

## A4TD's Nugget of Knowledge

September 4, 2020

### **Greetings Everyone ~ Rethinking Success**

A long time ago in a galaxy far far away, I was in high school. Much of that time I've erased from my memory. Remember "senior superlatives" – where classmates were called things like "class clown" or "best dancer"? Well, I was voted "most likely to succeed". I have to tell you, that has hung around my neck like an albatross ever since.

It's hard enough to live up to our own expectations of ourselves, and it's worse to feel the pressure of the expectations of those around you. This is especially true when we're talking about the thorny question of success. I spent 18 years living in the Washington DC metropolitan area where so many measured success by job titles, power, wealth, fancy homes and connections. Obituaries started out with an individual's job title in bold print. While I held a good job for many years, I never felt like I fit into the DC definition of success – nor did I want to. That was a suit of clothes that didn't fit me.

Then I moved back to Vermont where I had attended college at The University of Vermont. For years, I said I was coming back here and I finally did. I moved here by myself – no spouse, no children, no pets. Then at my job at Ben & Jerry's, my colleagues wanted to know if I had a spouse, children or pets!! Yikes! I didn't fit here either! What I love about Vermont is that if you read a person's obituary, you will learn about their family and friends, joys and interests, hobbies and favorite pets, personality, quirks and everything that made them who they were. Jobs are mentioned but usually much closer to the end. It's a whole different picture of what is notable in one's life.

Expectations change with time and we shouldn't get dragged down by old expectations of what should be – either ours or anothers. Would a, could a, should a. Now, right now, what do you want for your work and your life? The beauty of this time of our lives is that we can redefine what success looks like. We've already talked a lot about the skills, talents and gifts that you can offer an employer. So how might you want to use them in service of the people and things that matter to you? What might be an ideal career path or employer for you? While we can't always snap our fingers and get our dream job, answering these questions can give your search direction.

You still have so much to offer to the world, to an employer, to your community. I hope you can see that and aren't clouded by a history of shoulds.

As for me, I have found my own definition of success in this quote from 19<sup>th</sup> century poet Ralph Waldo Emerson:

*"What is success? To laugh often and love much; to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; to earn the appreciation of honest citizens and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty; to find the best in others; to give of one's self; to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to have played and laughed with enthusiasm and sung with exultation; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived - this is to have succeeded!"*

**Read on and enjoy.**

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### **A SCSEP Participant Success Story . . .**

I'd like to acknowledge two A4TD SCSEP participants who recently completed the Contract Tracing course offered by Johns Hopkins University. Kudos to Dee F. (in Buffalo) and Lori C. of Johnson City, NY. Furthermore, Lori just exited SCSEP for a job! Initiative does pay off.

I'll be sharing more stories in future issues. Maybe yours will be one?

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### **For the Gourmet Cook in all of us . . .**



From success to stress. I don't know about you, but I am a stress baker. And my favorite thing to bake? Brownies! So I was very excited to stumble onto this video on YouTube for doctoring up brownie box mixes to make them spectacular!

You can find how to do this – and other fabulous cooking videos – here! Little skill required! Yum – enjoy!

<https://youtu.be/ax8aRuvszpl>

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## Helpful COVID-related information . . .



Another day, another futile quest to find Lysol wipes in the grocery store. But fear not, you can make your own ones at home. Here's how! You can do this while your brownies are in the oven, and then celebrate with a warm brownie fresh from the oven, covered in vanilla ice cream! (Are you hungry yet?)

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/reviewedcom/2020/05/14/covid-19-how-make-diy-disinfectant-wipes-home/3120040001/>

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## A Training Tidbit . . .

In the last Nugget I gave you some tools for gaining clarity on your skills, talents and gifts. I hope you were able to identify those and shared them with your A4TD professional staff person. Being able to use these on the job should increase your confidence and belief in your ability to do well in your training or employment.

How about the Summary of Qualifications – did you take a first crack at that? Remember, we just want you to start putting things in writing. There is plenty of time for fine-tuning, and A4TD staff can help you with that.

### **Resume building, step 2:**

Identifying your skills and writing your Summary of Qualifications was your first step. This week we're going to focus on listing the places you have worked. Right now you shouldn't go back more than 10 or 15 years. This is what we would like you to do:

### **Take Action!!**

List out all of your jobs for the last 15 years, including this information for each job:

- a. Employer name

- b. Employer location (town and state)
- c. Job title
- d. Dates of employment (from month / year to month / year)

Excellent! Another great job! Slowly but surely your resume will take shape.

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## **DON'T UNDERESTIMATE YOUR VALUE**

From Harvard Business Review – “*The Case for Hiring Older Workers*”, Sept. 2019

*“The scientific evidence on (hiring older workers) shows. . . : For most people, raw mental horsepower declines after the age of 30, but knowledge and expertise — the main predictors of job performance — keep increasing even beyond the age of 80. There is also ample evidence to assume that traits like drive and curiosity are catalysts for new skill acquisition, even during late adulthood. When it comes to learning new things, there is just no age limit, and the more intellectually engaged people remain when they are older, the more they will contribute to the labor market.*”

*Beside the value and competence older employees can bring to the workforce, there is the issue of cognitive diversity. Few things of value have ever been accomplished by individuals working alone. The vast majority of our advancements — whether in science, business, arts, or sports — are the result of coordinated human activity, or people working together as a cohesive unit. The best way to maximize team output is to increase cognitive diversity, which is significantly more likely to occur if you can get people of different ages (and experiences) working together.”*

So if the Harvard Business Review things we're great, who are we to argue?

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**Work that Brain! . . .**

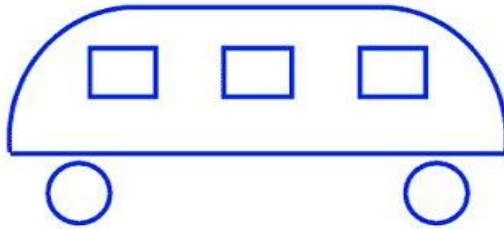


Speaking of intellectual engagement, let's work that brain with this week's brain teasers!

### ***Brain Teasers***

This issue's challenge:

1. **In which direction is the bus pictured below traveling?**



2. **Find the Homographs.**

A homograph is a word that has more than one meaning but is always spelled the same. For example, consider this pair of words: River - Money. Can you name the word (the homograph) that is connected to both of these words? The answer is "Bank". The side of a river is a bank, and a bank is a financial institution where money is deposited or loaned. Can you find the homograph that connects the following pairs of words?

LOCK – PIANO

SHIP – CARD

TREE – CAR

SCHOOL – EYE

PILLOW - COURT

\* \* \* \* \*

Here are the answers to our previous challenge:

1. *The more of them you take, the more you leave behind. What are they?*

**The answer is Footsteps.** (Kudos to Deb T.)

2. *I begin with T, have T in the middle, and end in T. What am I?*

**The answer is Teapot.** (Kudos to Deb T. And a special shout out to Terry V. for her excellent answer – **Tatertot!!**)

3. *A father and son, traveling in a car, had a bad accident. The father was killed. The son was badly injured and was taken to the hospital. The doctor walked in, looked at the child and said, 'I cannot work on the child, he is my son'. Why?*

**The answer is that the doctor is the boy's mother.** (Kudos to Deb T.)

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## **Some reminders from A4TD . . .**

Even though your local Department of Labor office / Career Center / Job Link / American Job Center may be closed to the public, that doesn't mean you can't access their services. If your resume is up to date and completed, now is the time to upload it into the system. Employers regularly review resumes on file with these state agencies to look for people with the skills, education and qualifications for employment. These agencies also offer online tools for building your resume.

In addition, be sure to look for upcoming events such as virtual workshops, job fairs and training sessions. A4TD encourages participants in all of our states to talk with your Regional Coordinator or Director about attending these events or other appropriate training activities. Our goal is to have you participate in training activities, even if your host agency is not open yet, so you may continue to grow your skills and prepare for employment.

Here are some links to help you get started:

New York: NY State Department of Labor <https://www.ny.gov/services/find-job#resources>

Maine: Maine JobLink <https://joblink.maine.gov/ada/r/>

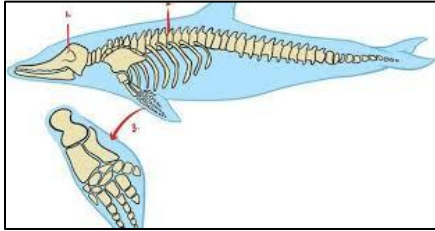
Pennsylvania : Pennsylvania Career Link

<https://www.pacareerlink.pa.gov/jponline/Admin/Common/JobSeekerServices.aspx>

Connecticut: CT Department of Labor <https://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/gendocs/JobSeekers.html>  
Vermont: VT Dept. of Labor - VT Job Link [https://www.vermontjoblink.com/ada/r/job\\_seeker](https://www.vermontjoblink.com/ada/r/job_seeker)

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**Fun facts . . .**

**Did you know that** Dolphins have hidden fingers? If you were to put a dolphin's front flipper in an X-ray machine, you would see that it contains an arc of humanlike finger bones. Why? The dolphin had a four-legged ancestor that lived on land, where it would have benefited from "fingers". Over time, as it adapted to life in the water, these multi-digit limbs slowly transformed into flippers.



For more scientific background on this phenomenon on other sea creatures as well, you can check it out here: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/08/science/dolphins-fingers-ichthyosaurs.html>

**Here is a little quiz for you:**

What was the name of the unrecognized republic that existed between Canada and the United States during the period of 1832 to 1835?

- a) Free State of Niagara
- b) Republic of Indian Stream
- c) Moosetown
- d) Republic of Mapleland

Feel free to phone a friend.

Stay tuned for the answer next time. Even better – feel free to submit your own fun fact or quiz for inclusion in the next Nugget!

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Last week we gave you this little quiz:

***“Which of these toys came first?”***

- G.I. Joe
- Barbie
- Slinky

- Silly Putty”

**The Answer: The Slinky.** The Slinky first tumbled around in 1945. Though the rubber goop used to make Silly Putty was invented around the same time, it didn't appear under that name until 1950.

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### **In case you need a break . . .**



Let's face it, it doesn't take much right now to find ourselves in a place of emotional overwhelm. We are being bombarded by news and events that are so anxiety producing. If you are having a hard time sleeping or could use a dose of relaxation, I invite you to check out this video of soothing music and awesome images of the Northern Lights.

<https://youtu.be/KVdczJQthLY>

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### **Silver Linings and other things shared by your colleagues. . .**

I received some wonderful emails from you sharing about your large families and longevity in your bloodlines. Thank you. This week I invite you to send in for sharing any little moment of your life that met your personal definition of success. If you would like me to share your story in the Nugget, please tell me so.

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### **A Final Thought . . .**

***“Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.”***

~ Sir Winston Churchill, British Statesman, army officer and writer.

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## **Ask A4TD . . .**

Finally, remember that if you have a comment or a question for A4TD, “reply” to this message and share your thoughts or questions.

*Until next time, may you appreciate beauty and laugh with enthusiasm, find the best in others – and see it in yourself! Keep safe, be well and don’t forget, we are here for you.*

*Sincerely,*

*All of us here at A4TD*

### **Melita DeBellis**

Employability Trainer  
Associates for Training and Development  
PO Box 107  
St. Albans, VT 05478

P: 802-524-3200 x124

F: 802-524-9933

[www.a4td.org](http://www.a4td.org)

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