



IT'S GOOD TO COMPLETE HIGHER EDUCATION BEFORE JUMPING FOR JOBS

In the Occupational Outlook Quarterly, summer 2010, published by the government, data from the U.S. bureau of Labor Statistics was found to show quite consistently that higher education translates into higher employment rates and higher median earnings for individuals. Data from the BLS shows that in 2009, high school dropouts had an unemployment rate almost double the average unemployment rate of the cumulative workforce. High school dropouts also earned almost 40 percent less than those with college degrees across all occupational fields. That is certainly serious statistics that one should consider before deciding to stop pursuing higher education and join any job at hand. Remember that all employers are equally averse to helping their employees continue higher education. Even if immediate financial situations compel a person to take up a job and abandon higher education, preference should always be given to those jobs that allow their workers facilities and incentives to earn college degrees. Employers are conscious about such needs, and even employers like Wal-Mart have devised programs for their employees to earn college credits on the job, if they wish to pursue higher education. And if you can achieve it, a college degree will stand you in good stead throughout your life. As the Occupational Outlook Quarterly points out, employment rates are higher for those with college degrees because the mere presence of a degree proves certain things about a potential candidate to an employer. The OOQ states, "Completing an educational program demonstrates qualities - such as initiative, willingness to learn, and organizational ability - that employers value." Workers who can claim higher earnings need to possess higher skills, skills that are usually gained through formal education. However, before perusing the data, the Occupational Outlook Quarterly warns to keep in mind that the data are averages. Geographic location and other factors determine success in the job market, and such success is not exclusively dependent on educational attainment. However, that Steve Jobs dropped out of college and became the CEO of Apple Inc. does not indicate that you will become the CEO of Orange Inc. if you too drop out of college and fail to complete your degree. As the report found out, what really pays off is finding higher education that is consistent with a person's inherent interests, abilities, and career goals. Unemployment rates in 2009 in relation to educational attainment were found to be the following: Doctoral degrees - 2.5%; Professional degrees - 2.3%; Master's degree - 3.9%; Bachelor's degree - 5.2%; Associate degree - 6.8%; College dropouts - 8.6%; High school graduate - 9.7%; Less than high school - 14.6%; Average unemployment rate for workers with some education - 7.9%. So, the latest statistics continues to prove what well-wishers preached: a higher education means a better career and greater security. Thus, unless faced with irreconcilable situations, a student is well advised not to jump into the job market if it means giving up on higher education. Even if you have to join a job, it is desirable to continue higher education that suits your interests and career goals.

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