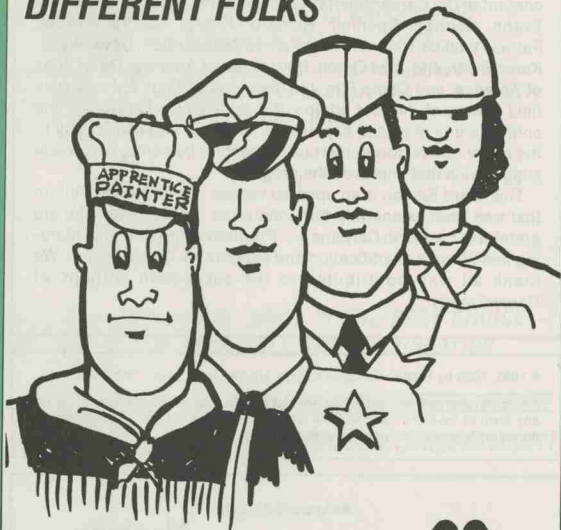


# CAREER PREPARATION

**DIFFERENT STROKES FOR DIFFERENT FOLKS**



Luther B. Otto  
Vaughn R. A. Call



# CareerSmarts

## **Preface and Acknowledgments (Third Edition)**

*CareerSmarts* is a collaborative effort between the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work and the Department of 4-H and Youth Development, of the Agricultural Extension Service at North Carolina State University. The authors developed earlier editions of *CareerSmarts* while at Father Flanagan's Boys' Home, Boys Town, Nebraska, with support from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation.

Many people helped shape the ideas and mold the form and content of the *CareerSmarts* series including Peter Ellis, Cynthia Evahn, Kenneth Spenner, Richard Millard, Sandra Wendel, Patricia Wallace, Heather Ware, Fannie Belle Burnett, David Wynn, Karen Bartz, and Jane Quinn. Boys Clubs of America, Girls Clubs of America, and Camp Fire, Inc. provided settings for extensive field testing of the first edition. We gratefully acknowledge the contributions of all and express our indebtedness collectively to the many others, too numerous to mention by name, who made suggestions that improved the program.

This Third Edition is an updated version of the Second Edition that was used extensively throughout the United States. We are grateful to the North Carolina 4-H Program for providing continuing institutional identification and support for *CareerSmarts*. We thank all who contributed to the successive editions of *CareerSmarts*.

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## **CAREER PREPARATION: DIFFERENT STROKES FOR DIFFERENT FOLKS**

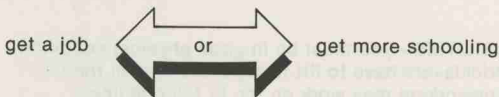
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Everybody wants a job that pays good money—probably you too. Right? That means you must have the skills that employers want. People with training—skilled workers—have the best chance to get those jobs.

For many occupations you need proof to show employers that you have learned the necessary skills—a college degree, a certificate from a technical school, or a journeyman card. You can learn some occupations while you're working. Others you have to learn in the classroom.

After finishing high school you have a basic choice to make:



Some people decide to get a job after finishing high school. All jobs provide some kind of training, but some offer more training than others.

### **LEARNING WHILE WORKING**

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Here are three ways to learn occupational skills while working:

- ✓ apprenticeships
- ✓ on-the-job training
- ✓ military occupation training

# APPRENTICESHIPS

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Apprenticeships train people for skilled occupations. More than half of all occupations learned by apprenticeship are in construction.

Examples: Carpenter  
Electrician  
Plumber  
Pipefitter  
Machinist  
Automotive mechanic

Apprenticeships combine supervised work experience with classroom instruction. Here's what you need to do to get into an apprenticeship.

**EDUCATION**—you must have a high school diploma or equivalency. Good classes to take in high school are math, mechanical drawing, and shop. People who have taken similar courses in a community college or technical school usually have an advantage.

**ABILITIES**—you must be in good physical condition. Bricklayers have to lift heavy materials on the job; ironworkers may work on top of tall buildings; carpenters must know how to do arithmetic quickly and correctly; and plumbers must have good eye-hand coordination. You need to have specific skills.

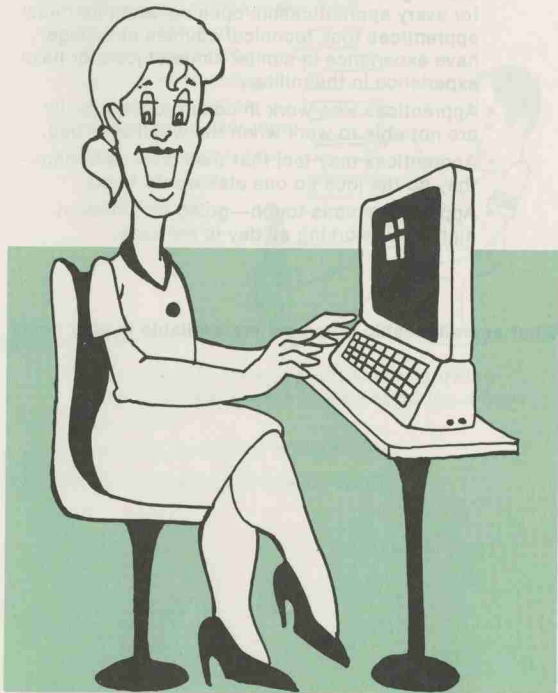
**AGE**—you have to be at least 18 years old—but most apprentices are older and have work experience or attended a community college.

Apprentices are taught job skills by experienced workers and learn how to do the work with less and less supervision over time.

Apprentices attend classes one or two nights a week or study at home. Some classes may be held at a community college and offer college credit.

Apprenticeships take about three or four years to complete. If you are laid off or go on strike, it will take longer.

When you finish the apprenticeship, you receive your "journeyman card." A journeyman card certifies that you have the training and experience necessary for your trade.



## ADVANTAGES

- Pay is good—more than for other beginning jobs.
- People with journeyman cards have more job opportunities. They can move anywhere in the country and use their journeyman card to certify their skills to employers.

## DISADVANTAGES

- It's tough to get in—there are many applicants for every apprenticeship opening, and most new apprentices took technical courses in college, have experience in similar kinds of jobs, or have experience in the military.
- Apprentices who work in construction usually are not able to work when the weather is bad.
- Apprentices may feel that their work is boring—they do the jobs no one else wants to do.
- Apprenticeship is tough—going to school at night after working all day is not easy.

**What apprenticeship programs are available in your area?**



# **ON-THE-JOB TRAINING**

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In many occupations, most workers learn their skills on the job. Here are some examples:

Postal clerk

Firefighter

Bank teller

Assembler

Welder

Getting into some training programs requires a high school diploma—others may require related training in a community college or technical school.

Workers in on-the-job training programs usually start in “entry level” or beginning jobs as helpers. Training may last for several days—or a couple of years. Gradually workers learn more difficult skills.

For some occupations workers go to school in company classrooms or a community college in their area.

## **ADVANTAGES**

- You can “earn and learn” at the same time—get job experience and earn money while learning a specific skill.
- The company provides training while you work.

## **DISADVANTAGES**

- Training positions may be hard to find—they are not widely advertised.
- On-the-job training programs do not provide certification, as do college programs and apprenticeships.
- On-the-job training includes only what is important to that company—another company may not accept that training for the same kind of job.
- On-the-job training may be worth less—in terms of earnings—than formal training programs.

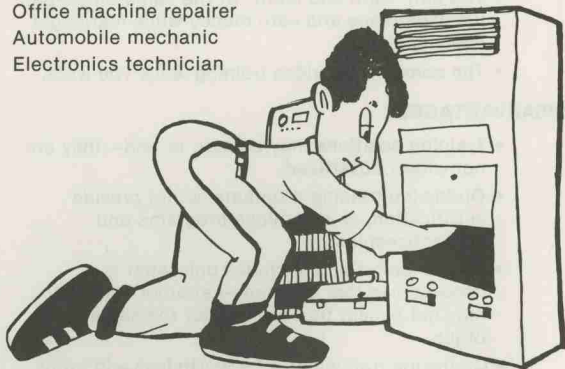
Name companies in your area that have on-the-job training programs.



## **MILITARY OCCUPATION TRAINING**

The third way to learn occupational skills while working is in the military. The Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines train people to work in many of the same occupations in which civilians work:

Emergency medical technician  
Computer service technician  
Office machine repairer  
Automobile mechanic  
Electronics technician





To get into the military, you usually have to be a high school graduate. You have to pass a test, and there are age, height, and weight restrictions.

Military training involves both classroom instruction and work experience. After basic training, recruits go to a military technical school for occupational training. Some people make a career of the military, but most plan to use service skills in civilian jobs after they leave the military.

It's a good idea to make sure that military training programs fit your civilian career plans. BEFORE you choose military training, get information about the civilian occupations that interest you. Talk to people who work in those occupations. Ask them:

- What kind of training will you need for the civilian job? Will military training help? Will you need more civilian training? A license or a certificate?
- Is the civilian occupation large? Growing? Will you be able to get a job when you get out?

### **ADVANTAGES**

- Job experience may be useful for getting a civilian job.
- Military jobs have more job security than do most civilian occupations.
- Military educational benefits may pay part of college tuition expenses.
- Military life may help you develop good work habits.

### **DISADVANTAGES**

- You can't just quit and go home if you don't like it.
- Your military work assignment may not be in the same area as your occupational training.
- Military specialties may not match up with civilian occupations.



## **GETTING ADDITIONAL SCHOOLING**

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Another way to prepare for a career is to go to college.

- Do the occupations that interest you require a college education?
- Do you like school? Did you take subjects in high school that you want to learn more about?

If you are interested in jobs that require more education, then going to college may be the right choice for you.

There are three kinds of colleges:

- four-year colleges
- two-year colleges
- technical schools

## **FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES**

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Four-year colleges offer courses leading to a bachelor's degree. Here are some occupations that usually require a four-year degree:

Physical therapist  
Teacher  
Social worker  
Accountant  
Medical technologist

Some occupations—like physician and lawyer—require a four-year college degree and then completion of graduate school.

Here are some ways you can help yourself pay for college:

- ✓ Get good grades in high school so you can qualify for a scholarship.
- ✓ Go to college while working—it will take longer, but it can be important for your job.

- ✓ Check out the financial aid possibilities. There are three kinds of financial aid:

**scholarships**—you don't have to pay back

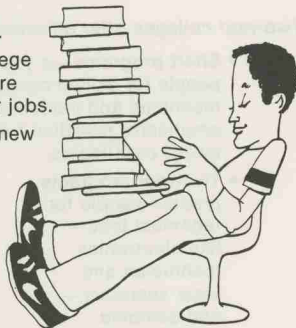
**loans**—you have to pay back

**work study**—on campus part-time work

Most colleges will try to help you in one or more of these ways.

## ADVANTAGES

- College graduates make more money than high school graduates.
- Jobs open to college graduates are more interesting, better jobs.
- College provides new and interesting experiences.



## DISADVANTAGES

- The number of college graduates is growing faster than the number of jobs requiring a four-year degree.
- A college education is expensive.

**What four-year colleges are in your area?**

## TWO-YEAR COLLEGES

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Two-year colleges are usually community colleges or junior colleges. Some occupations you can learn in a two-year college.

Examples: Registered nurse  
Air-conditioning mechanic  
Secretary  
Computer technician  
Automobile mechanic

Two-year colleges offer different kinds of programs:

- Short programs—a year or less—to prepare people for skilled occupations, like auto mechanic and nurses' aide. These programs emphasize practical training. Short programs award certificates.
- Two-year programs prepare people for technical jobs—like electronics technician and legal secretary—and combine technical and general courses. Two-year programs award associate degrees.
- Some two-year programs are similar to the first two years of a four-year college. Students receive an associate degree and can transfer to a four-year college to complete work for a bachelor's degree.



## ADVANTAGES

- Community colleges offer both technical and general courses—you can try different kinds of courses.
- Most cities have community colleges.
- Community colleges cost less than four-year colleges or technical schools.
- Most community colleges offer classes in math, reading, and English for people who want extra help in these areas.
- Usually it is easier to get into community colleges.

## DISADVANTAGES

- In some occupations, two-year college graduates compete for jobs with four-year college graduates.

**What two-year colleges are in your area?**



## TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

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Technical schools prepare people for immediate employment in specific occupations. Here are some occupations you can learn in a technical school:

Barber or cosmetologist  
Automobile mechanic  
Radiologic technologist  
Dental assistant  
Air-conditioning mechanic

You can learn many occupations in either two-year colleges or technical schools.

Courses in technical schools emphasize practical “hands-on” training—you get practice on the same kinds of equipment you will use on the job.

When you finish the program, you receive a certificate or diploma. Certificates indicate to employers that you completed the program and learned the beginning skills required for the job.

### **ADVANTAGES**

- Technical schools teach skills for beginning jobs in a specific occupation—courses are related directly to your occupational goal.
- New training programs start frequently.
- Technical schools help students find jobs.

### **DISADVANTAGES**

- Technical schools cost more than community colleges.
- If you decide later that you want to go to a four-year college, you probably will not receive credit for your technical school courses.
- Some technical schools are not accredited—check carefully before enrolling.

### **What technical schools are in your area?**



## **PUTTING CHOICES TOGETHER**

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Going to work *OR* going to school is not the only choice. You can do both—go to school *AND* work—a lot of people do.

- You can work full-time and take one or two classes—many colleges offer classes during the day, evening, and on weekends.
- You can go to school full-time and work part-time. More than half of all college students work while they go to school. Colleges usually have placement offices that help students find part-time jobs.

What to do after high school—go to work or go to college or both—is a decision you must make.

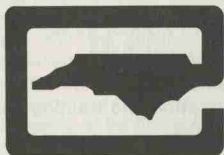
**Remember:** To get a good job, you need the skills that employers want. People with education and training have the best chance of getting good jobs.

***ONLY YOU CAN DECIDE WHAT IS THE BEST CHOICE FOR YOU. THINK ABOUT ALL THE POSSIBILITIES.***

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***BE CAREERSMART!***



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