



Moving Student Athletes From the Playing Field to the Corporate Team!

*An inside look at how the NCAA can transform
career services in higher education*

by

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Introduction

The NCAA has an enormous opportunity to leverage its brand and influence to solve a problem that has plagued colleges and career centers for decades and has grown increasingly worse in recent years.

This report will:

- Review the significant issues student athletes and students in general face in today's depressed job market
- Detail the lack of attention and resources colleges and universities have committed to career centers and the career needs of students and alumni
- Identify the risks to student athletes if the situation isn't addressed – immediately!

We will offer a number of proven innovative strategies the NCAA can employ to solve these issues. By taking a proactive stance on improving career training in higher education, the NCAA will be recognized as an advocate for helping students transition from college to the corporate team.

By acting on the issues shared in this report and implementing proven strategies...

..the NCAA can reinforce its brand as a career maker!

“I’m going to college so I can have a successful career”

A study entitled The American Freshman; National Norms conducted by UCLA’s Higher Education Research Institute over the past four decades, has shown an increasing number of incoming freshman report they are going to college to increase their “employability.”

The incoming freshman class in 2013 hit an all-time high. In fact, over 88 percent of incoming freshmen indicated the reason they were going to college was to get the knowledge and skills they needed to lead a successful career. This hasn’t always been the case. Only three decades ago, the percent of students responding was only 67 percent.

However, only a handful of the over 4,000 colleges in America have a program in place that ensures students take ownership of their careers. The career center is no different than the 300 other clubs on campus. They have to compete to get the attention of their students. Unfortunately they don’t have a marketing budget, but frankly, even if they did, the directors of career centers have little interest or experience in marketing.

As a result, students don’t visit the career center until their senior year and only then try to cram in one or two visits the information they should have been acquiring over the previous three years. The typical student will have little understanding of what industry their major will prepare them for, or the type of companies or position their degree might prepare them for. They leave the college completely unprepared and unschooled in how to get a job.

Despite having anytime access to thousands of alumni who would be willing to mentor and help a student/grad, few students take the time to build a network they can fall back on. And, in a day and age when resumes are crunched by computer programs looking for the right key words that will qualify for a human to review them, students are clueless on how to customize and stuff their resume to get noticed.

In fact most grads will be among those that spend as much as 40 hours per month lobbying resumes and feeling productive. They have little understanding that only 12 percent of all jobs are offered as a result of being placed on job board.

A perfect game plan for a college would be to integrate career training within the curriculum. However, because the faculty controls the curriculum, there is slim to little chance students will see this happen.

I recently had breakfast with the CIO of a major state university who shared with me how the college attempted to drop 55 majors that were graduating in some cases only a few graduates. Despite the college struggling to overcome a significant drop in enrollment and reduced funding from the state, despite the fact that the students graduating out of those programs are struggling to gain employment, the needs of the

faculty won and even the president of the institution was unable influence the outcome!

This lack of attention and focus on career training results in graduates suddenly waking up on graduation day and becoming painfully aware that their diploma does not offer a guaranteed pathway to success.

It doesn't have to be this way!

What we need right now is to admit the problem exists and pull together people, organizations and services that can change the paradigm. Careers are at stake!

No one is taking seriously the employment issues grads face today

The word career has roots in the French word “carriere” meaning road. The roots of this word suggest it was used to relate to one’s vocation, calling, or work as a path to follow.

Unfortunately, our society in general and our colleges in particular are not doing enough to encourage students to learn how to create a career plan or path to follow. As anyone around you if they have a written career plan or invest any time in career management. You might find 1 in 10 that do. You’ve heard the phrase,

“If you don’t know where you are going, you are already there!”

Without a career game plan, the typical worker mindlessly jumps from one job to another. Without a career game plan, they are losing out on moving toward an end goal that not only specifies the type of industry, position and title but where they want to live. Without planning in advance, those that find themselves unemployed will quickly take jobs that are totally unrelated to where they want to be as their funds run dry. What happens next is the job seeker will pick any job just to get a paycheck, and their career could ultimately be sidetracked or derailed and their dreams dashed.

Research supports that grads are “clueless on how to find a job”.

- A Career Advisory Board survey found that 77.4 per cent of career center professionals did not think grads understand what it takes to get a job.
- And that’s no surprise when you consider 61 percent of graduating seniors either never visit the career center, (27%) or visit only once(18%) or twice (16%).

College administrator are ignoring reports that suggest students are dissatisfied with the way the college prepared them for their job search. The John J. Heldrich Center for Workplace Development issued a report, “Unfulfilled Expectations: Recent College Graduates Struggle in a Troubled Economy” that showed that 58 percent of recent grads felt the career center did not prepare them for their first professional job search.

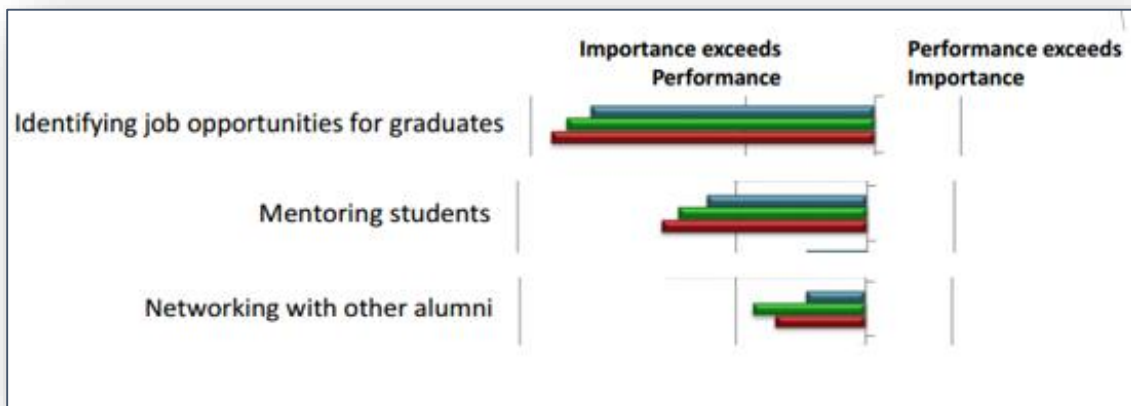
But it's not just graduates that are dissatisfied with the time, attention and resources their alma mater commits to help them lead a successful career.

The Alumni Attitude Study surveys the opinions of hundreds of thousands of alumni and recent grads at hundreds of colleges and universities every five year. The survey has provided colleges a great deal of positive information they can brag about in admissions and alumni publications. However, the one area where alumni literally excoriate the college is the college's lack of helping them build career networks, and provide the knowledge and skills they need to lead successful careers.

This report has been sharing the same data on the same issues to colleges for over a decade. Survey after survey is showing alumni and graduates provide poor marks to colleges. And yet, the administration still ignores the facts and the tragedies imposed upon a generation who are being blocked before they even start their job search.

See for yourself. Here is a chart that shows the significant dissatisfaction of alumni. This particular report is from the California State University system. To support my point above, note the 2012 summary has not improved significantly and in some cases is worse. A more granular look at the data, which we didn't have room to display, shows recent grads rating the colleges even worse!

If alumni were satisfied with the services provided by their alma mater, the red, green and blue bars would be going to the right of the chart instead of the left.



So what is the cost to students and colleges for ignoring these issues?

This problem is huge beyond proportions!

According to research by the National Association of Colleges and Employers, the average grad will take 7.4 months to get a job. Let's assume the average grad could earn on average \$3,000 per month or about \$17.50 per hours. The delay in getting a job takes on new significance when you multiply the \$3,000 per month times the 7.4 months it takes for a grad to get a job.

That's \$22,200 in lost wages!

Multiply one student's lost wages by the 1,700,000 college graduates each year and we are looking at the graduation Class of 2014 collectively losing out on \$37,740,000,000 in wages! (That's BILLIONS). It's an unprecedented number and something that needs to be fixed.

The facts speak for themselves:

- The Associated Press national survey reported that 53.6 percent of college grads 25 years old and younger are under employed or unemployed
- The Federal Reserve Board of New York reported that 41 percent of recent grads are underemployed

According to a study by Fidelity, the average grad is now graduating with \$35,000x in debt, facing these enormous challenges. New research is showing that this generation of students will earn less over their lifetimes, and yet carry a financial burden that will subject them to emotional and financial pressures no previous generation has been asked to endure.

And yet, despite these facts and research, college and university administrators are doing little to nothing to fix the problem. In fact, they are making management decisions that are making the problem worse.

According to a study last year by the National Association of Colleges and Employers, the average career center budget was slashed 15%, requiring career center professionals to cut services and staff at a time they should be providing more. The University of Washington, as an example, was forced to discontinue a decades old "Career Discovery Week" because the career center and alumni budget was slashed. The career center took a 40 percent cut alone. Susan Terry, director of the career center, said "This is a program that people work on for nine months out of the twelve. It's very time and resource intensive." With the budget cuts and loss of 3 employees, it became impossible to support this much-needed career activity for students.

The need is great!

According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers surveys, the average career center has one career counselor to 1,645 students. Larger schools are seeing one career counselor to 5,876 students. The US News and World Reports documented that the average private college has 1 faculty person to every 14.8 students. It's clear to see that your student athletes are not going to get the career coaching and counseling they need to launch their careers.

The NCAA has a short window of opportunity to take a leadership position

- What could the NCAA do to help student athletes not lose \$22,200 in salary when they graduate?
- More importantly what can the NCAA do to help the 1,700,000 grads each year not lose out on the \$37,740,000,000 billion in lost wages?!

- What can the NCAA do to help career centers reinforce the importance of career ownership on their campus?

Stay with me a few more minutes and we'll look at exciting "game changer" opportunities the NCAA can seize before others recognize the need.

Yogi Berra once said:

"It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and I've had several of them myself."

The NCAA has had many "once in a lifetime opportunities" since its founding in 1906, but the opportunity to help colleges get back to their roots and better serve their customers by making sure they can get a job when they graduate represents the most significant opportunity in its history.

A good friend of mine once asked me, "What's the greatest gift you can give someone?" I thought about it and threw out three or four responses of which he replied quickly discounted and when I finally gave up, he responded,

"A job"

He said, the greatest gift you can give someone is a job. "With a job," he went on, "They can put a roof over their head, educate themselves, care for the needs of their family and prepare for retirement. A job provides lasting effects for generations and can affect the lives of their children and their children's children."

I think about that statement every day of my life and it's one of the principal things that drives me. When you think about it, the NCAA represents athletes who go above and beyond the call of duty. Unlike traditional students, they invest up to 30 or 40 hours a week in practice, meeting and games. They have the makings of incredible employees. All they need is a game plan and the job search skills that will help them make the first interview cut on their way to start their professional career.

The NCAA has the opportunity to shift public and media attention to the positive things the NCAA is doing to help student athletes and students in general gain the knowledge and skills they will need in their first professional job search and for the 11-14 job searches they will conduct by the time they are 38 years old.

How?

If you are really interested, then slip past the summary on the next page and see how TalentMarks can provide cost effective and effortless solutions that can be immediately implemented.



If you want to go fast – go alone.

If you want to go far, go with others!

Melinda Gates

Summary

All problems have a solution.

It just takes someone, or an organization to offer the leadership to change what others have accepted as fate!

Rarely though does one organization have the resources, talent, time, passion or reach to solve the complex problems our society faces.

The issues and problems student athletes and the general student population faces cannot be solved by themselves. It's clear that colleges are not stepping up to the plate to even take a quick swing at the problem.

TalentMarks and the NCAA have a unique opportunity to work together to create a focus on their issues and implement strategies and solutions that marshal alumni, administrators, parents, legislatures, employers to provide the safety nets and resources to help a generation of students launch successful careers. You can leverage our experience, services and reach to build a memorable public relations campaign reinforcing the incredibly positive impact the NCAA has on students' lives and their careers.

Let's work together to give student athletes a "game plan" that will lead them to a life time of career victories!



7 Ways To Increase Student Athlete Employability

TalentMarks has worked with over 1,000 career centers by delivering career curriculum and webinars featuring the nation's top career authors and experts. Our programs have helped shape the careers of 250,000 students.

We learned two important things from career professionals:

1. The biggest challenge they faced was getting students to invest time in their careers.
2. They had little to no money to support what they needed to do.

And that just about sums up the state of higher education career services. Management has hand cuffed them with limited resources, directions and staff so they can't do much more than the career center did back in the "Leave it To Beaver" days.

Career center professionals seemed to be resigned to the fact that there was no way to improve things, their mission seems to be simply to trudge on and serve those that ask.

This university policy is ruining lives and subjugating graduates to a future with limited prospects because they are shackled with the enormous student debt load accumulated.

My experience lead me to write the book, *The Unemployed Grad, And What Parents Can Do About It*. I quickly realized that parents assume the college has their back on the career training issue, when in fact they don't. I wrote the book to educate parents about the risks their student will face, if they don't take ownership of their career.

This was my attempt to solve the first problem!

Next, I decided to tackle the lack of administrative support for careers. So I started a blog called Career Center Strategy. That led to a book, *Change It! Create a Career Centered College Culture*. The book is designed to give career professionals a voice and backbone to go to management to build a strong case on why the administration needs to focus on careers.

The third step in our strategy was to develop technology that would use students love, infatuation and acceptance of social media, smart phones and the emerging strategies to use online community concepts including Gamification, points, leaderboards, badges and social media to engage and involve them in their careers.

Scalable technology that encourages the adoption of career planning

What drives us today is the knowledge that students are not given a fair chance at breaking into their first professional job.

The current strategy provided by career centers is not only NOT scalable, but it's inaccessible to the busy lives of student athletes.

The following technologies are designed to build interest in and deliver career training to student athletes, while at the same time provide analytics and reports to management!

1. CareerParent Community
2. CareerTracks
3. CareerCommunity™
4. CareerWebinars

Each of these proven programs could be adapted to provide the NCAA a highly effective strategy to provide student athletes the support and attention they need to explore career options, build a professional network, and learn the job search techniques they need to compete in today's uncertain employment market.

We have 7 ways you could use careers as a powerful public relations strategy to build enhance your brand around being a "career maker!"

1. Distribute copies of the book, *The Unemployed Grad, And What Parents Can Do About It* to parents



2. Adopt a CareerParent Online Community for the parents of student athletes
3. Give student athletes access to CareerTracks so they can build career plans
4. Provide student athletes and alumni athletes a CareerCommunity™ and CareerWebinars to help them build their career strategies
5. Sponsor a CareerWeek program
6. Sponsor a conference for career counselors supporting the needs of career athletes
7. Distribute copies of the book, Change It! Create a Career Centered College Culture to career center professionals

1) The Unemployed Grad and What Parents Can Do About It

You can take this book, put the NCAA logo on the cover and include an introductory letter from Mark Emmert welcoming parents and building on the foundation that sports is building character but that the NCAA wants to make sure they have a career game plan to compete in an uncertain job market.

2) CareerParents Online Community

Our CareerParents Online Community is a webinar/discussion community for parents of college students that will get them to encourage their son or daughter take ownership of their career. This would be branded to the NCAA and parents would be invited to watch presentation by top experts. Click to see an example.

3) CareerTracks

CareerTracks is a career development community and eLearning platform that leverages Gamification, points, leaderboards, badges and social media that makes learning the skills students will need in their first professional job search fun and social! Student athletes will have the option of participating in effortless daily career workouts that help them modify their behavior and take ownership of their career. By giving this to student athletes, you will not only ensure they have the skills for their first professional job search, but also the “soft skills” business leaders say they lack. Click to see an example.

4) CareerCommunity™ and CareerWebinars

The CareerCommunity™ and CareerWebinar series is an online career community that will bring the nation’s top career authors and experts that will give your students and alumni access to the latest job search skills. Adopting this program will show student athletes the NCAA commitment to a lifetime of support of their career.

5) Student & Grad Career Week

You also have an opportunity to reach beyond the college community and athletes to join other organizations who are passionately promoting career exploration, planning and management.

TalentMarks is expanding our *12 Student & Grad Career Marathon* featuring the top career authors and experts in the nation to a weeklong event featuring the nation’s top career expert.

This program could include NCAA's branding and serve as a reminder to the public at large of your long-term focus and commitment to student athletes' success. Click for more info.

6) Conference for Career Counselors on how to support student athletes

To further improve the employability and job readiness of your student athletes, we are recommending you sponsor a series of conferences designed to give college career counselors the sensitivity, understanding and focus on helping your student athletes get jobs. This location-based conference would bring in top "celebrity" athletes and noted speakers to build enthusiasm and recognition of the benefits of hiring student athletes who have demonstrated teamwork, commitment and passion.

7) Change It! Create a Career Centered College Culture

To gain support and kick off a program that recognizes the needs of student athletes, consider giving a copy of the book, *Change It! Create a Career Centered College Culture* to career counselors. We can include the NCAA logo on the book, including an opening letter from Mark Emmert, and distribute this to career center counselors and directors.

You have a number of tools and services to add to your game plan to shift discussions on campus to what the college could be doing to help all grads succeed, but to also immediately give student athletes the information they need to land their first professional jobs.

Each of these programs will:

- Provide a steady stream of positive public relations stories reinforcing to the media, nonprofits, legislatures, college administrators, coaches, athletes, their parents and the public at large of the NCAA's ongoing commitment to help all athletes succeed in their careers.
- Encourage employers to take a second look at the character, commitment and passion that seasoned athletes will bring to their firm.
- Give athletes who are not going to into professional sports, the knowledge, skills and resources they need to create a successful career plan.

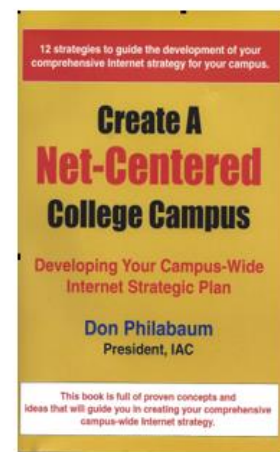
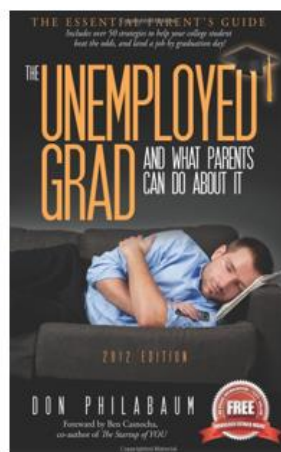
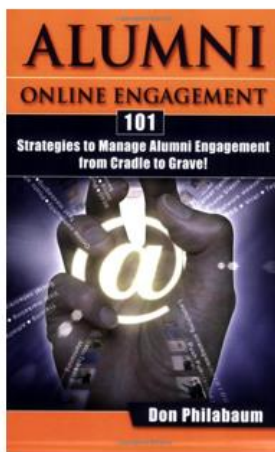
We're pretty excited about the opportunities to help students launch successful careers, however we can't do it alone. We need a partner, a change agent partner who is no longer willing to accept things as they are.

Will that be you?

About TalentMarks

TalentMarks provides clients innovative “in the cloud” career management tools and services. We’ve provided similar programs to over 1,000 career centers, 150 alumni associations and influenced the careers of over 250,000 students.

Don Philabaum has written numerous books including, *The Unemployed Grad, And What Parents Can Do About It, Change It, Create a Career Centered College Culture* and dozens of reports and white papers including *Engaging Grads with Career Programming*.



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