernadette Boas...

With the savviness of a 25 year corporate executive and the get it done creative spirit of an entrepreneur, Bernadette is a ball of fire business and leadership consultant, speaker, author, radio host and CEO of Ball of Fire Consulting, igniting the leader from within women around the globe!!

"My greatest passion is creating those 'ahha' moments for individuals when it comes to their career, business and life."

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# Advice from Veteran Teachers

Below is a collection of resources and tips for new teachers on a variety of topics, from teaching methods to assessment. You'll find great advice from experienced educators in two formats: slideshows or text. We hope that every teacher who spends his or her days making a difference in the life of a child will appreciate these choice bits of advice from veteran teachers. A big thank-you to all of the teachers who contributed their sage advice to help make the lives of other teachers easier!

## Slideshows: Tips for New Teachers

Being a first-year teacher is really tough. To make the transition easier, be sure to review each of these resources from professional veteran teachers to get some great strategies, tips, and techniques to prepare for every aspect of your new job!

- Top 10 Classroom Organization Tips  
Being well-organized will help save you precious time and

energy. Here are our Top 10 creative organizational tips from veteran teachers that will help you build an efficient classroom. New teachers, still determining the most effective methods in the classroom, will find this resource particularly valuable.

- Top 15 Pieces of Advice from Veteran Teachers  
Enjoy reading the wisdom of experienced teachers on how

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to become an effective, caring teacher. Our top 15 tips work for all kinds of situations and ages of students. New teachers will find this resource particularly valuable when they're getting ready to take control of one of their first classrooms.

- Lesson Planning Advice from Veteran Teachers  
Browse the wisdom of experienced teachers on how to best plan and execute lessons – the core of your professional world. These tips span all subject areas and grade levels. New teachers will find this resource particularly valuable and will benefit immensely from learning the

tricks of more seasoned veterans.

- Tips from Veteran Teachers on Dealing with Parents  
Enlisting parents in their child's education is one of the hardest yet most rewarding undertakings for teachers. Here are some practical tips from veteran teachers on managing these challenging relationships. New teachers will find this resource particularly valuable.
- Top 10 Behavior Management Tips for the Classroom  
Enjoy a collection of terrific behavior management tips and advice from experienced educators on behavior management. We hope that every teacher who spends his or her days making a

difference in the life of a child will appreciate these choice bits of wisdom.

### General Teaching Tips

Even if you are not still a first-year teacher, it never hurts to review resources to help keep you at your best. Review the sources in this section to enhance your teaching style, pedagogy, or classroom resources.

- Helpful Bits of Advice from Veteran Teachers  
Veteran teachers share small bits of invaluable advice to make classroom life easier.
- Fire in the Classroom: Teaching Advice  
This excerpt from Teach Like Your Hair's on Fire will introduce you to Rafe

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- Esquith and his advice on being a successful teacher and transforming your students' education.
- Standards for Good Teaching  
Learn the ten basic standards for good teaching and how you can be a successful, effective teacher.
- You Are a Role Model: Teaching Advice  
Learn how to be a good role model in this excerpt from Rafe Esquith's Teach Like Your Hair's on Fire.
- Lesson Planning Advice from Veteran Teachers  
Use these great tips to help minimize the time spent lesson planning.
- Replace Fear with Trust: Teaching Advice

In this excerpt from Teach Like Your Hair's on Fire, Rafe Esquith explains how to establish a sense of trust with your students, instead of instilling fear in them.

**Student Orientation**  
Learn some general rules about what makes a great teacher. This advice is especially useful for back-to-school and new teachers.

- Children Depend on Us, So Be Dependable: Teaching Advice  
Rafe Esquith, gives advice on being dependable in your classroom, in this excerpt from Teach Like Your Hair's on Fire. This advice will help you as you try to establish trust with your students.

- First Day at the Secondary Level

Get ready for your first day teaching at the secondary level with these tips on everything from outlining the syllabus to starting a fun and hands-on project. New teachers will find this resource particularly valuable for back-to-school.

- Gimme Some Truth: Teaching Advice  
This excerpt from Rafe Esquith's Teach Like Your Hair's on Fire will instruct you on

how to create a safe haven for your students in your classroom. He will explain how to remove the element of fear from your classroom so you and your students have a more enjoyable learning experience.

## Staying Organized

Feel like there is so much to do and not enough time to get it done? Paperwork piling up and your not sure how it's going to get organized? Use the tools in this section to help make this year your absolute best.

- Classroom Organization Tips from Veteran Teachers  
Use these tips from experienced teachers to get your classroom organized and keep it that way for the whole year.

- Too Many Tasks, Not Enough Day  
If you feel overwhelmed by the number of tasks you have to do each day in the classroom, read these tips on how to organize those chores and make your job easier. New teachers will find this resource particularly valuable.

- Routines and Schedules  
Set up a routine for your classroom procedure on the first day. Your students will feel organized and the days will run more smoothly. New teachers will find this resource particularly valuable.

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## Classroom Management Tips

The toughest challenges become easier when you have the right resources. Find our best classroom management resources, from room set-up advice to behavior modification articles to effective teaching methods. Whether you're a new teacher or a seasoned veteran, there's something for all grade levels, K-12.

- **Behavior Management Tips from Veteran Teachers**  
A helpful list of tips about behavior management. Learn how you can make a classroom full of students run smoothly.
- **Classroom Management & Success as a Teacher**  
These classroom management basics will help

you reach your goal of becoming a successful teacher. Use the tips to gain control of your class and increase overall learning. New teachers will find this resource particularly valuable.

- **Positive Classroom Behavior**  
Read ideas and find resources on establishing and maintaining acceptable behavior in your students. New teachers, who are determining the most effective teaching methods for their classrooms, will find this behavior management resource particularly valuable.
- **Discipline Must Be Logical: Teaching Advice**  
In this excerpt from Teach

Like Your Hair's on Fire, Rafe Esquith discusses discipline and how punishments should fit the crime. New teachers will find this behavior-management advice particularly valuable.

- **Tips for Achieving and Maintaining Discipline**  
There are certain steps you can take to ensure that your students are disciplined and behave in an appropriate manner. Find those tips here. New teachers will find this behavior-management resource particularly valuable.
- **More Classroom Management Resources**

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## Advice for Parent-Teacher Interactions

Sometimes as teachers we don't realize teaching our students' parents on how to work with our students at home is just as important as teaching in general. Work on the home-school connection and collaborating with parents with the resources in this section.

- **Parent-Teacher Communication Advice from Veteran Teachers**  
Communication with parents is an essential part of teaching. Here is a list of helpful suggestions from experienced educators.
- **Hosting a Successful Open House**  
Your students' parents are powerful allies and can make your job much more manageable. Learn some tips on how to foster a positive relationship with parents and host a successful open house. New teachers will find this resource particularly valuable.
- **Parent/Teacher Relations**  
Handy suggestions for creating and maintaining positive parent/teacher relationships.

## Additional Resources

As teachers, we can never have enough resources on hand. Be sure to look through this section to see if there is anything here that you may need for a rainy day!

- **New Teacher Resources**  
Discover everything a beginning teacher will need for a successful school year, from tips for your first day, to classroom-management advice, to printables and lesson plans that will support your curriculum all year long.
- **Back to School Resources**  
Return to school this fall prepared to conquer any questions you or your students might have about the school year. Our resources range from teaching students the school's layout to assessment tips.
- **Getting to Know Your Students**  
Get to know new students through icebreakers, name games, and first-day celebrations. Our activities and advice will help teachers develop classroom community and establish positive relationships.

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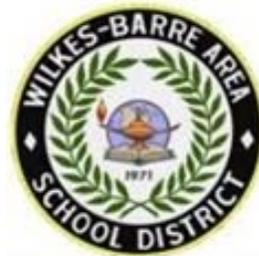


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# The Role of Effective Communication Skills in Your Professional Life

By : David Rickersey

Think “Communication Skills” and all our thoughts focus towards speaking and language skills, academically related and mostly used in our personal lives. More than often, we ignore its value and importance in our profession and at our workplace. We all have to communicate with our peers, subordinates, seniors, internal and external customers, which make effective communication skills a must-have.

The following are the most essential

skills one should master in order to become a skilled communicator and use it to climb up the ladder of personal and professional success:

**Listening skills:** This skill ranks topmost in the list as the ability to listen, understand and reciprocate to other’s views, considered to be quite an essential one in the corporate world. Listening shows that the other person’s opinions are important and you are willing to consider them, while being open to new concepts and

ideas. While speaking, an active listener will always pause for the audience’s response, repeat it and also ask questions that confirms their involvement in the ongoing conversation.

**Verbal Skills:** This is a skill that helps us to navigate our way through daily meetings, one to one discussions and brainstorming sessions. Clear and articulate speakers are usually the most effective as they reflects their

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uncluttered thoughts and leave no ambiguity in the listeners' mind. Since attention spans are becoming shorter, it is always a good idea to put one's thoughts in a clear and concise manner, focusing on the most vital segments of the conversation. While undergoing **training on communication skills**, a lot of emphasis is given to the development of verbal skills that engage others and help reaching a mutual consensus.

**Written Skills:** Modern businesses are heavily dependent on email communication, presentations and social media. Writing clear and accurate emails is surely a great skill all employees should possess, irrespective of the business function one is associated with. You should be able to focus on the important points without rambling and using unnecessary words or repeating them. It is also important to use an appropriate tone without getting too casual as this could ruin a perfectly good business association with a potential customer.

Good written skills include proper follow-ups and closing of the communication loop, the latter being considered a valuable asset in the world of cluttered electronic mail. This skill takes up a large portion of any communication training module.

**Interpersonal Communication skills:** Success at building strong interpersonal relationship through effective communication is an extremely valuable asset for any individual aspiring to make it to the top. Interpersonal skills help one to communicate not only at the business level but at a personal level too, thus taking the relationship a notch higher. It is useful in building bonds and helps employees to find common ground.

**Presentation skills:** The day of a busy corporate executive is filled with meetings, video conferences and of course, presentations. It could be a presentation of ideas, information or product details, either to an internal team or to a potential customer. A good presenter uses anecdotes, stories and references to make a presentation impactful and moving. The entire focus is on getting a desired outcome by influencing the audience in a positive manner and is a part of effective communication skills. Eye contact with the audience, a relaxed attitude and a dash of humor are all important ingredients of a memorable presentation.

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# 5 Tips for Choosing the Right College

By: Susie Watts

Choosing the right college can be a stressful experience for many students. Most do not know where to begin. Some simply decide to go to their local state university and do not consider another school. Others want to look at a variety of colleges and universities before deciding where they would like to apply. Putting together a college list is one of the most important steps in college planning.

When you are choosing the right college, you need to look for schools

that have what you are looking for in a college experience. This does not mean that you only consider schools that some of your friends are applying to or ones that are rated high in the college rankings. It means putting together a good list of schools to which you want to apply. It means looking at schools where you will fit in and have a successful college experience.

What do you need to consider when you are choosing a college that is right for you?

## 1. LIST THE CRITERIA THAT YOU THINK IS IMPORTANT.

- \* Do you want to go away or stay closer to home?
- \* Do you prefer a school with thousands of students or would you be more comfortable in a smaller environment?
- \* Do you want a college that will challenge you academically or be more laid back?

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\* Have you decided on a major? If so, what kind of programs does the school offer?

## **2. CHECK OUT YOUR RESOURCES FOR INFORMATION ON SCHOOLS**

\* Visit each school's website and request information for prospective students

\* Talk to your counselor, teachers or a private college counselor who can discuss these schools with you and tell you what they know about them

\* Do a virtual tour and get a feel for what each school offers

## **3. FIND OUT ABOUT CAMPUS LIFE**

\* What percentage of students lives in the dorms?

\* What extracurricular activities are available that appeal to you?

\* What does the surrounding community offer that sounds interesting?

\* Is there a Greek system and what part does it play in the social life?

## **4. DETERMINE THE FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY**

\* Use a net price calculator to get an idea of what the school will cost

\* Contact someone in the financial aid office to discuss how to pay for college

\* What scholarships does the school offer?

## **5. WHAT ARE THE RETENTION AND GRADUATION RATES**

\* How many students graduate in 4 years? How many in 5 or 6?

\* Is the school committed to seeing their students graduate in 4 years?

\* How many students return after their freshman year?

Taking the time to research schools is not an easy task, but it is well worth the effort when you are choosing a college that is right for you.

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# College Success - Most Students are Not Ready

By: Raymond Gerson

ACT, Inc. (American College Training) reported that college readiness levels were 22 percent in 2008. This is startling and the numbers are even worse for low-income and under served students.

Most high school graduates are not prepared for college success or to succeed in the workforce. My work experience gives me a unique perspective about the similarities between skills needed for college success and work success. Currently, I am a part-time college professor of

college success strategy and career development courses. For many years I worked as a job placement specialist and also owned an executive search and recruiting business.

Skills needed:

Here are some of the skills needed for college success, which are also necessary for success in a professional career:

- \* Reading comprehension
- \* Problem solving

- \* Reasoning and critical thinking
- \* Writing
- \* Note-taking
- \* Time management
- \* Goal setting
- \* Knowing your learning style
- \* Self-awareness
- \* Learning how to learn

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These skills are even more critical for career success during our current economic crisis. Employers are much more selective in hiring during tough times. College graduates will face greater difficulty finding good jobs in the next few years but will do better than many lacking a college education.

College success will be more important now because of increased competition for jobs. Employers will be looking more closely at college majors, grades, internships, volunteer work, and related work experience. Students who prepare for high demand jobs and who excel in college will have the best job opportunities.

College enrollments increase in hard times.

As job shortages increase it is likely that enrollment in colleges, especially community colleges, will grow. One

reason for this is that community colleges offer vocational programs that lead to jobs in a year or two. This is appealing to both recent high school graduates as well as returning older students who need to acquire new skills quickly due to job losses.

The problem, as stated by ACT and many other sources, is that most high school graduates are not ready to succeed at a college level. What can be done?

Many colleges offer courses that can teach you how to study and learn more effectively. Effective learning strategy courses can help you to succeed in your other college courses by teaching you how you learn best, goal setting, time management and many of the skills mentioned previously in this article.

When you learn how to learn and how you learn best, this ability is also an asset when you go to work because you are able to acquire the latest job related knowledge and skills. College success strategy and career exploration courses are also needed in high schools. This would help students come

to college prepared for success rather than failure, and they would have a better idea which college majors and careers are a good match for them.

Tips for learning:

Here are a few simple study tips that can increase your learning:

- \* Anticipate test questions. Create and take practice quizzes before you take the actual test.
- \* Write brief summaries in the margin of the text in your own words.
- \* Study for 30-45 minutes at a time followed by short breaks.
- \* Pause after reading a section and ask yourself questions about what the author is saying.
- \* Teach what you are learning to others. It reinforces what you are learning and makes it clearer.
- \* Discover and identify your preferred learning style and types of intelligence.

I have seen firsthand in my courses that when a student studies, understands and applies college success strategies, grades on tests and papers quickly improve. Students also report that their grades start getting better in their other courses. When you combine willingness to work and learn how to study, you will find success can quickly come your way.

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