

Accomplishments Insights

General Insights

Values

- My town was like a Norman Rockwell cover for Post Magazine
- I am very fortunate to have grown up in a small town with such close extended family and basic Midwestern values

Economic Engine

- I grew up not expecting to be given a lot and still don't
- We lived very modestly and I don't have expensive tastes
- I have worked full time during the summers since 9th grade
- My parents pay for my tuition, room & board – but I pay all the other expenses

Academics

Elementary through High School:

- Was not that difficult to get really good grades. I graduated 2nd in my class from high school.
- Only 5 of our 40 kid graduating class went to college, the rest stayed around and either worked on farms or local businesses.
- After attending my engineering school I now realize my small high school was not a top school and did not really challenge me.

Engineering School:

- I have learned to take charge of my life, e.g. switching from AP Calculus to regular Calculus (even though it was a step down) and switching from Civil Eng to Electrical Eng in middle of semester when everyone said it couldn't be done
- I have learned how to study
- I have further honed my ability to think analytically

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Sports

Elementary through High School

- Was part of my life starting in elementary school, e.g. pickup baseball, pick up basketball and Little League
- Became more serious in Junior high with organized school baseball and basketball, e.g. winning State Baseball Championship
- In Midwest high school basketball is the community sport – people will ask you why you did something in the 4th quarter.
- Really spent my high school years in a gym or out on a baseball field
- Wished I was as good at basketball as I was at baseball
- Always wanted to play football but my school was too small to have a team
- Coaching town Little League team convinced me of two things: 1) in spite of being a really good baseball player I was not a really good coach and 2) I did not really enjoy the job.

College

- Continued to play baseball in spring of freshman year, high school team was better than my college team. Eventually dropped baseball to devote more time to being editor of the newspaper
- After my first year in engineering school I realized I could play football and basketball there, but didn't because of academic workload
- Instead I played intramural flag football (and loved it) as well as basketball.
- Our fraternity had a lot of jocks and we won the All Sports Trophy every year

Overall

- I like improving myself and am willing to invest the time to do it.
- I like being part of a winning team

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Really Enjoyed Doing Insights

Leadership Roles

- **Junior High through High School**
 - People chose me or gave me leadership positions, e.g. President of Letterman's Club and President of Senior Class
 - Think they did that because they saw me as the "adult" who would do the job
- **College**; came about in one of three ways
 - I created it myself, e.g. founded the school newspaper
 - I ran for it, e.g. VP of fraternity (although others recommended me) and President of Student Body (again others recommended I run)
 - It came with another job, e.g. Editor of fraternity Rush Book was one of the jobs of the VP of the fraternity

Leadership Characteristics

- **Junior High through High School**
 - Just carried out the duties of the role without any real creativity
- **College**
 - Became entrepreneurial (didn't know the word at that time), e.g. starting the college newspaper
 - Learned to manage others who knew more than I did, e.g. I had never been on a newspaper but found I could pull together people who knew all the aspects and put out a high quality weekly newspaper
 - Learned when I get excited about something I can get carried away – I put so much time into the newspaper it started to affect my grades. I found working on it was a lot more fulfilling than studying engineering.

Taking Risks, Going outside comfort zone

- Founding & running college newspaper
 - Was told if it failed I might not get into an Honor Society
 - Never had worked on a newspaper
- Rush Book
 - Tried a new approach, instead of just copying the one that had been used for years
 - Fraternity brothers were not real supportive
- High school Junior & Senior Plays
 - Never been in a play or anything theatrical

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Really Enjoyed Doing Insights

Taking Charge

- Founding & running college newspaper
 - o Had an idea and went with it
 - o Got people together and met deadlines every week
- Rush Book
 - o Pulled together group of talented people
 - o Met the deadline for Rush Week

Team Player

- Sports Teams
 - o Winning State Baseball Championship (after finishing 4th in 7th)
 - o Becoming best player on JV basketball during my junior year
- Work Teams
 - o Founding & running college newspaper
 - o Creating best Rush Book in history of fraternity
 - o Playing lead roles in Junior & Senior Plays
 - o Baling hay every summer
- I have played two different team roles
 - o Player, e.g. Baseball, basketball, junior/senior plays, baling hay
 - o Team leader, e.g. college newspaper, Rush Book

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Didn't Enjoy Doing – Engineering School

Engineering School – Glass Half Empty (probably 75% Empty):

- The students in my engineering school are cut out of a different cloth. Almost all came from schools with AP classes where they had some freshman college courses (I had never even heard the word Calculus).
- They are the classic nerds – a lot of them spend weekends studying, while I like to spend mine playing sports, drinking and chasing girls
- I have a 3.0 GPA so I am not failing but it comes because of a lot of hard work and not a lot of joy
- They really love engineering; probably have wanted to do this for years. I had only heard about engineering as a profession when I was a senior via my math & science teacher
- They love to go into the lab and put what they learned in the classroom into practice, I don't. Labs are my least favorite part of engineering – a real red flag for a pragmatic degree.
- They want to go out and tackle real problems with what they have been learning. I feel like I don't know enough to do a good job.
- In fact I feel like I did working for my father – I will be an average, at best, engineer and I don't want to be average at anything.

Engineering School – Glass Half Full (probably 25% Full):

- I have learned to take charge of my life, e.g. switching from AP Calculus to regular Calculus (even though it was a step down) and switching from Civil Eng to Electrical Eng in middle of semester when everyone said it couldn't be done
- I have learned how to study
- I have learned how to compete with people who are doing something that is a natural for them and for which they have passion – but I really don't want to do that for a living
- I have further honed my ability to think analytically
- I now know a lot about engineering and technology
- I will have a very important degree
- I have made a lot of good friends
- I have been able to have a lot of great experiences because I was not a “nerd” and was willing to go after leadership positions.

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Didn't Enjoy Doing – Working as Apprentice Electrician/Plumber

Apprentice Electrician & Plumber – Glass Half Empty:

- Not really good at practical aspects of being an electrician or plumber
- Doesn't play to my natural strengths
- Could see I was much better with things that were cerebral
- Realized I would be an average, at best, electrician and plumber
- Would always be compared to my father, who was a master
- Would be living in my small town

Working for my father as Apprentice Electrician & Plumber – Glass Half Full:

- I got some great training in two trades – electrician and plumber
- I will be able to use these around my house
- Also learned about running a business – it isn't just about doing a great job of being an electrician and plumber
 - o estimate & bid jobs
 - o buy parts
 - o decide what his core strength was (stopped selling appliances)
 - o deal with potential customers and existing customers
 - o set prices so he made money, yet got business
 - o do all of the administrative part of the bus, e.g. paying bills, sending out invoices, collecting money, paying employees
- Saw how my father made sure the customer got a good deal because they would keep coming back to him – how he saw each job as part of long term relationship
- I really got to know
 - o What my father did for a living (will my kids know what I do?)
 - o How good he was at his trade
 - o How good he was at running his business
 - o Him as a person, not just my father