

REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING – ROAD TO A REAL FUTURE

Not really interested in going to College? Do you have an interest in the actual building or putting something together?

What better way to learn a craft or specific skill than by working with an expert? Being an apprentice is an opportunity to learn from a master the skills, 'right way', and ins and outs of a skilled trade. If you want to be a carpenter or cabinetmaker, the best way for you to learn is to observe, shadow, and actually work with a master carpenter or cabinetmaker.

While an apprentice, you will get supervision on the job as well as classroom-type or correspondence instruction. Apprenticeship programs conform to state and industry standards with national recognition. Specifically, apprentices are often sponsored and employed by a company, labor organization, trade association, educational partnerships, or a combination of thereof.

Apprenticeships come in all shapes and sizes. As an apprentice, you actually work in a full-time employment environment for your sponsor, but at the end of your tenure, you'll receive a Certificate of Completion, a nationally recognized credential. An apprenticeship is a self-contained education for your future.

What You Get

Experience, skills, a specialized education, job security, the ability to earn an above average wage and an open door to the future. All you have to do is put in the time, the work, the openness to learn, and the devotion.

What It Can Cost

Guess what? Nine times out of 10, you won't have to pay for your apprenticeship! That's great news. Usually the sponsor pays for 100 percent of an apprenticeship program cost — a chunk of change since we're talking up to 8,000 hours (four years) of on-the-job training.

Only rarely will the student be asked to pick up the cost, but it can happen, so make sure you read the fine print before you sign any agreements. Sometimes you may be asked to purchase certain books, tools, or other incidental items, but no doubt you will want to have these anyway.

BASIC SKILLS NEEDED FOR APPRENTICESHIP ENTRY

A good working knowledge of math is important, almost all apprentice-able occupations require strong math skills. Good communication skills - written and verbal, are also key qualifiers. Apprentices need to know how to follow direction and provide "feed back" to fellow workers. Having a good work ethic - which means you're prepared to take your job and training seriously. Being committed to continually learn while you learn on a day to day basis is very important to your employer and sponsor.

Advantages

As an apprentice, you get to learn to do something that interests you cost-free and be coached by a master. The catch is simply that you have to work hard. That's it, no tricks. Unlike school, where much of the learning involves reading and homework on your own, as an apprentice much of your learning will take place in the actual work environment under the direct supervision of a master or journeyman.

And here's some more good news — you can become an apprentice right after high school, though some states do require that you be 18 to start and you actually get paid to learn! Starting apprentices typically earn approximately 40 percent of the skilled-worker rate, which in most cases is considerably higher than minimum wage. By the end of the program, you'll be totally qualified to make a decent living in your chosen field.

For more information check out these web sites:

<http://exploreapprenticeship.mt.gov/>

<http://wsd.dli.mt.gov/apprenticeship/>

