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Although my childhood aspirations were marked by an assurance that I would grow up to be a specialist and creator of computer graphics for video games, specifically, the Coca-Cola polar bears, this has not turned out to be the case. Through a series of life experiences, accompanied by a revision of plans, I find myself deeply interested in the field of media studies. My long term professional goals are three tiered: become a professor in Media and Film Studies specializing in Race and Ethnicity, Pop Culture (video games, comics, film and television), and New Media; create a non-profit organization for youth interested in media/new media; and lay the foundation for a 21st century corporate media empire.

All aspects of my professional goals involve working in the media sector. I believe that media is an excellent tool that can be used constructively or destructively. It is my desire to see media utilized in ways that are innovative, progressive and socially provocative. Approaching media studies from an academic standpoint will give me the platform to effectively introduce my own ideologies and influence the field of media studies in a concrete and direct way.

From a social aspect, creating a non-profit organization for youth will enhance the ability of my academic rigors to translate into socially relevant and feasible ideas that interact with communities in positive ways. Also, it is of the utmost importance that future generations have a grasp of where the field is going in order to ensure that communities on the ground benefit from what is happening in the academic realm.

Lastly, laying the roots to a corporate media empire will create a fiscally profitable way to support my academic and non-profit work which will ensure that it will have a broader reach and also provide an avenue to market and distribute my own media solutions. Incorporating this business will also connect my work with other companies, corporations and associates who are doing similar work in the field.

Below I have outlined twelve important factors that will be necessary to consider in my endeavors to accomplish these three tasks. The movies, artwork, commercials XXXX that I selected have been chosen based on title, content, and/or meaning but each element offers something valuable to the work of bringing these goals from concept to materialization.

- Education

Higher Learning (1995)

Higher Learning is a movie that deals with the experiences of a young man who goes to college. The title of this film captures the idea of the importance of obtaining education and

specifically how one uses that education. Part of my plan is to work in the realm of academia so I will be exposed to both sides of the higher education paradigm; both as a student and eventually as a professor. *Higher Learning* makes numerous references to the importance of education and its pivotal role in successful implementation of goals. The overall thrust of the movie reinforces the maxim that “Knowledge is Power”

- **Problem Solving and Strategic Thinking**

- **Die Hard With A Vengeance (1995)**

- Die Hard with a Vengeance is a film in which John McClain (Bruce Willis) and his partner Zeus (Samuel L. Jackson) are sent on a scavenger hunt of solving riddles by an antagonist whose aim is to keep them distracted while he carries out his plan to steal the gold reserves in a New York bank. The riddles range from word play to mathematical deductions. The premise of the movie and being able to apprehend the antagonist rest on the main characters skills of problem solving and strategic thinking.

Riddle 1 As I was going to St Ives, I met a man with seven wives, Every wife had seven sacks, Every sack had seven cats, Every cat had seven kittens, Kittens, cats, sacks, wives, How many were going to St Ives?

Riddle 2:

You are given a 5 gallon jug and a 3 gallon jug in front of a fountain. Measure out exactly 4 gallons of water.

This movie represents the need to have sound problem solving skills and be a creative and strategic thinker. It is not just enough to obtain knowledge, but it is the application of knowledge that often makes the difference between success and failure. Creative thinking, problem solving, and strategic planning are all a part of the application of knowledge and necessary skills particularly in constructing a career that is somewhat off of the beaten path.

Sudoku and Chess

These two games are games of strategy and both require sound thinking. They outline rules and guidelines to play by, but the opportunities for improvising ways to win successfully are endless. This is also a characteristic of life and planning. There are certain rules and guidelines, but the opportunities for how one envisions navigating the landscape toward success is nearly endless. One must define what

works for them, analyze their skill set and decide the path the suites their conditions most optimally.

- **Networking**

Dogs Playing Poker - <http://blog.lib.umn.edu/bgleason/pt/dogs-playing-poker.jpg>

This infamous artwork captures networking at its finest. It is often said that more business deals are made on the golf course than in the board room. However, this demonstrates how all situations can be used for networking opportunities as they present interacting and bonding experiences. This artwork demonstrates how a game has the ability to bring people together. Oftentimes, these leisure activities can even result in new bonds or friendships being forged.

Social Network (2010)

The Social Network movie is a company biopic about the inception of Facebook, and how it evolved to the empire that it is today. In it's grand essecene of social media, it is used to bring people together, meet people at a distance, keep in contact with with those you hardly see, and helps you stay in contact with new people you meet.

Networking is imperative in obtaining success. Some of the opportunities I have had thus far has been because of networking. My future endeavors do not depend on networking, but I know that from it I will be able to accomplish more and possibly not have to work as hard. I forsee that in the build of my professional and corporate empire networking and connecting with like-minded individuals will be a priority for the success and integration of the vision of the corporation.

- **Do Your Own Thing**

Be You: Dr. Pepper Black Eyed Peas Commercial:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=45vJkMoYVVE>

This commercial is a perfect reference that represents the ideology “do your own thing.” When embarking on a journey to discover and live out my dreams, I realize that not everyone is going to see the vision that I see, nor are they going to believe in me to achieve it. At the end of the day however, it has to be about following your heart and embracing your own goals. This commercial illustrates the necessity to be

yourself and not to worry about what people think. Here's to the individuals like Dr. Pepper the originals.....Be you, do what you do"

- **Speak Your Mind**

Liar, Liar (1997)

Liar, Liar is a film in which Jim Carrey, a lawyer and habitually dishonest man becomes unable to tell any untruths for an entire day. His life nearly unravels, but it is the overall message of the film that embodies a truth that resonates with me: Be honest about your desires, what you want and have honorable intentions. Carrey's character learns that although he had convinced himself that telling lies was beneficial and/or sometimes necessary, honesty really is the best policy. This is an important principle, and the most important person to be honest with is yourself. In order to successfully engage your gifts and talents, you have to be honest about what you really want and what you are capable of. Once you have these clear, you can begin to build the necessary resources and connections to fill in the places that are lacking.

- **How We Shall Proceed**

Rules of Engagement (2000)

I do not doubt that there are many people that have a similar dream to mine. However, one important question that I will need to clarify as I develop my own personal brand is how my business, my product, and my approach differ from what already exists. In order to be innovative, I must bring something new, fresh and progressive to the table and be able to effectively demonstrate how I have set myself apart from the competition. This remains true for building a business, working in academia, or running a non-profit. Establishing an angle and a brand are of the utmost importance if I am going to have a successful media marketed approach to the knowledge and opportunities that my work will offer to others.

- **Getting Advice and Assistance**

The Help (2011)

The inclusion of this film is more related to its title than to its content. Throughout my own life I have realized the necessity and benefit of asking for help. I may have

my own ideas about how things should be done, but ultimately, relying on the wisdom and experience of those who are older will save me time and resources.

Throughout undergraduate and graduate school I have gained wisdom by listening and learning from those who are wiser than I am. Due to the influence of these individuals I am able to recognize when I need help and to ask for it. I am willing to talk about concerns and questions that will help me further my personal and professional goals. All of the goals that I have set require assistance from others. There is no way to have a lasting impact without incorporating levels of help from others.

- **Build Your Team**

- The A-Team (2010)**

- This movie is based on an early television show from the 80s which features a team of crime fighting men. Part of the success of any business or endeavor is making sure that you have the right people on your team. Your team creates a sounding board, a system of checks and balances and a support that can bear you through difficult times.

- In my personal life, I have already developed a Seal Team. I call this cohort my Seal Team after the team that eventually captured Bin Laden. These are the people that I go to when I know I need something done well and in a timely fashion. This team building will be an important aspect of working all of my professional, personal and community building goals.

- Final Fantasy 7 (1997)**

- Final Fantasy 7 is a video game based on the franchise of Final Fantasy. In this role playing game, you are McCloud, a small man with a huge sword, who encounters different characters along his journey. Each character has a different trait and a different reason for joining your team. Some of them remain with you throughout the whole game, some are with you only for a time, and others are only a part of your team because they are looking to further their own agendas. The same can be true for people who join your team in real life situations. Discernment and understanding are important factors of interpersonal interaction. You must understand your resources and the investments that people have in you, your work and themselves in order for the team to function thoroughly.

- **Finance**

- 21 (2008)**

21 is a movie about a young man that wants to go to Harvard Medical School, but does not have enough money. As a solution, he is recruited by a misfit team of blackjack players who go to casinos in Vegas and count cards to win large sums of money.

This movie highlights the reality that dreams require financing. I am planning on obtaining my Ph.D but I also realize this is an investment in myself. It is my hope that it will be fully funded, however, I also have to have a backup plan.

Running a non-profit also required forward financial thinking. Although it will be a non-profit the work that we do in the community will have to be funded either privately, corporately or through grants. When thinking of doing effective work, it is important to consider the financial aspect as well.

- Dream It All

A Beautiful Mind (2001)

At first glance, the movie *A Beautiful Mind* appears to be about a man with superior intelligence and a great circle of friends. At the end of the movie, it is all revealed that the other characters that he interacted with were figments of his imagination. I believe this is a powerful concept as we really do create the realities we experience in our minds. We create our realities by our thoughts and dreams are realities that haven't happened yet--Everything begins with a dream, idea, or thought. When I envision my dreams for the future they are very real, even if they have not yet materialized. This ability to dream is paramount to being able to achieve those dreams.

- Motivation And Perseverance = Success

Motivational Speech- Secrets to Success

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WTFnmsCnr6g>

“If there is no struggle, there can be no progress” ~ Fredrick Douglass

Motivations are what drive dreams and everyone is motivated by something. Today's hip-hop culture inundates consumers with motivators such as money, cars, jewelry and clothes, however, everyone has an end goal. Media would have one believe that you can just wake up one day and the perfect world will be laid at your feet. This is a deep mistruth. However, it is important to understand what motivates you as you work towards your goals. What are you really striving for? Do your actions reflect those core beliefs?

“If there is no struggle, there can be no progress” is one of my favorite quotes. It is a constant reminder that there will be struggles, obstacles, and momentary defeat, but it will all be worth it in the end. It is those down falls and mishaps that make you a stronger person, and from those experiences you learn more about yourself. Some of the most successful people share stories about denial, losing hope and wanting to give up at some point. However, they dug deep and found the motivation to keep pushing towards their dreams. Motivation propelled them, but perseverance sustained them.

- **Live Life**

- **Slumdog Millionaire (2008)**

- Although it took me some time to warm up to this movie, when I finally watched it, I was inspired.

- *Jamal Malik, an 18 year-old orphan from the slums of Mumbai, is about to experience the biggest day of his life. With the whole nation watching, he is just one question away from winning a staggering 20-million rupees on India's "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?" But when the show breaks for the night, police arrest him on suspicion of cheating; how could a street kid know so much? Desperate to prove his innocence, Jamal tells the story of his life in the slum where he and his brother grew up, of their adventures together on the road, of vicious encounters with local gangs, and of Latika, the girl he loved and lost. Each chapter of his story reveals the key to the answer to one of the game show's questions*

- Everyone has different life experiences, but you can learn a lot from your experiences if you allow life to teach you. It must not be confronted with fear, but with love realizing every experience is a growing experience.

- **Live Your Life by T.I feat Rhianna**

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=koVHN6eO4Xg>

- This song by T.I and Rihanna remains a reminder that life could always be worse. You must live the life you are given like it is a gift, because it truly is. Live the life that is yours, not the one that others expect from you or the life that you think will please others—live the life you love and love it while you are living it. Change is inevitable, so you have to be ready to adapt and be flexible, however never give up and stay true to your dreams.

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