

Creating Success: How Vocational Education Empowers Thousands

How Vocational Training Can Unlock True Potential

Part 11/12

Dylan's Story

Dylan never liked high school. If you were a fly on the wall in his 10th-grade geometry class, you could see Dylan with a hand on his forehead, eyes scanning his test back and forth, and in a fit of frustration, throwing his pencil and flinging himself back in his seat. "This is stupid," he would say. The other classmates might not understand, **"Why can't he just do the work?"**

Despite his struggles, he graduated and chose trade school over college. He discovered a passion for working with his hands, and now, as a mechanic, he wakes up every morning happy to go to work (and he may even earn more than many college graduates). Part 8 of this series discussed how disruptive classrooms steal valuable student instruction time. While disruptive behavior can stem from many things, many students like Dylan didn't value education because he thought it was a waste of time when he knew what he wanted to do.

Bachelor's Degrees Don't Guarantee Success

Many students, like Dylan, feel disconnected from the traditional academic path, yet schools still push a university-focused curriculum. However, a growing number of young people are drawn to trade professions, and the demand for such services remains high. A Thumbtack.com survey found that 73% of young adults respect skilled trades, 47% are interested in pursuing them, and 80% see benefits over desk jobs. A Strada Institute report also reveals that 52% of recent college graduates work in jobs that don't require a bachelor's degree.

A university degree doesn't always lead to success.

A New Path to Success

Imagine a dual education system that blends vocational training with academics, like the model in Switzerland. There, **70%** of students follow a vocational track, learning essential skills tailored to their chosen field. The other **30%** are trained, with a rigorous program, to attend a university. Adopting a similar approach in our public schools could reduce many students' frustration and disengagement and fuel their enthusiasm and commitment to learning.

In the U.S., two things could be done:

- High schools must define their vocational tracks and hire trade teachers to deliver the material.
- Employers must collaboratively support and invest in training programs by designing jobs, mentoring students, and offering compensation to ensure a skilled workforce.

It's time to rethink our approach to education. By integrating a well-designed vocational track into our high schools, we can prepare students for real-world success, not just academic achievement.

Authored & Paid For By:
Richard W. Garrett, PhD.
www.elevateschools.us