

Shenika Coleman

Coleman 1

Ms. Hasting

English 105 B

1 October 2002

Life after High School

Many people tend to think that the only option after high school is college, but there are a number of other options. Some of the most obvious options include finding a job, joining the military, and vocational school. Some of the not so obvious ones include apprenticeships, internships, and volunteer work. If you are unsure about what you want to do after high school, then you should consider one of these options. If you do not think college is right for you, and you know what field you would like to work in, then one of these options might also be perfect for you.

Apprenticeship is working with an expert to learn a craft or specific skill. You get supervision on the job as well as classroom-type instruction. Companies, labor organizations, education trusts, and others sponsor apprenticeships. Apprenticeships range from carpentry to cabinet making to just about anything you would be interested in. As an apprentice, you actually work full-time. At the end of your tenure you receive an accredited certificate of completion. On the downside, apprenticeships are hard to come by. It is very hard to find a program of your interest close to where you live. You only get paid 40 percent of the skilled worker rate. Also with an apprenticeship, you have to work extremely hard, but that's true with just about anything you do that you want to excel at.

On a positive note an apprenticeship can be very beneficial and rewarding. You can learn a specific craft or skill for free, and you learn it from a master in that field. In most cases, the sponsor foots the bill for the student and rarely is a student asked to pay for anything. You can start an apprenticeship right after high school, you get paid to learn, and after the completion of the program you are totally and completely qualified to make a decent living in your chosen field.

Internship is a job that lasts for a limited length of time. Internships are a way to get your foot in the door, and get some skill in your chosen profession. The point of an internship is to learn and to gain experience. Because there are so many programs available for interns, it is important to find a program best suited for your needs. There are many programs out there that are very unorganized and could hurt you rather than benefit you. An internship is often set up with specified responsibilities in a company, nonprofit, or other organization. Sometimes they are full time, but depending on the job, the hours can be flexible or irregular. Internships don't pay much, if they pay at all, but they can be very beneficial to your future career.

Internships are very accessible because there are so many programs nationally and internationally. Sponsor organizations usually answer all your questions, so you can learn as much as you want. Another important point is that if you were considering two different fields, an internship in each would help you find out which one you like better, and for many, an internship offers the chance to build confidence through the experience of living under your own roof.

Most people wouldn't think of volunteer work as something they could do after high school, but it's a good way to learn new skills, gain much needed experience, and make some lasting contacts. You get the satisfaction that you did something good and possibly make a difference in someone else's life. Volunteer work comes in many shapes and forms, from tutoring to building homes to delivering meals to homebound people.

Volunteer work doesn't pay, but it gives you skills and experience that you could use later in a paying job. If you decided to do volunteer work, you would have to be very conscientious about your spending habits, and you would have to crunch your dollars. Also, you would have to sacrifice a lot and lower your standard of living, which is usually not a very acceptable way of living to teenagers. On a positive note, you gain a lot of worldly insight, and you gain experience without even having to sign up for it. Because of this, you can see how you do in certain situations and pursue work that really interests you instead of feeling locked into a certain career path or fearing that you might fail. Also, a lot of employers think of volunteer work as a plus on your resume.

College is definitely not for everyone. Most people do not have the ability or the desire needed to pursue a degree. There are other options out there for teenagers after high school. If college is not for you then consider other alternatives. Apprenticeships, internships, and volunteer work are good examples of what options teenagers do have. These options aren't for everyone, so you should take each option and examine it carefully to find which is the right path for you.

Whether it is college, or just simply finding a job, the decision should be very carefully thought out and all the pros and cons should be weighed. The decision you make will impact the rest of your life.