

A stack of several books is positioned on the right side of the cover. The books are of various colors and thicknesses, with some showing their pages and spines. The stack is slightly out of focus, creating a sense of depth.

A STUDENT'S
GUIDE TO
GREATER SUCCESS
IN SCHOOL (AND LIFE)

OWN

Your

EDUCATION

MEGAN STONE

**OWN YOUR
EDUCATION!**

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OWN YOUR EDUCATION!

**A Student's Guide to Greater
Success in School (and Life)**

Megan Stone

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*To “Team Stone”—Rick, Lauren, and Nathan:
Without you, none of this would have been possible.
Love you all!*

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About the Author

Megan Stone, M.Ed., Founder and President of Stone Foundations of Learning, Inc. (www.stonefoundations.net), has worked with students and faculty across the country for more than 17 years.

Her company's mission is to provide the organizational strategies and study skills students need to excel in academics and throughout life. Her program's foundations are self-advocacy, responsibility, and ownership.

Along with coaching students and families, she consults with school districts, colleges, and universities to better equip faculty to work with students who lack the tools to "do the job" of being a student and to build educational ownership.

Megan has also created and written a college curriculum for students and faculty called the Ownership Series (www.pearsonhighered.com/educator/series/Ownership-Series/13402.page). The series helps to reinforce the concept of student ownership so students are more likely to take responsibility for their success and failures in school and life.

Before launching her company, Megan taught science in the highly ranked Edina and Eden Prairie Public Schools. She holds a B.S. in human biology and an M.S. in life science education from the University of Minnesota.

Megan enjoys spending time at her cabin, being outside, and helping others. She has been married to her husband, Rick, for 19 years. They have two children.

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Introduction

What do you want to be when you grow up? The future “you” will be the product of what you do now and how you go about doing it. So what kind of person do you want to be?

The sunny June day was all about me...my graduation party. The party tent was decorated in my school colors of green, white, and yellow and with banners reading “Congratulations, Emma,” certificates, letters, and every first-day-of-school photo for all the guests to see. Even Grandma Sheila from Dallas made the trip. I thought it was my day to relax, enjoy my success, eat my favorite Mexican food, and hang with my friends. Boy, was I wrong.

“What are you going to major in?”

“Do you have a job for the summer?”

“What internships do you have planned for the future?”

“Where will you be studying abroad?”

“What is your minor? Will you double major?”

“Have you met your roommate yet?”

“How are you going to pay for all your expenses at school? Do you have a job on campus?”

I never imagined that I would be bombarded with life questions and need to have answers and a plan for the rest of my life—especially at my perfect grad party!

Emma is a typical high school graduate, with her whole life in front of her and many decisions to be made. If you've picked up this book, you are probably in the same boat.

Astronaut? Princess? Pro Athlete?

What do you want to be when you grow up? Do you remember being asked this question as a kid? You may have fantasized about becoming the next Wayne Gretzky, Cinderella, a firefighter, or a zoo keeper. Even older adults may jokingly remark, "I don't know what I want to be when I grow up." This question is always a great conversation starter, but you also need to consider what your occupation is right now. Do you have a job? What are the everyday tasks you have in or outside of school?

List your current occupations and/or responsibilities:

Did you list being a student as one of your jobs? If not, take a look at how you view your school experience. Being a student is a full-time job. If you did list student as an occupation, are you taking control of this experience or relying on others to get you through your courses?

Either way, you've made a great choice in reading this book! Together we will discuss the idea of owning your experience and taking control of your life. You will become more confident in and outside school. I promise.

What Is Your Job?

You have likely listed many other responsibilities aside from school work. Being responsible for chores at home, a part-time job, volunteer work, sporting activities, the arts, and other chosen obligations take commitment and hard work. School is just the same. The payoff is worth it, no matter what you choose to do. Your "paycheck" will be knowledge,

skills, and abilities that you will need in order to succeed now and in the future. And who doesn't want that?

Think of a basketball player who shoots free-throws until the sun goes down. An oboe player who practices 45 minutes a day instead of the required 30 minutes. A school play understudy who practices lines with her little brother—just in case. These types of extra effort earn a spot on the varsity team, first chair in the concert band, and a leading role in the play. As with any other activity, the more effort you put into the job of being a student, the greater the opportunities will be in the future.

In all these situations, knowing the expectations and going above and beyond will build success. Whether in education, work, or any other endeavor, opportunities and your desire to get them will drive your success. You need to know the requirements, receive training, practice, ask questions, get feedback, and then take responsibility to perform independently.

Sam's Story

“In my first job, as a restaurant host, I went through a short training period, where my boss explained his expectations of me and what I was to accomplish during each shift. I learned to greet customers, take incoming calls, and manage reservations. I understood the general rules for the restaurant. I then practiced these skills with a more experienced hostess, asked questions, and listened to her feedback. Finally, I worked by myself. When I had a question, I took the initiative to find someone to ask. I took responsibility. I *owned* my job performance.”

Sam's experience is surprisingly similar to that of a student for a number of reasons. As a student, you need to be responsible for:

- Reading the syllabus and becoming familiar with the instructor's expectations during the first few sessions of class
- Getting “trained” in the course materials, class requirements, and deadlines from your instructors' lectures
- Asking questions and obtaining feedback
- Completing homework, studying, and participating in classroom activities in order to practice skills