

Career Vision 20/20: Finish Strong!

Hello Wake Techians. This is Career Coach Larry Tucker. I know you've heard it many times by now, but I'll say it again: It's been a crazy year! These challenging times are unprecedented. The COVID-19 virus and the public health crisis has dominated the news for months now, and these last two semesters have been unlike any before. We are coming to the end of the year and if you are like me, you are probably glad to see 2020 come to an end, but you realize you've still got stuff you need to do in order finish this year strong. You still have some things to complete. You might have some projects or assignments that you need to complete, or you might have some crucial final exams to prepare for in the next couple of weeks. And even though this has not been a conventional year. Even though this has been a hectic year. Even though this has been a challenging year. You realize that it's still not over yet, and there is so much more for you to do to end this year strong, to end this year on a positive note. And so, if that is you and you know that this year is not done yet. You know you still have some things that you want to make happen, then this message is especially for you.

This is the time of the year where many people begin to check out. This is the time of year that there's really to be quite honest with you, a whole lot of distractions. And many of those distractions are really pretty good to be honest with you, right? This is the time of the year where you've got the holiday season. We just came off of celebrating Thanksgiving. Now we're going to be coming into Christmas and before you know it we'll be celebrating the new year. But here is the thing that I also know. This is the time of year when productivity goes down. The semester is about to end. This is the time when people are usually planning to either go on vacation, or planning to spend time with family. People start having what I call "a next year mentality!" So I don't know where you're at right now. I don't know if you have one of those next year mentalities.

And so, you might be saying "wait Larry, what's the next year mentality? So let me tell you what that is right quick. The next year mentality is when you are at the place right now, and you're already talking about what you're going to be doing next year. So in other words you're already having conversations with people and you're saying "you know what, next year I'm going to update my resume." "Next year, I'm going to meet with my advisor to make sure I'm on the right track to graduate on time." "Next year, I'm going to do this, and I'm going to do that, and I'm going to make this thing happen." And listen, I am all for planning out your year. I'm all for planning out amazing goals. I'm all for making sure that next year is a phenomenal yea! But I don't know about you, but the last time I checked my calendar, this year is not yet over. And so, I am speaking specifically to that person who realizes and acknowledges the fact that this year is not yet over and you still want to make some positive things happen. And so, what I want you to realize is the majority of the people around you, maybe your friends, your co-workers, your classmates, the people around you, for the majority of those people guess what. For the majority of those people, this is the time of the year when they start checking out. And if you were to follow them on a daily basis, you're going see that their productivity is going down. Most people just seem to have a lack of sense of urgency during this time. They are no longer focused! And I want you to realize that that does

not have to be you. You can still finish strong. You can still squeeze some great things out of this year, but I want you to understand that that's not going to just sort of happen by circumstance. It's not going to just happen by coincidence. It's not just going to happen by wishful thinking. You are going to have to be very intentional about making that happen. And so, I want to break down for you some specific things that you might want to do if you want to finish this year strong, if you want to make sure that you

end this year on a positive note. You need to get focused. And when I say focused, I'm talking about you've got to create some laser focus right now because the people you are around are experiencing distractions. People are not having conversations about their career goals and accomplishing their dreams. It is normally around this time when you start taking your foot off the gas. And let me tell you about that. I am all for looking forward to spending time with family. I'm all for celebrating during this holiday season, and celebrating Christmas. Make no mistake about it, I will be with my family and having a wonderful time, but I want you to understand that there's a difference between being present in the moment and already checking out mentally right now! And having an I will do it next year mentality. But when I say laser focused. I'm talking about putting your blinders on and I need everything else that is simply a distraction, I need you to just simply tune those things out. It is the only way that you are going to finish this year strong, and it is the only way that you are going to produce massive results in a short period of time. You would be absolutely surprised what you can get done in less than a month when you're able to put nothing but complete focus around one single project, one single thing. So, what I want you to do is, I want you to become laser focused. And you will have to be focused while other people around you are not being focused. So the question becomes, what are you going to do now to finish out this year strong? What are you going to do to rebound? What are you going to do, to do everything you can to get the most out of this semester and this year? And so what I believe is going to really help you out is figuring out what is the one thing. What is the one thing that you are going to focus on completing before this semester is over? I just need you to focus on one thing, because amazing things happen when you can get focused, and focused specifically on just one thing. So I want you to think about one thing that you want to make sure that you accomplish and finish out this year strong.

The one thing that you're going to put all of your energy, all of your effort behind. And that one thing that you choose, I want it to be something that you are going to get a high rate of return on your effort and on your energy. So I want you to think about what that one thing is. And so maybe perhaps for you, you've been working on completing an assignment for a course that you're taking. Or, preparing for a final exam, or maybe you were planning to meet with your advisor to make sure you have the classes necessary to graduate next year. Or maybe, you have been contemplating updating your resume and/or LinkedIn profile to be able to launch before the end of the year. I want you to think about what that one thing is. What is the one thing that you are going to stay focused on? What is that one thing that you are not going to allow any distractions to pull you out of the way? And I want you to commit all of your time, all of your effort, all of your energy, and all of your focus to completing that thing. Everyone else will be talking about what they are going to do next year, but you need to have the mindset that as far

as I'm concerned next year is not promised and so I'm going to do whatever I can to increase my energy level, to increase my effectiveness of my activity, to eliminate distractions, so I make sure that I get the absolute highest rate of return on all of my efforts. So you've got to create a sense of urgency. If you are a job seeker, this is an excellent time to update and send out your resume. This is the end of the year. This is the time many businesses are finalizing their budget for the next year. So this is the best time when your competition is asleep for you to send out your resume, so you can be at the top of their minds when hiring managers begin looking for new employees at the beginning of the new year.

The current public health crisis has motivated many Wake Tech Departments come up with creative ways to continue to provide resources to current students, alumni and prospective students. With all of the innovative strategies implemented this year in efforts to provide continual educational services, it's as important as ever to know your college resources that can help you ace those final projects and exams, and keep your career development plans on track. I want to share with you... Three strategies to help you finish this year strong right from home. Strategy #1: Keep in Communication with Your Professors. For many professors, teaching online classes and adjusting to the changes in the semester is a learning curve as well. Your professors want to help you and see you succeed, so it's important to let them know if you need extra help on that tricky math question or clarification on due dates. Our instructors are here to help you learn and understand the material, and if something isn't clear or making sense, never hesitate to reach out and ask them for help. Emailing your Instructor to ask a few questions or clarify class material can go a long way when it comes to studying and preparing for finals. Strategy #2: Take Advantage of College Resources. Our Individualized Learning Center or ILC tutors are available for one-on-one, in-person tutoring Mondays – Tuesdays by appointment only, and online tutoring is available 7-days a week to help students prepare for finals exams from home. Students can get support and expert assistance from Wake Tech Faculty in Math, Science, Writing, Computer Skills, Study Skills and more. To schedule a one-on-one tutoring appointment, go to ILC.Waketech.edu. In addition, Career and Employment Resources services are available through the end of the semester. Students can still chat with a Career Development Coach or a Career Specialist online. Our Virtual Coaching lets you chat with a Career Development Coach or A Career Specialist for questions like Occupational information, Program Certificates and degree, Creating a Resume, Preparing for an Interview, and Job Search Strategies. Career and

Employment Resources services are available through the end of the semester. Go to career.waketech.edu to schedule a Virtual one-on-one appointment. Strategy #3: Use Campus Mental Health Resources. Wake Tech Community College understands that there are many factors that might hinder you from being able to function at your best during this time, such as mental health issues, financial or food insecurities and other circumstances. If you need to talk with someone or want to know what resources are available to you for any situation, please visit wellness.waketech.edu to schedule a confidential counseling session. So, if you want to end this year on a positive note, stay focused, continue to communicate with your instructors, take advantage of Wake Tech's

many campus resources, and reach out to our confidential services if you need to talk. This is Career Coach Larry Tucker wishing you a safe and enjoyable holiday. And remember, the year is not over yet, and there is still some work to be done to make sure this year ends on a positive note. So stay focused and finish strong!