My Growth Since Starting College

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What my school life was like until my graduation of high school was procrastination and aiming for the bare minimum. After a few semesters of college, I had a rude awakening of how different college was from all my previous experiences of school. It was not until then I realized I had to change the way I approached school.

**Choosing a college**

Towards the end of senior year of high school, in class one day, my classmates and I were applying for colleges that we wanted to get into. I chose River Parish Community College (RPCC) with the intention of doing my general studies at RPCC and transferring to a university. At the time, I had not decided what universities to transfer to, but I had my mind on Southeastern University (SELU) or University of Louisiana of Lafayette. But I put off that decision until the time came, and focused on what was ahead of me at RPCC.

## Falling on My Butt1

For most of my school life I have been procrastination and aiming for the absolute barest minimum. Because that is how I have always approached school, I had a tough time getting into college life. Although RPCC had given me a rude awakening, it was not until I transferred to SELU that really made me realize I had to change something.

When transferring to SELU, I changed my major to Business Administration because my dad convinced me that it would be the best thing for me. When attending RPCC my approached change to be more involved in my schoolwork, but attending SELU I had to go farther than what I was used to doing just to get the bare minimum. My approach to school gotten better with every semester I went through at SELU, but no matter how much I improved my approach to college, I could not get the results I wanted.

### Coping with Procrastination and Anxiety.

When entering SELU I no longer wanted the bare minimum, what I wanted was to get satisfactory results. Even though my motivation and standard for my grades has improved since high school, I still had my biggest issue of procrastination. No matter how motivated I was at school or in class, once I walked through the door of my home, that motivation is replaced with procrastination.

Procrastinating assignments would then lead to either poor grades on the assignment or no grade at all. This would then lead to anxiety. My anxiety came from not only bad grades, but due to my bad grades the only way to get the bare minimum would rely on the midterms and finals. The way I cope with anxiety is to play video games and hang out with friends. Which would lead into a circle of procrastination, anxiety, coping with anxiety, and procrastination again.

#### Putting it into practice

I also decided that transferring to a new school for a different environment and a separate way of schooling was the best option for me. I chose ITI College because it was more hands-on learning and the smaller number of students in each class allows me to get more personalized assistants from the professors if I was not grasping a concept. At ITI I try to do as much work as possible in class as to not bring it home because I have acknowledged that I do not have as much motivation in class as I do at home. If I do have assignment to take home, I then try to do them as soon as possible because the longer I wait the less of a chance I will do the assignment. Also, for me to succeed at ITI, I am devoting all my time to my studies since I am in a position that I do not have to work.

**P.O.W.E.R**

P.O.W.E.R learning is a five-step process that helps students succeed in college and their careers. P.O.W.E.R stands for Prepare, Organize, Work, Evaluate, Rewrite. It is a research approach to help students learn the best practices that many students have not learned.

The “P” in P.O.W.E.R has changed my perspective of how I see school because I have not only set realistic goals for myself. By setting realistic goals it has given me motivation to work towards succeeding them. My long-term goal is graduating from ITI College. My short-term goals start with getting to class on time. Then doing and finishing whatever work I am given in class. And if necessary, a short-term goal can be to practice a concept until I get a better grasp on it. The most recent example was when taught binary I was not as good as I wanted to be with it. So, I made an Excel spreadsheet that would help me practice converting numbers into binary.

Organizing has helped me achieve my goals and understand material through better note taking. I have organized my time better to be able to put more effort into school. Originally, I would just do assignments when I did not have anything else I wanted to do instead. But now the first thing I do when coming from class is take an hour or two to do any assignments I did not finish or could not do in class, or study. Before I when taking notes, I would either write whatever I thought was important or just jot random notes down. But now I have my notes organized with various categories, and with each subcategory is a summary of different concepts pertaining to the main subject. This has allowed me to have an easier time studying material.

The “W” has made me realize that I no longer want my motivation to be able to get a decent job or to make my parents happy. I am now going to college for myself. Earning a degree for myself pushes me more to succeed than it did doing it for someone else because it is something I want. Because earning a degree in IT is something I want, I am more willing to learn different concepts and skills.

Evaluating my past and current schooling has allowed me to see if what I am studying is important. Since swapping majors to something that I have a passion for, this has allowed me to see the importance of all of what I am learning. In the past I was in a major that I had no real interest in and was only in it because of parental pressure. This made me see the importance beyond “I need to know this for my job.” While what I am being taught now, I am already using what I have learned in real life. Also evaluating how well I am doing in my classes encourages my decision to swap to IT. Comparing my grades with the subjects I was learning at my past schools, and comparing them to now has shown that making the decision to transfer to ITI and swapping majors to IT was a good decision.

The final letter is “R” which stand for rethink. Because of the smaller students within each classroom, the professors can challenge their students more so than a classroom of thirty to hundred students. My current professors would challenge a concept I thought I had grasped, and present it in a unique way to be able to recognize the concept from a different angle. Before in classes at my past schools, they could not present the information in such a way because it would take too much time and it might confuse the other students.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, in the past I have not had the best mindset and approach to school. Because I was in a program I had no interest in, or I was doing it for the wrong reasons. I had bad practices and issues with procrastination. After evaluating myself and what I wanted, I realized that I needed to change things. First, I needed was to change myself. I became aware of what I was motivated for and when I was motivated to do work that needed to be done. Second, I had to change my major to something I wanted to learn for myself rather than to satisfy someone else. Based off this first term, I feel confident that I made the right decision. I am interested in what I am studying, and if I need extra help my professors can provide it because of the smaller class size. And by using P.O.W.E.R, I am able to do better with note taking and goal setting. Using these skills increases my chance of success in college and in my career in the future. For the first time in my college life, I am enjoying what I am being taught. And even though I still have tough choices to make, as in whether I specialize in networking or programming, I am excited for what the future holds for me.