

RoadTrip Nation

Avoiding Potholes in the Journey

Each season, the PBS program RoadTrip Nation features several college students who drive a green RV across the United States. The students visit successful people in different fields and listen to their stories of how they achieved their dreams and goals despite obstacles.

RoadTrip Nation helps students grappling with the issue of what career to choose. The program's website has an excellent array of informational interviews; including entrepreneurs. But it is clear from viewing several episodes that the concept of meeting and talking to people won't necessarily provide the answers that some students are seeking.

Consider Hannah Johnson, a participant in the eighth season, who at the end of the entire trip admits to still being unsure what career direction she should pursue. Johnson doesn't seem fully knowledgeable about all of her skills, a few of which she displayed during the season. For instance, during the first show, before meeting one of her fellow travelers and without seeing a picture of him, she's able to sketch a likeness that was stunningly accurate.

Later, during one of the stops, the students visited a woodworking shop where Johnson eagerly asks to craft an item. There is a reasonable probability that Johnson has the aptitude structural visualization, and mechanical, and creative ability, but she doesn't seem to be aware that these skills should be examined. Instead, her focus is broadcasting, a field in which she worked before being selected for the program.

A person with strong structural visualization skills needs to work in a field with tangible ideas in order to feel comfortable and excel in their activities. On the other hand,

working in an occupation that's focused on less tangible concepts would not be as satisfying, and would tend to create restlessness, which Johnson exhibited after the program ended.

Lesson: Talking to people is a good way to gather ideas for a potential startup, but it's only one way. Gathering information using this method may not translate into usable ideas, especially if one isn't an auditory learner.

References

http://roadtripnation.com/watch/watch_episode.php?x=2676&s=10

<http://www.jocrf.org/>