

Introduction

While working on homework, my mind often drifts into daydreams. One moment, I am standing, soaked in freezing water after repairing a broken pipe on a ship. Next, I am submerged in water to practice a water rescue. Then, I am confronting a wall of fire, guiding a fire hose to extinguish its flames. As these memories flash through my mind, I realize that, never once, has the situation been reversed: I have never found myself in a stressful or exciting moment wishing I were back at a desk. I have raced through the harbor of San Diego and sped down an airport tarmac—and in those moments, I knew I was exactly where I was meant to be. These experiences have not only fueled my passion for action but have also prompted me to define my mission, vision, values, and goals in life.

Mission

My mission is to serve others. I believe that the greatest form of leadership is one rooted in service. A leader cannot be truly effective if he merely commands others without demonstrating a willingness to humble himself and do the toughest work. As I continue to learn through jobs, school, and relationships, I realize that focusing on myself in any situation only leads to worse outcomes. The best form of leadership is self-sacrificial and unconditional servanthood, and it has been my mission to live this way for some time now.

Vision

As I continuously pursue a life of service, I imagine where it might take me in ten years. I return home after a rewarding training day with my unit: Navy EOD Mobile Unit ONE here in San Diego. I love my job, despite its long hours and constant challenges. I have to park my 1972 El Camino in the driveway, as the garage has been converted into a gym. Inside, the smell of

steaks my wife has prepared for dinner fills the air. She is a full-time stay-at-home mom and a part-time CrossFit coach, obsessed with healthy eating and living. She is the main reason I am able to endure the mandatory long days and job stress. Without her, I would be nothing. We sit down to eat with our amazing kids and talk about our days. As I go to bed later that night, preparing to wake up early the next day to get a good workout in and head into work, I thank God for my amazing life and pray that I may continue another day, though content if I must say goodbye to everything tomorrow. I am continuously comforted by the fact that if something were to happen to me in my high-risk job, my brothers at work, the community at our local CrossFit gym, and the family at our church would care for my family in my absence.

Values

From my vision and my trajectory, the things I value the most are clear. First, I value service. The materialization of this value occurred one day when I was coming to shore after kayaking with my girlfriend and I had the privilege of jumping into the cold water to drag the kayak to shore to keep her dry. This still gives me genuine joy. Secondly, I value commitment. Dedication to a person, a job, and a community is how true love is expressed. Holding this value in high regard, I have never quit a job I've had. I only move on to a new job when it is absolutely necessary. Finally, similar to commitment, I value consistency. I know that to be a strong employee, demonstrating consistent hard work, not missing work, and always showing up early is what employers need from their employees. These are the words that my previous director wrote about me when he recommended me for a student worker appreciation award.

Goals

As I reflect on my mission and the way my values align with it, I am able to set a few goals to achieve my vision. First, I will be completely financially independent from any external familial support by September 2025. This will motivate me to find a job, even if it is only a temporary one. I value movement over stagnation in my professional life. Second, I will obtain a job in my desired career field by the end of 2027. Whether this job aligns with my previous vision directly or is somewhat different, it will be a service-centered position that can sustain me for a 20-year or more career. Finally, I will obtain my seminary degree by the year 2040. This will give me over 10 years to establish myself in an organization where I can comfortably balance my career and personal desires. These goals are tangible steps to propel me toward my broader, less measurable aspirations, such as starting a family, setting up an inheritance for my children, and remaining committed to the woman I will marry for the rest of our lives.

Conclusion

Each step I take is intentional, aimed at turning my daydreams into reality. I see the ultimate prize I wish to obtain: a physically demanding career that allows me to support a family and feel as though I never have to work a day in my life. I want to use the strengths I have accumulated over my short life to be an asset to a company that will feel as satisfied to have me as an employee as I will feel to have them as an employer. Every time I slip into these daydreams, I snap myself out of them and remind myself that they will only become a reality if I focus on the tasks at hand and commit fully to the preparation I know I must undertake.