

LifeMapSM



"LifeMap is a navigational tool to help you on your path towards personal and professional success. Our belief is that you can achieve a more rewarding career, a more productive organization and a more enjoyable and abundant life."

June 2010

This Month's Message:

Living With Your New (or not so new) Graduate.

Paths Forward

- Need Career Coaching?
- Tired of boring meetings??

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Living With Your New (or not so new) Graduate.

Part of the original impetus for LifeMap was to be able to address the types of concerns that folks who work in my client organizations quietly or confidentially raise with me "off-line" or in casual conversations that aren't strictly related to work or career. I know something is really afoot when I hear multiple individuals from different companies bring up a similar issue. In the last couple of months I've been asked more than a couple of dozen times if I had any ideas about how to best manage the arrival of so-called boomerang kids moving back home after college. Or as one dad jokingly said to me "You can child-proof your house but they always find a way back in."

There are a number of reasons for this recent upsurge: the economic slowdown, high rents, the tough job market, and high student debt loads. If it seems to you that this trend is increasing - you are right. Collegegrad.com reports that 67% of recent grads moved home in 2006, 73% in 2007, 77% in 2008, and 80% last year. Younger workers who are not recent grads and have been recently laid-off or who are under-employed add to these numbers.

If you are a parent or child in this situation I recommend

that you check out [Mom, Can I Move Back in With You?: A Survival Guide for Parents of Twentysomethings](#), by Gordon and Shaffer (Tarcher/Penguin) which is a thoughtful, optimistic and realistic look at the opportunities and pitfalls of this phenomenon. In the meantime here are some ideas for you to try on that have been shared with me by both boomerang parents and offspring.

Paths Forward

- **Renegotiate the Relationship.** Your child is now an adult. (Not a fully-formed adult perhaps but an adult nonetheless.) This means you need to communicate with him or her more like a peer than someone who needs constant supervision and guidance. Frank, "adult to adult" conversations about money, household responsibilities and how best to smoothly live together will be more productive than "parent to child" edicts which tend to infantilize and or "child to parent" responses which tend to inhibit adult development and independence.

- **Specificity is Your Friend.** The more details you can work out upfront the less wiggle room and opportunity for conflict there will be later on. Is rent or a contribution to grocery, utility or cable bills required? How much and for how long? Is there to be a formal or informal curfew? What about friends (gulp) "staying over"? Working these things out is not as easy as saying "my house - my rules" if you really want this to work out.

- **The Money Thing.** Experts are of a mixed mind on this but I think charging a child rent (even a minimal amount) reinforces the fact that everything has a cost and that this isn't an unlimited, free ride. One father shared with me his exasperation with his daughter (whom he was providing free room and board) going off on a 10 day Jamaican vacation while he and her mother stayed in frozen Boston trudging off to work every day. But these parents set the rules and the daughter was merely living by them. So who was to blame for his exasperation? If those funds are not needed for current household expenses the parent could always start an investment account for the child's eventual house down payment or open a retirement account in the child's name either of which would be a strong demonstration of sound financial management.

- **The Career Thing.** I am all for knowing what your dream job looks like and working like heck to find it. But careers are built from the ground up and working an entry-level job or even a minimum wage job or two in retail or the hospitality industry or wherever while hunting for a job that builds on a hard-won and costly education is useful in a number of ways. It provides real world experience, it is a resume builder, it helps develop contacts and work habits, it provides some cash flow and it is a daily reminder to focus on one's true goals.

- **Deadlines?** Some experts recommend setting a firm deadline for your child to move on because it is so easy to keep pushing off moving out. I'm not so sure about this. If your child is meeting his / her agreed upon responsibilities, is contributing financially and is working on his / her career diligently then I suggest that some flexibility is in order. I think the key question is whether the parental support is fostering or hindering growth and independence. Many times a counselor can help sort this out. Most parents love their kids and many truly love having them around but, as the saying goes, a parent's role is to provide *both* roots and

wings.

LifeMap is about building mutually reinforcing family relationships - at all stages of life.

(PS: I would be remiss if I didn't mention that this Friday, June 25th, is *Take Your Dog To Work Day*. For more info visit www.drpaulpowers.com, click [LifeMap Archive](#), open 6/19/07, *A Smart Bond to Invest In.*)

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Resources

· Are you or someone you know job hunting or thinking about it?

The best, concise, all-round job changing guide available. Revised Edition [Winning Job Interviews](#) by Dr. Paul Powers.

In this easy-to-follow, step-by-step book, Dr. Paul Powers demystifies job interviewing, explains why the process actually favors the job hunter, and shows how you can dramatically improve your interview skills. Packed with solid, practical information and laced with both humor and "kick in the pants" motivation, *Winning Job Interviews* is the book you wished you had before your last interview... and is mandatory preparation for your next one!

· Stalled at work? Still struggling to find your true vocation?

Or know someone who is? Order your copy of [Love Your Job!](#) *Loving the Job You Have, Finding A Job You Love* by Dr. Paul.

<http://www.drpaulpowers.com/booksandarticles.html>

Have an issue or question you'd like Dr. Paul to address in a future edition? Send an email to the email address list below.

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