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Alumni Unscripted: Post-Architectural Leadership

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Have you ever walked into the sales office for a new housing development that is under construction? You’re probably there for the opportunity to be the first in and possibly cash in—in the long term.

Picture this …

You are standing in a construction trailer looking outside at mountains of dirt, yet somehow you have an absolute vision of this neighborhood.

How is that possible when all you’re looking at is dirt?

The architectural process—that’s how.

You’ve studied their architectural renderings (drawings). These images helped paint a picture of what life will look (and possibly feel like) in this place. As a matter of fact, these renderings are so meticulously done they have cars and people in them.

Here’s the trick …

The architect creates this “vision” at the beginning of the process. She partners with the developer, and together, they paint a vivid picture of their project and use it as a tool to align the staff, vendors, sales team and community.

Once you know what the end-game looks like, then, you can work backwards. There is no point getting estimates for a shingled roof when the design calls for metal. Sadly, I see folks obtaining estimates for a ton of stuff they don’t need. Why? Because they don’t know any better. And because they don’t have a clear goal-driven direction.

**Being “busy” ≠ productive.**

Think of your early career and beyond through the eyes of an architect. Create the rendering first—outline what you want your life to look and feel like in 10 years. Think about your third job after graduation—what do you envision?
Now ... design your work experience to give you the relationships, knowledge, experience, and skills to help you fulfill this vision. Be mindful and intentional about where you spend your time—treat time as your most valuable resource (because it is). Volunteer for projects that will help you build skills and join organizations that will enable your success.

Just remember this ... being busy is nothing more than pushing papers and living life on a hamster wheel. What’s your intention? Be productive and intentional ... which starts with your vision. Then build.

Fight on,

Ryan

Ryan Blanck is the founder and chief executive officer of Deviate, a leadership company. Deviate specializes in performance coaching and partners with influential leaders and brands to help them change the way they lead and live. Deviate has helped organizations rebound significantly from turmoil, saved rock bands from breaking up, helped grow the careers of today’s cultural icons and executives, advised a foreign presidential campaign and helped startups scale up. The common denominator of their work is always the same: develop healthy leaders worth following and build cultures people genuinely want to join. Blanck is known for bringing the best out in people and has helped Deviate’s clients ascend to the top of their profession without losing themselves in the process. He graduated from WMU in 2002 with a major in sales and business marketing.