

## Benefits of Learning Career Skills and Industry Certifications in HS

### A College Alternative

While a college degree still plays an important role for long-term career success, a degree is no longer the default requirement for launching a well-paying career in information technology. This is especially true in high-demand areas of IT where role-specific skills can be developed in a short period of time and validated with industry certifications.

Students who can prepare for an IT career while still in high school can:

- Start their career right after high school graduation
- Determine whether a career in IT is right for them before spending money and time on a college degree
- Use employer education reimbursements to pursue a degree

### Skills for a Lifetime

IT skills are skills that can be beneficial for a lifetime. Whether it's troubleshooting issues to fix your personal computer or increasing your productivity and effectiveness at work, developing fundamental IT skills early in life can benefit all areas of adulthood.

### A Backup Plan

About 59% of students who began seeking a bachelor's degree at a 4-year institution in fall 2009 completed that degree within 6 years (*National Center for Education Statistics, 2017*). So, over 40% of students who go to college need a backup plan. IT skills gained and certifications earned can provide students who complete some college, but not a degree, with marketable skills to enter the job market if college doesn't work out as planned.

### A Differentiator for College and Career

Even after earning a college degree, the competition for a job can be fierce. Completing a career program and earning industry certifications can differentiate students from others for scholarships and internships while in college and for job opportunities after college.

### Soft Benefits

Build Confidence | Enhance Collaboration Skills | Improve Writing Skills | Establish a Professional Network

## In the News: Career Skills and Certifications

### Report: Colleges and Universities Should Offer More Alternative Credentials

--*Campus Technology, University Professional & Continuing Education Association (UPCEA), Blackboard*

### A New Kind of Tech Job Emphasizes Skills, Not a College Degree

--*The New York Times*

### Why Practical Skills Will Matter More Than Your Degree In The New Economy

--*Fast Company*