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~ OVERVIEW ~  
 THE KEYS TO THE KINGDOM

Let's start with the title of this book – How to Graduate from College the Easy Way ... and Other Popular Fairy Tales. What do we mean “*other popular fairy tales*?” Basically, we are talking about the fact that a lot of books you see for first year college students want to make it seem like all you have to do is learn some simple tricks and you'll breeze through to that degree. And, well, there ARE some simple tricks that will make your academic life easier. But here's the thing. Tricks aren't the answer. They just aren't enough to carry you through to the end. College is an incredible time of change and growth and that's hard stuff. Students need to have strength, motivation, support, goals and the knowledge of how to make all these things work together. Then, they

need to practice these skills until they are second nature. That's why we've written this book and created the companion website, Campus ToolKit.

Campus ToolKit is your own personal kit full of tools to help you succeed in college (so it's *not* just a clever name.) This book is so packed full of information that we had to put some of it online. For example, there are ten chapters on improving your study skills. Amazing. But the most amazing part of this book is **you**. Because this book is based on you, personally.

Now, how can we do that? It's a book, after all. So how can we know about you, personally? Well, this brings us back to that tool kit and the tools contained therein. Since there is only one **you** in this world, our job is to help you learn all about who you are, what makes you tick, and how you can make the most of your unique set of skills and talents.

The idea behind this book came when we were writing our online knowledge modules for students (more on those later). We realized that there wasn't just *one solution* for success in college because, hey! We're all different. There isn't just *one* solution to procrastination, or time management, or more effective studying, or meeting new people. What works for your older brother or your next-door neighbor might not work for you at all. Likewise, if you're a super-successful student, you could explain your methods until you're blue in the face to your friends and it doesn't mean it will work for them. Because people are different.

This isn't just a book about study methods, either, because college isn't just about studying! Don't get us wrong; studying and getting the best grades possible is job number one in college. Good grades and staying on top of studies is your foundation in college. Without that strong foundation, everything else tends to go downhill in a hurry, including your social life. However, whether you're attending straight from high school or are a returning student of any age, you'll probably make interesting new friends in college. College is an opportunity to meet other people and learn about yourself in the process.

Money is another biggie. For most people, having enough money in college is a perpetual struggle. If you're a returning student, you might have had to cut back on hours at work to accommodate your new course schedule. If you're a

student in your first year or so out of high school, you'll most likely be as broke as can be—it's just the way things are. If you're fortunate enough to be... well, *not* broke during college, this system will give you valuable information about how to make your money go further, and how to start growing a financial empire now. At the very least you will gain an insightful understanding of the plight of those around you. It isn't personal. They really *can't afford* to go to the movies Saturday night!

So what is Campus ToolKit? Well, as soon as we realized that people were different, and that one solution wasn't going to work for everybody, we began the search for tools that would help you understand exactly who you are, and what your distinct personality type is. We knew that when we found the right ones, we could give you a tool kit without limits. We want to give you a mirror into your own mind, and helpful suggestions to get through college in the easiest way possible... *your way!*

### **So what's in this thing?**

Campus ToolKit is a personalized system made of two components: this book, and online information and tools. The book contains practical information for college success, and leads you through all of the online tools. Your online space is where you will discover information about yourself by taking special assessments and quizzes. Your Campus ToolKit online system is also full of practical features to help you every day in college.

Everything in Campus Toolkit is designed to help you cope, and come out ahead in college. Upon entering the online system with the enrollment key found at the back of this book, you'll see a very simple page with shortcuts to tools, assessments, knowledge modules and some other helpful tools. The rest of this overview chapter gives you a quick tour of everything that is contained in your new Campus ToolKit system.

### **Knowledge Modules (Start here.)**

We've already mentioned our online knowledge modules – and these are a great place to start if there's something you need to know. These aren't dry, boring, textbook-type blocks of information, but real life help with the challenges that college students face.

Things like:

- ~ Comprehensive test-taking help and tips
- ~ Secrets to studying smart and saving time
- ~ Concentration busters and how to avoid them
- ~ Shortcuts to better memorization and information retention
- ~ Solid techniques for avoiding procrastination
- ~ Overcoming Anxiety
- ~ Goal setting for students
- ~ Help with time management
- ~ Money management  
(Yes, even for the extremely financially challenged)...

... and a lot more.

### **Campus ToolKit System Orientation**

First up under Knowledge Modules is the system orientation. This takes you on a tour of Campus ToolKit and explains how the whole thing works. Give it a try now if you want to, or, read on.

### **Assessments**

Assessments are the heart of Campus ToolKit. This is how we are able to base our advice on your individual personality type. Even though we have varying shades of personality traits, we all have a base personality type, and natural tendencies. However, it can sometimes be difficult to figure out what type you are!

Here are some examples:

Brianna loves to stay up talking animatedly until all hours of the night with her friends, but when it comes to a classroom situation, she is usually quiet and reserved. She loves spending time with her family and her existing friends, but doesn't really find it so easy to make new friends.

At home, John is all business. He has studying to do, chores to complete, and doesn't have a lot of time (or the interest) to sit around

chatting with his family. However, at school he gets to express himself. He loves to talk with friends, frequently dominates classroom discussion, and is considered to be one of the funniest guys around.

Although these are opposite behaviors, both Brianna and John exhibit them at different times. So if you exhibit contrasting behavior patterns or personality styles, which is the “true” you? The way to find out for sure is to do our online assessments. When you have completed them, you’ll understand a lot more about who you really are.

Our assessments aren’t *all* about personality. Here is a quick list of our assessments, and what they do. We have placed them in an order in which they make sense to complete, but feel free to take them in any order. You may find it helpful to complete them before you read chapter three (which is where we’ll begin referring to your personal traits) but again, this book is designed so that you can dip in and out of any chapter that may be grabbing your interest at the time.

### **Locus of Control assessment**

This chapter is all about how you see things. You, personally. By taking the short Locus of Control quiz, you’ll get an idea of where you place YOU in the whole scheme of your life. Do you make things happen? Or do things seem to happen to you? This is important information to know. How you view your ability to control your own destiny plays a vital role in your success in college. It is also critical in determining your overall level of happiness in life!

### **Sensory Learning Styles assessment**

This is an assessment to complete as soon as you can, because it gives very specific insight to your learning style. Your learning style is how you learn most effectively, and it is key to your success in college. Are you a visual learner? Or do you learn by hearing something? Maybe you’re a tactile or kinesthetic learner, who learns best by doing or by immersing yourself in a task.

There is no time to lose academically, so the sooner you understand what your learning style is, the sooner you’ll discover your own secrets to better learning skills and more effective studying.

Throughout this book and our online Knowledge Modules you'll see specific tips for your learning style. For example,

### **Concentration for Auditory Learners**

Auditory learners are very well suited to group discussions and study groups. If you find you are having a hard time concentrating in your usual study environment, try organizing study groups, so that you have more chances to “hear” information. You may actually have an easier time studying with others rather than isolating yourself in a quiet environment.

When your mind starts to wander, try speaking important points aloud, recording them, and playing them back.

In order to get the most out of this personalized information, it is probably a good idea to take each assessment before you read the chapter that discusses it.

### **Study Skills assessment**

This assessment gets right to the heart of where you're excelling when it comes to general study skills, and where you could improve. This may seem obvious, but most often we're not even aware of our challenges. This assessment will make you re-think where you study, how you study, and your whole attitude about college.

We've taken the assessment a step further, and added information about how you can work with your own personality type to improve your study skills.

This assessment covers everything from how your brain actually processes information to how to get the right information from your instructors, including what is going to be on their tests!

### **Communication (DISC) assessment**

Now we're talking. This assessment is about your behaviors and communication style. Once you take the short assessment and discover what your own behaviors are, you can learn how to connect better with other people. How can you communicate most effectively with those around you, especially if they're not the same type as you are? This assessment is the first step toward understanding your own personality and behaviors and how to get the best

out of others. You'll *really* be on fire when you combine it with the PLSI, which we'll talk about next!

### **Personality (PLSI) assessment**

This assessment gives you a more in-depth look at your personality. Whereas DISC and communication are about behaviors, personality is about inherent traits that we all have. Once you can identify your own personality type, you can start to spot tendencies in those around you – like your parents, roommates, instructors and friends. This is a very enlightening tool. Many people don't start to get a natural feel for this information until mid-life. It's a major shortcut to understanding how to get along with more people with a lot less strife.

### **Job Interest Profiler assessment**

After answering some questions, this assessment will give you an idea of what your vocational interests are. If you aren't quite sure what you want to do for a career, this is where you can narrow down your ideas and get some direction. Not only does this assessment give you accurate feedback on what you'd be into, it also gives you examples and information on over 900 occupations, and shows those that fit you best.

This means you can explore these careers and choose a major that will work for you in the long run (or learn more about the one you have chosen). You can even save profiles of the careers you're considering.

### **Work Importance assessment**

Working hand-in-hand with the Job Interest Profiler, the work importance exploration tool helps you figure out what is important to you in a job. Do you like to get group recognition of your efforts, or would you rather work alone? Would you rather have a steady job that you didn't need to worry about, or unlimited opportunity for advancement? Is it more important that you get to try out your own ideas at work, or would you rather belong to a finely tuned team?

For every combination of work values, there are jobs to match—and they're all ready and waiting for you to discover in this assessment.

### Financial Awareness assessment

This is the stuff we should all know, but admittedly, a lot of us don't! A lot of financial awareness comes about only when you experience something for the first time, and often the bigger lessons occur only when something goes wrong! And yet, these are issues we all will certainly face in life, including:

- ~ Cars and car payments, and why an expensive car can be the dumbest investment you'll ever make—*especially* in college!
- ~ The scoop on hidden charges you might be paying at your bank
- ~ How credit cards can cost you *way* more than you thought they would
- ~ How to access your money when traveling abroad
- ~ The ins and outs of health insurance
- ~ How over the next 30 years you can painlessly save 12 million dollars
- ~ Why credit companies keep track of your history
- ~ The secret of budgeting and *always* having the money for what's important to **you**

Start with our pre-quiz, which is a fun way to check your financial savvy. If you find you need a little guidance, it's all here in the book and online. After reading up, try the post quiz and see how much more you know!

### The Tools

Once you've finished your assessments, check out our collection of tools. This is where you can really fine-tune your time management, goals, and budgets. We also give you quick ways to communicate with various personality types, including the dynamics of teams and groups. Many of these will mean a lot more to you when you've learned about yourself and others by taking the assessments, and they are online for you to use any time.

### Getting in touch

Because this is a book about **you**, the first person we recommend getting in touch with is, well...*you*. That's why we've designed the set of tools right up at the top of your screen. With a notebook and eFolio, you can use your laptop in class and have assignments always at the ready. We've also given you to-do lists, reminders, and a calendar to help you schedule and organize your whole

life. Not only that, but you can get in touch with the inner you using your own journal and goal-setting section.

### **Life Troubleshooting: When it all goes wrong**

Sometimes you need a little bit more help than journaling will provide. Ever feel like life has run you over, backed up, run over you again and peeled out as a final insult? Next time you feel like that, or even if you are only having a minor problem, head to this chapter. It's at the back, like most troubleshooting manuals. We promise, no *"To start, open book."* here. Only a simple list of what can go wrong, and where to find help.

So, that gives you a pretty thorough run-down on the Campus ToolKit system. We didn't discuss every single feature, but we thought it would be best to let you discover a few things on your own.

#### **Flash Point!**

Finally, as you go through this book, you may notice our little Flash Points! These notations serve to highlight information we think is particularly important to you. When you see them, we would suggest asking yourself why we think the point is so important and what it means to you. One way to do this is to make a journal entry online or even write in the margins of this book. Copy the Flash Point (this will help you remember it) and then just write a few words about its meaning to you individually. Remember – this process is about YOU so please take an active part in making it your own!

