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College Programs Increase Your Hiring Potential by Jason White

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If you're looking to measure how beneficial college programs are, look no further than Centennial College, which is located in Toronto, Ontario. Not only is the school recognized as one of the most culturally diverse post-secondary institutions in Ontario, with almost 100 ethno-cultural groups and 80 languages spoken on campus, it also offers more than 120 applied degree, diploma and certificate programs on a full- and part-time basis in business, communication arts, community and consumer services, science and engineering technology, health sciences and transportation. In addition, 16,000 full-time students and 22,000 part-time learners attend these college programs annually.

Why are college diploma and degree offerings so popular? First of all, long gone are days when you could start out pouring coffee and end up as the CEO of a multi-million dollar company. Today, high-ranking positions in a variety of industries require a post-secondary educational background. However, that does not necessarily mean having to attend university. College degrees, diplomas and certificates are respected credentials, as they reflect a work force that comes into the field having had hands-on, practical experiences that combine both theory and practice rather than just the latter.

According to the Census Bureau, those with a college degree earn around $2.1-million throughout their working adult life, while high school graduates earn an average of $1.2-million. In fact, in winter 2004-05, the US Department of Labor reported that in 2003, workers who had a college degree had median weekly earnings of $900, compared with $554 a week for high school graduates. That's a 62 per cent jump in median earnings. Along the same lines, a college degree or diploma makes your marketable. Even in times of high unemployment, there are thousands of jobs that go unfilled because many jobs in the fastest-growing industries such as health care, education, and business support services require a college degree or diploma.

Aside from helping to move people up in the workplace, students attend diploma and degree programs at colleges because they have short-term benefits. For example, getting a college education is more budget-friendly. Tuition and books are not as expensive as they tend to be in university. This opens the doors to students who may not have previously been able to obtain an education. The fact that students from all walks of life attend college programs is an advantage in itself as it allows you to network and mingle with many people who may be of help to you as you seek a career upon graduation.

Lastly, in terms of actual learning, schools like Centennial College have many college programs that emphasize experiential learning with laboratory instruction, paid co-operative education opportunities, and industry and agency field placements. All Centennial programs are developed and kept current with the assistance of program advisory committees (PACs), made up of academic advisors and employer representatives. Their participation ensures the education and skills students receive at Centennial are up-to-date and relevant to the industry they are preparing to enter.

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Jason wrote this informative look at the benefits of a a college degree. Besides making students more marketable, it also saves money, as tuition is more affordable than that of a university program.

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