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How To Earn Six Figures Without A Four-Year Degree



An instructor at the Siemens training center in Berlin, Germany with apprentices. In Germany, apprenticeship training is much more common than in the United States. (PHOTO BY ADAM BERRY/GETTY IMAGES)



By 2025, two million jobs will be unfilled because U.S. companies won't be able to find the skilled labor they need. Many of these jobs provide a middle-class salary — some pay six figures annually — and don't require a four-year-degree.

How to get one of these jobs? Apprenticeships. This age-old practice with origins in medieval times is now gaining traction again in the United States. Economists and corporate leaders say apprenticeships can lead to interesting and stable careers, ranging from robotics and mechanical design to medical sciences and even high-end gourmet cuisine — all without college debt. We'll explore how to find an apprenticeship, the pros and cons and common misunderstandings.

Guests

Nicholas Wyman CEO, Institute for Workplace Skills and Innovation; author of "Job U: How To Find Wealth And Success By Developing The Skills Companies Actually Need"

Ken Hitchcock Director, Pickens County Career and Technology Center in Liberty, South Carolina

Christine Scullion Director, human resources policy, National Association of Manufacturing

Cory McCray Delegate, Maryland House of Delegates; electrician and former apprentice with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

Robert Lerman Fellow, Urban Institute; founder, American Institute for Innovative Apprenticeship; professor emeritus of economics, American University

Read An Excerpt Of "Job U" by Nicholas Wyman

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What Is An Apprenticeship And How To Get One

By Nicholas Wyman, CEO, Institute for Workplace Skills and Innovation;
author of "Job U: How To Find Wealth And Success By Developing The
Skills Companies Actually Need"

How does an apprenticeship typically work?

An apprenticeship is a structured accreditation program that provides participants with the building blocks to master a specific occupational area and learn hands-on skills under the direct supervision of a skilled expert. It is important to note that because apprenticeships are a nascent industry in the United States, they are often confused with internships. In fact, at present, the line is very fine between the two. Briefly, internships are generally short-term; involve little or no pay; and are inconsistent across the board concerning rigor, degree of responsibility and supervision.

What types of roles and industries do you find apprenticeships in?

Today's apprenticeship programs are becoming more sophisticated and progressive and found in a variety of modern fields from engineering and sales and marketing to computer programming and health care. Many of the knowledge-economy jobs available in the United States can be effectively learned through apprenticeship.

When should you consider taking on an apprenticeship?

Whether currently unemployed, unhappily employed, or simply wishing to experience the joys of learning a new skill through hands-on work, it's time to seek out apprenticeship programs in your area. Apprenticeships are not just for young people. They are for people of all ages and all stages of life.

Where do you find an apprenticeship?

Although the formal apprenticeship concept is rapidly gaining traction in the United States, no central site exists to access opportunities. However, there are several useful websites to be had.

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- U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship: <https://www.dol.gov/featured/apprenticeship>
- American Institute for Innovative Apprenticeship: <https://innovativeapprenticeship.org/>
- A variety of the popular job opportunity sites like: <https://www.linkedin.com/jobs/apprenticeship-jobs> <https://www.indeed.com/q-Paid-Apprenticeship-jobs.html>, <http://www.careerbuilder.com/jobs-apprentice>, and so forth
- Local community colleges: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/tom-snyder/apprenticeship-programs-at-community-colleges_b_8918366.html

