

The Asian Reporter

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MY TURN

■ Wayne Chan



Now that's what you call being an entrepreneur

What the heck are they teaching in college these days?

My son Tyler just came back from UCLA for summer break. He's majoring in English with a minor in entrepreneurship. He's been putting what he learned during his first year in college into practice — just not in the way his mother and I were hoping.

Over the last couple of months, we've encouraged Tyler to find an internship to get some experience under his belt. Well, I would say I was "encouraging." For his mother, the more accurate phrase might be "cajoling, pressuring, and coercing." I've got to say that watching a tiger mother in her natural habitat is awe-inspiring but also a little scary.

During his first week at home, Tyler was happy to just hang out with his high school buddies, which, after finals week, I figured was time he'd earned.

In the last week, however, he seems to have picked up his pace dramatically, and looks like he's on some kind of mission.

I could see him rushing past my den repeatedly while I was working. Then he started poking his head into my office to ask questions about various things.

"Dad," Tyler said, holding up a pen. "Do you need this anymore?"

"No, go ahead," I replied.

A few minutes later, he walked in with a three-hole punch: "Dad, what about this?"

"No, you can have it," I said.

I have to say, I was impressed. A pen and a three-hole punch? Tyler is obviously filling out applications for a job or internship and has so many that he's organizing them into folders. Combined with the fact that he seemed to be driving a bunch of places, he seemed like a man on the move.

I'd like to think my gentle and reassuring guidance was what started him on the path to a

successful business career, as opposed to his mother's approach — threatening, hovering, menacing.

But it was the next item Tyler asked me about that gave me pause.

He asked, "Dad, do I need more than one of these?"

I sat there with a confused look on my face.

Even Ally, our golden retriever, looked puzzled.

Tyler was holding up a used bedsheet.

I replied, "Why are you asking about a bedsheet?"

It turns out Tyler didn't need a pen and a three-hole punch to fill out job applications. And he wasn't driving to interviews.

Apparently, while hanging out with his friends, one of them mentioned an app called OfferUp, which allows people to quickly sell stuff to others locally.

He wasn't trying to get a job. He was selling stuff from our home for cash.

The next few days were a bit of a blur.

He drove across town to deliver an old fan we owned. Next, a vacuum cleaner was gone. Then, an old storage box went missing.

I didn't really mind. Actually, I kind of got excited about it. He made a little extra money and I got rid of a few things cluttering up the garage that Maya had asked me to remove.

Maybe "asked" isn't the right word. Perhaps "beseeching, needling, or demanding" would be more accurate.

Before I knew it, he had sold an old barbeque, a carpet cleaner, and a pair of binoculars.

Even more surprising, yesterday Tyler got a summer job as well.

Good thing, too. We were running out of things for him to sell.

Any longer and I'm afraid he would have sold something I actually wanted.

Where's Ally? Ally? Ally!?! Tyler!!!

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