

The Value Of Internships And Co-op Opportunities For College Students

by Linedda Cates-McIver

If you think that a college diploma is all you need to find a job, you need to rethink your plans right now. Your search will bring you to a harsh reality ... it's difficult to get a good job without experience in a particular field, and you can't get experience until you've had a job.

More and more students are finding out that applied learning such as internships and cooperative education programs (co-ops) give the necessary practical experience, and provides a contact base that is invaluable in the job search process. For employers, these programs allow them to get a jump-start on training a talented young workforce.

"...as an intern you will be given the opportunity to prove yourself and find out if this is the career path you want to follow. This is a unique exploratory opportunity for each student."

"A co-op program paints a more vivid picture of what individuals do in certain professions. Once you experience a certain job environment and see what that job entails, you may not like it.

"...the real benefit of this program is that you are able to acquire work experience that gives you more advantage than a four-year graduate without work experience, thereby, making you more attractive to prospective employers and competitive in the job market."

Excerpts taken from Linedda Cates-McIver is a freelance writer in New Orleans, LA.