

Rick Townsend

It has been over 12 years since I delivered my last book, jumped into my bookmobile and left the bookfield forever.

Strangely, hardly a day goes by where I don't think about the places I went, the people I met and the experiences I had while working for The Varsity Company.

I still remember that spring morning in 1991 when the phone rang in my dorm room at 6:45am. A perky voice (too perky for that time of day) asked me if I wanted to come hear about a summer internship that would help me save \$4,000 for college expenses. For some reason I said yes, met Glenn Ransom several days later, and the rest is history.

The first payoff from my three summers worth of hot days, mosquito bites and \$20 book deposits was on Graduation Day, 1993. I sat in a row with 24 other graduating seniors and someone asked that fateful question:

“Who has a job after graduation?”

Now, please understand that America was in the midst of a recession in the early 90's. As such, most new grads didn't have many career options after college. So it was no surprise when only 4 hands went up in our row of 25 people.

I raised my hand. But I didn't have only one job offer; I had SIX. That was the first time I understood the edge my experience with Varsity gave me in the job market.

So what set me apart from others? At the ripe old age of 22, I had hands-on, real world experience dealing with real people and running my own business. That meant something in the “real world,” as I soon found out.

Over the years, I've shared my Varsity experiences with many work colleagues, managers and executives. It's surprising how many of these highly successful people shake their heads and say “I don't know if I could do that.” Man, that makes me proud!

There have been so many times when my experience with Varsity has served me well, and I won't go into all of them here. But during tough times, one fact comes back to me again and again:

“I am a Book-Man! If I could go door-to-door selling books for 80 hours a week in the summer heat, I can get through this as well.”

Simple, huh?

Yet it's one I use every day. I credit Glenn and other Varsity leaders for helping me understand how this critical skill would help me survive (and THRIVE) in today's business world.

I'm sure Varsity has lots of people who are willing to step up and talk about how the Internship Program has changed their lives.

I cannot imagine how my life would be different without the Varsity Experience. Sure, it's hard work, the hours are long and you will be jerked out of your comfort zone so fast your head will spin.

But regardless of what you plan on doing after college, you'll be light years ahead of your peers in the Game of Life because of your experiences with and through Varsity.

I guarantee it.