Transcripts of movie

Hello. I am Professor Rick Jerz, and I'd like to give you a little bit of background about myself. Sometimes it's good to know something about your professor as you progress through a course. In future sessions I will be sharing some of my real world experiences with you to help you understand topics. Let's get started! Who is Rick Jerz? I'll begin with my name. I do prefer Rick instead of Richard, and my last name is pronounced "Jerz," as in New Jersey. Just leave off the "EY." I was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois. Some people have told me that they can recognize this from my accent. I grew up in the northwest side of Chicago, a community called Albany Park. I went to Hibbard Elementary, Von Steuben Middle School, and Roosevelt High School. In my youth I was always interested in sports and outdoors. In high school I was on the swim team and tennis team, and in college I became a very good ping-pong player. In high school my greatest interest was in mathematics. I recall always being a good student, and in high school I graduated in nearly the top of my class. I was a hard worker and worked every summer starting at about the age 13. My goal was to get a good education and do well in life. At about age 10, I had this dream to get a college education. My parents were not wealthy so I knew that in order to get an education I would have to work hard and save my money. My dream came true during my senior year in high school when I was accepted into Illinois Institute of Technology. I graduated from IIT with a B.S. in Industrial Engineering. I paid for this education with my own hard-earned money. In order to have a good life I knew I would be working in business. While an undergraduate student, I developed this second goal of getting an MBA. I started my MBA while I was an undergraduate student at IIT. I continued it at the University of Northern Iowa, and eventually I received my MBA from St. Ambrose University. I never thought of going any further educationally. However, when I was in my mid-thirties, my wife convinced me to pursue a Ph.D. I was accepted into the Ph.D. program at Ohio State, but after changing jobs, found myself in the Ph.D. program at The University of Iowa. I finish my Ph.D. there in Industrial Engineering. My Ph.D. dissertation involved a new method of analyzing process alternatives. Relative to my work experience, I have spent about half my life working in industry, and half my life teaching. I sometimes wonder "Where did this all begin?" Well, it was with teaching. At about age 13, I was hired as a swim instructor teaching, oh, maybe 5 to 10 year olds how to swim during the summer. I did this for a couple years. After the age of 16, each summer I found employment at different companies, including the Playboy Distribution Center, where my father was the Warehouse Manager, Littel Machine, a company that manufactured machines that would straighten coiled steel, and Continental Can, which produced waxed-paper cups. When I was a sophomore in high school, my mother took an interest in many kinds of arts and crafts. I took an interest in candle making, thinking that I might be able to sell enough candles to pay my way through college. So I started my own candle making business, and did this for about five years, and made enough money to pay for my college. Having a candle making business not only provided funds for college, but it also gave me a good perspective of how businesses operate. When I was going into my junior year of college at IIT, I decided to sign up for the co-op program, thinking that it would be good to get some real business experience before graduation. I remember the day that the co-op supervisor at IIT called me into her office and told me that John Deere, in Waterloo, Iowa, wanted to interview me. I knew nothing about farming, tractors, and Iowa. But the pay was very good. I went on the interview and got the job. It was great! During my four semesters as a co-op student with Deere I spent time in every department in the shop and foundry, and worked in about a half dozen engineering departments. Right before graduation, the John Deere Component Works made me an offer I could not refuse. They said, "Rick as a co-op student you have worked in nearly every engineering department. Which one do you want to work in full-time?" I said, "Manufacturing Research & Development." They replied with, "What is your second choice? Most people in Manufacturing R&D have at least 10 years of experience." I said, "My second choice would be Plant Layout." A couple weeks went by, and my co-op supervisor came back and said, "Rick guess, I spoke with the manager of Manufacturing R&D, and he wants to hire you." In this job I worked as a project manager, investigating "new" manufacturing equipment. One of my projects involved the application of industrial robots. I found a good application, and this became the first robot application at the Waterloo Component Works. Industrial robot technology was new, and I was told that the John Deere Administrative Center in Moline, Illinois, wanted to hire somebody to work with this technology exclusively. I interviewed for the job and got it, and basically became an internal consultant to all John Deere factories for industrial robots. Eventually, the department that I was working in at the Administrative Center was moved to the John Deere Technical Center. I continued working with industrial robot technology, and also got involved with some other interesting technologies: industrial vision systems, computer networks, computer-aided process planning systems, and automated inspection systems. The management at the Technical Center saw my interest in computer-based technologies, and my ability to work well with people, and asked me to be in charge of their computer operations. This was an exciting time. Personal computers, minicomputers, and mainframe computers were being integrated into networking solutions. I was in this position for a couple years. My last job with John Deere was in the Finance department at the Administrative Center. They needed help installing a computer network for Financial Services, and they needed their people trained to use it effectively. Technology by itself is not good unless you get your employees to use it. I remember, in my interview with the Chief Financial Office, him saying to me, "Right down the hall I have some great computer scientists who really know computers but none of them have an MBA. You do and therefore I'd like to hire you into my department." Sometimes you may wonder if your education will really ever help. Without my MBA I would not have gotten this promotion. The 1980s were tough years for John Deere. Agriculture was very slow. No one was getting hired nor promoted, and raises were small. I decided to leave John Deere and work for small manufacturing company in Columbus, Ohio. This job turned out to be a bad move, so I decided to look for another job, and I found myself a leaving industry to teach for St. Ambrose University. I want to mention also that in about 1985, I and a friend started a business called Software Generation, specializing in developing and using sports software. Initially, we hoped that this would become a big business, but it has proven to remain a small side interest to both me and my partner. For Software Generation, I did all the computer programming, and learned a lot about databases, and how to program in SQL. My college teaching work experience began with St. Ambrose. I actually taught as an adjunct, or part-time instructor, while I was still working for John Deere. I enjoyed teaching and thought that someday I might want to do this full-time. While I was looking for a new job in Columbus, Ohio, I made a connection with St. Ambrose University and they offered me a full-time teaching position in Industrial Engineering. I am now approaching nearly 20 years of teaching at St. Ambrose. About half of these years have been teaching courses in engineering, including engineering graphics and computer-aided design, problem solving with microcomputers, manufacturing processes, and computer-integrated manufacturing. The latter half of my years at St. Ambrose have been teaching Operations Management, and Business Statistics in the College of Business. I have also had the pleasure of teaching as a part-time professor intermittently at The University of Iowa. I have taught Manufacturing Processes, and Design for Manufacturing for the College of Engineering, and more recently, Operations Management for the College of Business. As I reflect upon all of my work experience, both in industry and in academia, I think my common theme has always been my interest in using technology to improve operations. My professional interests continue to include manufacturing technologies, and more specifically process evaluation and selection, computer technologies, and for teaching, various teaching technologies. You can get additional information about my interest and see some of these technologies on my website. I have lived the first part of my life in Chicago, Illinois, and the latter part of my life in the Quad Cities, which includes Rock Island, Bettendorf, Davenport, and Moline. I lived in Columbus, Ohio, for a year and a half, and I currently live and have been living in LeClaire, Iowa, for about 10 years. I designed and built the house that I'm living in, acting as a general contractor. I am very happily married have two children of my own and two stepchildren. I am very fortunate to have a great family. Some of my personal activities and interests include tennis, skiing, travel, spending time with my family, and working on home improvement projects. Thanks for taking your time to spend a few moments with me. I hope you have enjoyed what I have shared with you. If you ever need my help, or have any questions, please let me know.