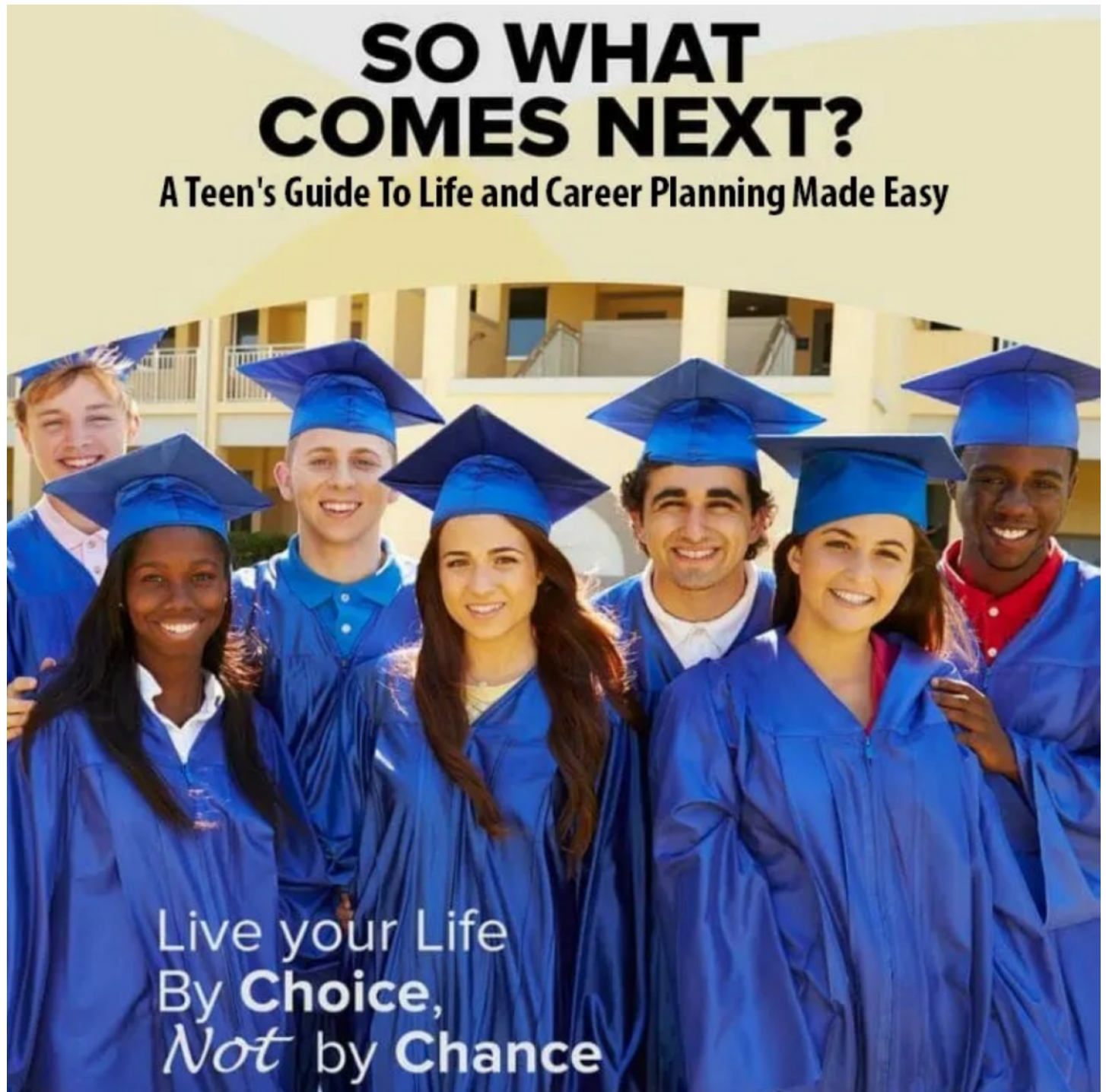


“So What Comes Next?” Empowers Teens to Build a Future They Choose, Not One Chosen for Them

Michael A. Deffina’s concise guide gives young people downloadable planning tools and a relatable roadmap for life after high school.



Sacramento, California Oct 13, 2025 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - As rising education costs and a shifting job market force earlier, smarter choices, Michael A. Deffina’s *So What Comes Next?: A Teen’s Guide to Life Planning Made Easy* offers a clear, teen-friendly blueprint for what happens after high school. The 47-page paperback distills career exploration, goal-setting, and decision-making into an engaging

format written in teens' own language— complete with downloadable worksheets that turn insight into action.

More than a pep talk, *So What Comes Next?* guides readers through self-awareness, strengths discovery, and values-based planning before mapping options such as college, trade programs, military service, entrepreneurship, or gap-year pathways. Recognized as a #1 New Release in Teens & Young Adult Values & Virtues (November 2022), the book has earned praise from educators and reviewers for its clarity, practicality, and approachable tone.

Deffina's inspiration for *So What Comes Next?* is deeply personal and hard-earned. Having navigated his own early transitions—from Navy service as an electronics technician to balancing night classes while working on IBM's Apollo guidance program—he went on to earn national "Golden Circle" sales honors in the top five percent and later co-founded Ellie Mae Inc., which became a publicly traded company on the NYSE.

Through these experiences, Deffina recognized that many people build their careers by circumstance rather than by design. His book distills decades of professional insight into a clear, actionable system that teens can complete on their own in just a few hours—turning uncertainty about the future into confident, informed decisions.

Ideal for ages 13–18—and the parents, teachers, and counselors who support them—the guide replaces anxiety with agency. Educators cite its real-world examples and bite-sized structure as attention-holding for teens, while early reviewers highlight how its Excel-based planning tools make goal-setting "highly accessible." By shifting the conversation from "What should I do?" to "What fits who I am?", the book equips readers to choose with confidence and follow through with a concrete plan.

Deffina's background lends uncommon credibility: Navy-trained in electronics, recruited to IBM's Apollo guidance work, top-5% "Golden Circle" sales honors, and co-founding Ellie Mae Inc., which later became a NYSE-traded success story. A lecturer and longtime business consultant, he now focuses on helping teens design lives aligned with their strengths and aspirations.

So What Comes Next? is available now: <https://sowhatcomesnextbook.com/>

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