

Building Your Dream

Presented by
MARK C. PERNA



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Welcome to the Competitive Advantage Track!

In these highly engaging, plug-and-play videos, your learners will discover the powerful skills to craft a personal competitive advantage—and why they need it.

In a fast-changing world, young people must develop strong life and career skills. Each module (or “Slice”) includes a short, heartfelt talk by Career Tree creator Mark C. Perna about a particular skill, why it matters, and how it connects to their personal competitive advantage for whatever they want to achieve in life.

▶ Click on the video to learn more, or click here:
<https://youtu.be/o8W9X78A2fM>

MARK C. PERNA

“ Building a competitive advantage can help you move forward by getting you the skills needed to do well in life, and whatever you’re passionate about. It gives you purpose and you can get far.

— Student



You can then implement any or all of the resources in this packet:

- Facilitator Reflection
- Group Discussion Starters
- Supersize Suggestions

You choose whatever elements will make the greatest impact in your unique learning environment.



“ I liked that we weren’t pushed to be motivated and inspired, like every other video.

— Student

Strategies for Success

“ You need this because we need this to survive... We will be better than the rest and have a competitive advantage. And since we are learning this now we could have a lead on the others.

— Student



How you use the **Competitive Advantage Track** is entirely up to you. It can be a bellringer exercise, material for an entire class period, or something you use at home with your child. You can use all the materials in this packet or change them up. These resources are provided to adapt in any way that best serves your schedule and learners.

That said, here are a few best practices to consider:

- **Make “competitive advantage” your thread:** The experienced facilitators who piloted the Competitive Advantage Track tapped into the power of repetition by constantly touching back on the concept of a personal competitive advantage. Everything the learners did moving forward was done because it related to their own competitive advantage. With this narrative, learners were more engaged when asked to complete work.
- **Connect “competitive advantage” with the lifestyle the learner wants to live:** For today’s young people, everything—including career—is a lifestyle decision. The kind of life they can live, the things they can afford, and the places they can go are what motivate young people to put in the necessary effort. Building a personal competitive advantage today is what sets you up for the lifestyle you want to enjoy tomorrow.
- **Encourage effort:** Our pilot facilitators suggest that the concept of a personal competitive advantage is a useful tool to answer questions like “Why do I have to learn this?” or “When will I ever use this?” The answer: “It is all part of building your own personal competitive advantage.” Making “personal competitive advantage” a constant thread throughout the day encourages effort and helps reframe the challenge the learner is experiencing with an end goal that matters to them.
- **Where possible, connect to the Career Tree:** While the Competitive Advantage Track can be used as a stand-alone lesson, it’s also designed to integrate with the Career Tree career exploration tool. The Competitive Advantage Track helps learners develop their Root System and ultimately move closer to their goal on the Career Tree. Find out more about the Career Tree for classroom use [here](#).



“ It can help me by giving me something to look up to and give me ideas.

— Student

Slice 4:

Building Your Dream

Video Runtime: 7:05

▶ Click on the video above to get started, or click here:
<https://youtu.be/OCvISSnr3FQ>

Visit MarkCPerna.com/cat to access the full, free library of Slices and downloadable activities.

Learners will discover:

- What it means to build your dream
- Why we all do one of two things: build our dreams or build someone else's
- The difference between passion and interest
- Why, instead of trying to find their career passion, they should put themselves in a position where that passion can find them
- 3 ways to give your best effort (show up 5 minutes early, leave 5 minutes late, and care while you're there)
- How a personal competitive advantage is necessary to reach our dreams, no matter how big or small those dreams are
- Insightful advice from legendary actor/comedian Steve Martin

Facilitator Reflection

It is often said that time is our most valuable asset. Think about how time spent in your learning environment is helping learners build their dreams. Do they see how putting forth effort now can connect with building their dream for their life? You might also consider how much of your own time is invested in building your dream.

Slice 4: Activities

Group Discussion Starters

- Think about some things you dream about for the future. How can the things you are doing now help you build that dream?
- How are you currently carving out time to build your dream? What actions can you take to carve out more time?
- Actor and comedian Steve Martin says we should spend our time becoming good. In fact, he says “Be so good they can’t ignore you.” What are you already good at? What are some things you want to become good at? How can you explore more things you may be good at?

Supersize Suggestions

This is just a starter list to help you supersize the impact of this Slice. Customize these activities or create your own to fit your unique learning environment and course of study, if applicable.

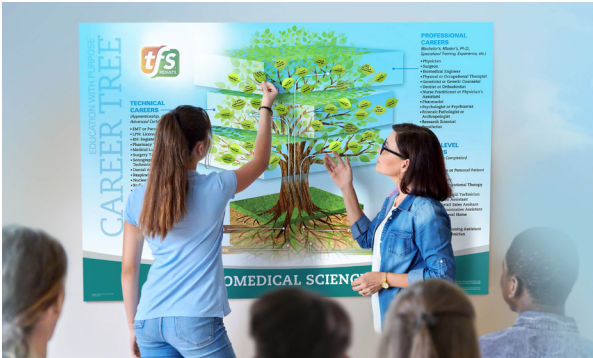
- Have learners outline what they do in a normal day, hour by hour.
Ask: **How much of your time is spent building your dream? How much is spent building other people’s dreams? Are there ways to turn the things you HAVE to do into things that help build your dream?** (For example, school or work)
- Have learners discuss any obstacles to or distractions from building their dream.
Ask: **What are some things that get in the way of spending time building our dream? How can we overcome those distractions and obstacles?**
- Have learners consider that Mark is never done building his dream—and neither are we.
Ask: **What might Mark need to do (or NOT do) to keep building his dream?**
- As the facilitator, tell a story from your own life about how you built your dream. It could be a big dream (example: your career) or a small dream (example: your goals for today’s lesson). Talk about the things that could have prevented you from reaching your goal and how you overcame the ones that were within your control.
- Project: Have learners write or orally present a reflection on what they have learned about building their dream.
Ask: **Since nobody can build our own dreams but us, what action can you take now to make sure you’re ready to succeed when your passion finds you?**

Big-Picture View

This closure question is designed to show learners the relevance of what they’re learning to their lifestyle and career goals. They should be able to connect the dots between their unique competitive advantage and what they’re learning.

- **How will your effort to be good at what you’re learning move you closer to your dream, or prepare you for the day you find your dream?**

Discover the Career Tree



Created by education leader Mark C. Perna, the Career Tree is the first career exploration tool informed by a generational perspective. Through meaningful self-discovery, ongoing dialogue, and real-world goal-setting, this groundbreaking approach is helping organizations across North America to enroll, engage, and complete students in higher numbers. [Find out more about the Career Tree here.](#)

Within the Career Tree, the Competitive Advantage Track helps young people build a strong foundation to reach their desired career and lifestyle goals. On the [TFSCareerTree.com](#) portal, our [Career Tree](#) community has access to early releases, curricular elements, and training materials not available to the general public.

You can use the free elements of the Competitive Advantage Track without being part of our Career Tree community, but we encourage you to schedule a demo to explore how the Career Tree can supersize your efforts.

Please note the Career Tree is a classroom tool and is not designed for home use. New resources created especially for parents are in the works, so subscribe to our [free Paradigm Shift newsletter](#) to stay posted as those are released.

Mark C. Perna

CREATOR OF THE CAREER TREE & COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE TRACK

Mark C. Perna is a generational thought leader on a mission to effect a national paradigm shift in education, employment, and economic development. He delivers 80+ keynotes annually across North America, including a special address at Harvard University. At Forbes.com, his weekly column on generational issues in careers, education, and the workforce reaches an audience of more than 4 million. His *Perna Syndicate* micropodcast is heard in more than 70 countries.

Mark, who serves on the Advisory Council for the Coalition for Career Development in Washington, DC, founded the Education with Purpose & Employment with Passion movement to help communities connect education, business, and economic pipelines. He is a frequent guest on television and podcasts, including the #1 economic development podcast, *Develop This!*

Mark created the Career Tree and Competitive Advantage Track to empower parents, educators, employers, and community stakeholders to unleash the tremendous potential of today's younger generations. This is also the topic of his bestselling book, *Answering Why*, which won eight national awards, including the Nautilus Award which is given to books that make a positive difference in the world.

You can contact Mark [here](#) and follow his mission on these platforms:



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Want to stay posted on our latest releases in the Competitive Advantage Track and other free resources? Subscribe to our [free Paradigm Shift newsletter](#) now to receive actionable strategies, insights, and tools 2x a month from the desk of education and generational thought leader Mark C. Perna!