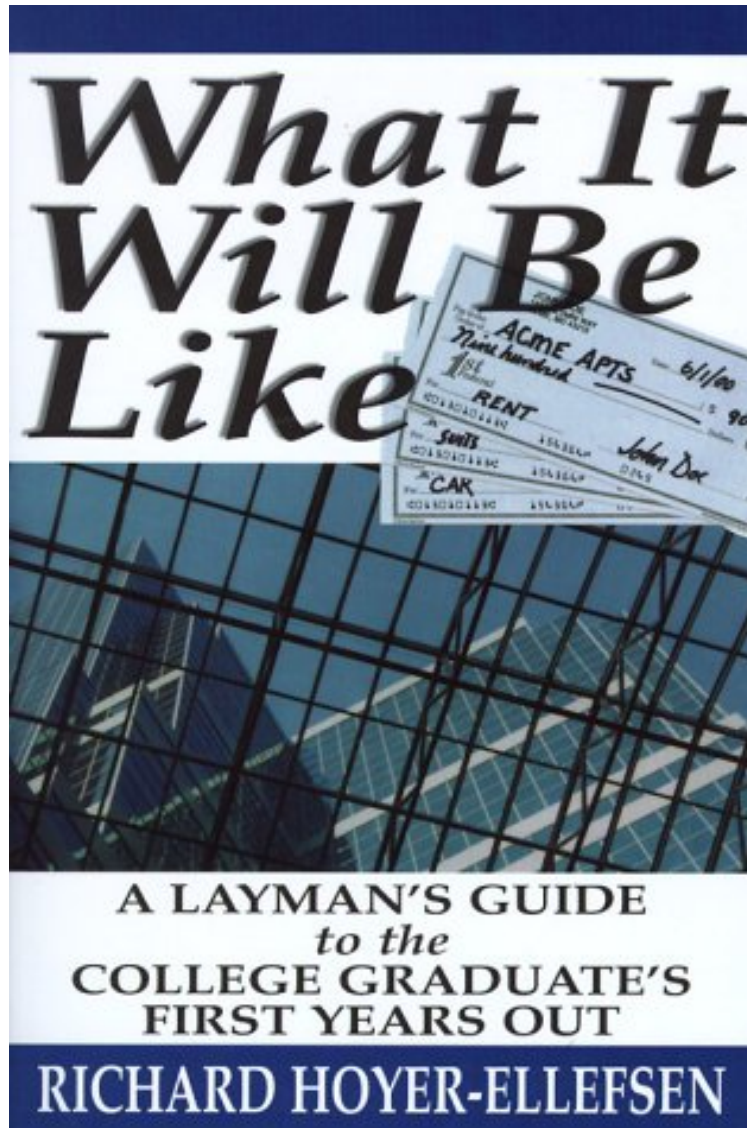


# What It Will Be Like: A Layman's Guide To The College Graduate's First Years Out

*Richard Hoyer-Ellefsen, Careers*  
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**Richard Hoyer-Ellefsen, Careers : What It Will Be Like: A Layman's Guide To The College Graduate's First Years Out** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised What It Will Be Like: A Layman's Guide To The College Graduate's First Years Out:

6 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Excellent guide for college graduatesBy Bonni TheriaultThis book is a fantastic and humorous guide for anyone who is about to enter the workforce or has been there for a while. I wish it

was around when I was graduating from college.

From guides on successful interviewing, choosing the right career and writing effective resumes, college seniors and recent graduates have a variety of useful resources to choose from when it comes to finding a good job. But what happens next? What aspects of young professionals' futures should excite them and which should be cause for concern? Most career resources don't offer much insight into working life itself. *What It Will Be Like* was written to fill this gap in college seniors' career resources. By drawing on real-world anecdotes, sociological research and the author's experience recruiting college seniors, *What It Will Be Like* is able to offer a career perspective tomorrow's professionals won't find anywhere else. *What It Will Be Like* is a captivating, plain English account of working life from the best possible authority on the subject: a graduate who has already torn a few sails navigating the daunting waters the reader is about to tread.

About the Author Richard Hoyer-Ellefsen graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Massachusetts in 1995. He completed his undergraduate studies in economics as a visiting undergraduate student at Harvard University. During his career as a management consultant specializing in mergers acquisitions, Hoyer-Ellefsen has recruited college seniors to his employers and volunteered as a career advisor during his personal time. Hoyer-Ellefsen lives in Annapolis, Maryland, where he and his wife spend most of their free time sailing the Chesapeake Bay. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. The most important thing you can do to build a happy working life doesn't have anything to do with getting a good job, making a lot of money, or even joining the right company. It has to do with the mindset you bring to bear on every one of the critical decisions you will have to make moving forward. Making a mistake here will tremendously increase the likelihood of your making bad choices at critical times, while getting this facet of your mindset right will dramatically increase the odds of making good decisions. Where I have seen people do the dumbest things in either their career or personal lives it has nearly always revolved around this issue. If there's only one thing I want you to take away from this book, I would want it to be the following: Make every effort within your power to drive out a tendency to make decisions and derive your self-image from the perspective of your status or prestige relative to others. An instinct to compete for status is one that is inseparable from human nature, and is one that is therefore virtually impossible to completely drive from our personalities. In that context, note the wording of the admonition above: make every effort within your power. You won't ever completely eliminate a desire to "outperform" or "out-achieve" those around you. But stomp it out of your personality to the greatest degree possible. Here is why this simple rule becomes absolutely critical when you become an "adult" and enter "the real world:" the dimensions along which we measure our status relative to others once we leave school can have much more significant impacts on our happiness than the dimensions along which we measured our status in school. Life gets a whole lot more complicated in the real world. In high school and college, however strong our status instincts were, the measures of our status were fairly simple: we worried about getting into a good college, making good grades (for those particularly inclined to care), being successful at sports, associating with the right crowd, and dating the right people. You will notice, if you think about it, that these can be thought of as "micro" measures of status. They did not ordinarily force us to weigh major tradeoffs in the structure of our lives. Straining to attain popularity, for example, didn't usually force us to make complicated and painful decisions about the importance of our families in our lives. Trying out for varsity football did not involve a decision on whether to leave all of our friends and family to move to a team in Chicago. Choosing a college was at some level an exception to this dynamic, since we did have to make a decision about whether we attended the same school as some of our friends, how much of a financial burden we and our parents took on, and how far away from "home" we lived. But this decision involved an inevitable choice about how to make the transition from one phase of life to the next, not about whether we made that transition at all. High school was definitely going to end, and there might have been painful dimensions to that fact, but by definition this phase of our life was not intended to last forever. And regardless of which college we chose, the tradeoffs were likely to be fairly small. Only a small percentage of our friends were likely to go to any one school, and so one decision likely resembled another as to its impact on our futures. And once we got to college, our biggest decisions reverted back to the simplicity we knew in high school: the decisions there were fixed at the micro level for another four years. In pursuing more status, for example by attempting to get into a prestigious sorority, we didn't have to weigh whether this goal was worth a major change for our families. Nor did earning better grades or trying out for the lacrosse team involve such significant decisions. Once we're out in the real world, though, all of these dynamics change. Since they involve decisions like career/family time tradeoffs, material wealth, marital status and parenthood, post-college gauges of status impact our lives at a level that can be thought of as "macro" rather than "micro." They involve much more complex decisions having significant implications not only for our lives, but for those around us. Compare the post-collegiate status measure of career prestige to its collegiate equivalent, earning good grades, for example. As both a student and a working professional there has always been the incentive to seek status through our vocational activities. While in college this drive primarily forced us into conflicts between work and play, in the working world the tradeoffs become much more significant. Certain vocations such as medicine, law and management-track business

professions such as consulting and investment banking represent the highest-ranking fields. Pursuing such vocations involves sacrifices we didn't face in college; for example, seeking more career status may involve a decision not only about our use of time, but about where we live. A tantalizing job offer may force us weigh the decision of whether to move to an area we may not otherwise be inclined to. We may have to decide whether a career in a prestigious management-track field is worth the price we fear our children might pay in lost family time. A promotion may be offered that requires a move to another city, forcing us to consider whether we are willing to give up literally everything we've built outside of work in pursuit of our career progression.