

#AFTER COLLEGE

TWEET

Dealing with Life after College

MATTHEW CHOW and JONATHAN CHU

FOREWORD BY MICHAEL S. MALONE

An Actionable Career Summary

A THiNKaha® BOOK

Book 01

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Dealing with Life after College

Book Excerpt

By Matthew Chow and Jonathan Chu

Foreword by Michael S. Malone



An Actionable Career Summary

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Dealing with Life after College



Foreword by Michael S. Malone

We all remember that morning, even if it was through the haze of a hangover headache. Perhaps we were still in our clothes, lying atop an unmade bed, our gown, mortarboard, and diploma all tossed in a pile in the corner. Or maybe we awoke in a strange bedroom—or perhaps even worse, the most familiar bedroom of all from our childhood.

But wherever we awakened, we all shared the same thought: *Now what?*

College, especially if you do it right, is a four-year hiatus from reality. Sure, it can be tough work, but it is also an isolated world free from most of the cares of the larger reality beyond its gates. This is especially true if you live on campus—where you get three meals per day, everyone is your age, and law enforcement is largely kept at bay. Your only real task is to learn and to ponder the great thoughts that you will rarely ever have time to think about again.

You largely get to forget about that bigger world Out There—right up until that moment you strut across the stage, take the diploma in one hand, shake the university president’s hand with the other...and then come hurtling back down to earth.

Real Life is waiting for you at the far end of the stage—and it’s brought bosses, mortgages, screaming babies, work cubicles, and houseboat vacations. It’ll let you party tonight; but tomorrow morning it’s going to pay you a visit—and then it’s going to move in with you for the next seventy years or more.

We all remember that morning—vaguely, because we mostly try to forget it. But to Matt Chow and Jonathan Chu, the authors of this remarkable book, that memory is as fresh as an open sore. They embarked on writing this book just weeks after they had their own “morning after”—Matt from UC San Diego, and

Dealing with Life after College

Jon from Trinity College in Connecticut. Both young men had known each other since high school in Cupertino, California, and had stayed in touch during the good times in college—and now, after they had graduated and moved back to their respective homes, in the long, depressing days and weeks after as they adjusted to being back with their parents, looking for jobs, and, ultimately, figuring out what to do with the rest of their lives.

I've known both of these young men for years (they are friends of my son), and in Jon's case, because I was his scoutmaster, since he was a little kid. They are both ferociously intelligent, funny, and fine writers—but, of course, none of those talents are much use when you wake up that first moment after college graduation—lost, confused, and scared.

This is their guide for how to get through that morning, and the mornings after that, in one of the greatest life transitions any of us ever make. It is eye-opening, depressing, optimistic, hair-raising, and hilarious. And I think it is the best, most truthful book ever written about navigating those very first days of real adulthood. If you are about to graduate college, or have just done so, buy this book—you'll learn something on every page. And if you are a parent of a grown child going through this transition, read it, and you'll better understand what's going on in the head of that mopey person now back living in the bedroom down the hall.

Michael S. Malone

Santa Clara University

Introduction

Walking out of college, I had the romantic idea of being picked up by a nice company that would provide me enough income to live in my hometown. I thought that I would quickly pay off my student loans and still have enough money to buy the things that I wanted while slowly pursuing life goals in my free time. My life would finally start, and school would be a distant, ugly memory. All this would be made possible because after four years of undergraduate study, I had a bachelor's degree.

This didn't happen. Apparently, I didn't have the work experience nor the connections to make it in the real world and, counting today, I have been unemployed for eight and a half months. The last few months have been filled with stress and confusion as I try to pursue my dreams, while worrying about where I'm going to get the money to pay off my student loans, and what my family is going to think of me when I'm *still* living at home almost one year after graduating. It's difficult to see my money drain away without a foreseeable income. My life did not exactly start; it simply fell into a living purgatory as I scrambled to make myself more appealing to employers. Even then they seldom responded to my resume and when they did it was always a rejection.

Leaving college, I was not prepared for the life of unemployment that awaited me. Fortunately, over these past eight months—short for some people, a lifetime for others—I have been given many words of advice by friends and family who want to see me succeed. Hopefully this book—a collection of the best thoughts my loved ones and I have come to understand—will help you if you ever find yourself freshly graduated and unemployed in the future.

Matthew Chow

Section I: Money



Section I

Money

Congratulations, you've finished college! So ... now what? For the first time in many post-grads' lives, they find themselves worrying about money (like us, the authors of this book). Our first eighteen years were made easy with the support of our parents plus the student loans and grants that helped us pay for college. You might find yourself in the same situation. The current unemployed college graduate usually isn't making any money along with the added burden of student loan bills to worry about. With this new financial situation, we all need tactics that will help us deal with the pain. Here are some things to keep in mind that can help during this precarious time.

1

Budgeting is simple; self-control in the face of excessive spending is another story.

2

Grants and loans are no longer paying for things. Student loan payments will soon begin, so there's no time for wasteful spending.

3

If your parents won't charge rent, consider moving back home. It's a great way to save money while looking for a job.



Section III

Job Search

After college, quite a few people get jobs and start their careers, but many of us leave our college campuses without a clue as to how to get these jobs.

Of course, we know that we need to have resumes and cover letters, but beyond that, many people are lost when they first start out—we definitely were.

We didn't know what we were getting ourselves into. In addition, the job search is much harder for some than it is for others. Here are some words that should help steer you in the right direction, or at least help to keep your chin up.

40

Don't put all your eggs in one basket—that's a good way to get them broken all at once.

41

Getting a job is like applying for college. They have to choose you, not the other way around, so spend time fine-tuning your resume.

42

Although you should spend
time every day searching
and applying for jobs, don't
devote all of your free time
to it—you'll burn out.

43

Look for jobs
everywhere—online,
bulletin boards at coffee
shops, local papers, etc. Go
into or call random places
& ask if they're hiring!

44

Be creative in your job search—companies you may not even think about might need a person with your set of skills.

45

The hardest part is waiting to hear back. Find a hobby that can help you take your mind off of it.

Section V: Dealing with Frustration (The Dark Side of the Job Search)



Section V

Dealing with Frustration (The Dark Side of the Job Search)

In our current economy, finding a suitable job can be difficult. You may not get a job as easily as you might have first thought. It has personally taken us more time than we like to disclose to find jobs that we never thought we would even consider. Frustration and depression can build as time passes and the job search continues. This is a normal reaction, but it must be controlled before it gets out of hand. We know that a few words in a book cannot find you a job, but these words of wisdom gleaned from sympathetic friends and family have kept us grounded while we conducted our job searches.

82

Treat yourself every once
in a while. It can be a meal,
a present, or a movie.
Something that makes you
feel good about you.

83

Exercise is a good way to
keep healthy and work out
your frustrations.

Section VII: The Good Part of Unemployment



Section VII

The Good Part of Unemployment

We have been unemployed for a long time. There has been a lot of stress and much confusion, but it hasn't all been bad. You'll tend to have several hours of free time when you don't have to be at a job for most of the day. There are plenty of things that can be accomplished as a result of unemployment.

123

Want to watch all six *Star Wars* movies in one day? You don't have to wait until the weekend; do it whenever.

124

Tired in the middle of the day?
Take a nap! This is a luxury for the unemployed.

125

Want to grow a lumberjack's beard?
Shaving is usually required
in the corporate workplace, but
unnecessary elsewhere.

126

You can go on a trip whenever
you want and for however long
(excluding financial demand).

About the Authors



Matthew Chow graduated from the University of California, San Diego, one semester early with a bachelor's degree in English and has been floating in unemployment and student loan debt ever since. He has attempted to find a job, to no avail, using his free time to hone his skills as a writer.



Raised in the cool, temperate climate of Sunnyvale, CA, Jonathan Chu ventured to Hartford, CT, to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science. However, Chu has never been a one-trick pony. In his twenty-two years of life, Chu has constantly sought to better himself through experience. He is currently preparing for a post-graduate introspective journey to Australia and wherever else the wind may take him.

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For Those of Us Out of College and
Moving Forward

"The things that Matthew and Jonathan say are universal to new graduates. I particularly think the section with the questions is great! It gets you thinking about the direction that you are taking, so that you can really consider what you want to do with your life."

Christine Ruff, Co-author, #ENTRY LEVEL tweet Bookos: Relevant Advice for Students and New Graduates in the Day of Social Media

"Reading this book, I found that the 'aha' moments of the authors weren't so different than many professionals have faced over these last, very difficult years. Freshly graduated or not, multiple periods have become the expectation of many. These 'kids' have learned some hard lessons, but have articulated bits of wisdom that will inspire all of us."

Lori Ruff, CEO, Integrated Alliances, Author, Forbes Top 50 Social Media Power Influencer

"#AFTER COLLEGE tweet should be required reading for everyone BEFORE they graduate from college. This book includes actionable tips that students can start implementing before graduation day to get a head start on their job search."

Barbara Safant, President, Career Solvers



Matthew Chow is a recent graduate of UCSD with a B.A. in English. He is looking for a job in the publishing industry while trying to start a writing career.



Jonathan Chu is a recent graduate of Trinity College in Hartford, CT. He graduated with a B.S. in Environmental Science and is looking for a way to make the world a better place.

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