

## WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

*In this chapter, you will explore the jobs available to skilled and unskilled workers.*

- *What opportunities do workers without specific career skills have?*
- *What is the earning potential for an unskilled worker?*
- *How would having a skilled job change your life?*
- *Will you be able to meet your needs and fulfill your goals with the jobs you are qualified for right now?*

### FOR YOURSELF TODAY

***To you, it may not seem like a big deal to get a job. After all, you probably see “help wanted” signs all the time, don't you?*** Of course, most of these jobs require a high school diploma and some previous experience. Sometimes the hours are bad, but you figure the job will help you to pay for a roof over your head and put food on your table.

However, it doesn't take long to realize there is much more to life than just food and shelter. Think about talks you have had with your friends -- what you said you wanted out of life and what your friends said they wanted. How close are you to getting those things with a low-paying, unskilled job?

Let's take a few minutes to figure out how much it costs to live for a month. Suppose the job pays around \$8 per hour, which is realistic for an unskilled job. A full-time job at \$8 per hour before deductions would pay \$320 per week or \$1386 for 4-1/3 weeks, the average working month. Using percentages provided by the Ontario Ministry of Labour, we can create an average budget or your own profit and loss statement for a month. (See table 1)

In the amounts allotted, include all fast food lunches in your food budget; utilities and maintenance in housing; bus, car pool or gas, repairs, insurance, maintenance and license fees for your own car under transportation costs; your laundry, dry cleaning and new clothes in your clothing budget and haircuts or hairstyling under personal care. Housing costs can be kept low provided you either live at home with your parents or share accommodation.

If you make \$8 per hour working full-time, you would have \$356 left over each month after expenses. With that money, you could go to the movies or do other fun things. It would also go toward monthly emergencies. You would probably save some of this money as well so that in the future you will be able to afford a nicer place to live or a better car. You would have many uses for this \$356 wouldn't you?

#### **Why don't you spend the next couple of days doing the following?**

1. Look at apartment rentals in the newspaper.
2. Decide on the clothes you would like to have and check out the prices.
3. Go to the grocery store to buy a week's worth of food, spending no more than \$60. Don't eat at a restaurant all week.
4. Find out how much it costs to ride the bus per week or how much gas costs to run a car for a week.

Have you noticed that there isn't much left over for savings, to buy a car, to take a trip or to do something special for yourself, a friend or a relative? There isn't much left for retirement either. The opportunities to become really free and independent increase with your ability to make money!

Now let's look at the “what ifs”. What if you spent several months or even a year or more training for a career? Let's say you learn a skill that puts you in a job that pays more than an unskilled job. Let's imagine that in this skilled job you earn \$12 per hour. Your total income for 4-1/3

weeks would now be \$2078 instead of just \$1386 and your monthly statement would change for the better. (See table 1)

The additional \$692 per month you receive in pay because of your training will make your living conditions better. You could treat yourself to special events or buy some fun clothes with some planning on your part. Over a lifetime, a difference of \$4 in your hourly wage will mean a significant increase in your income.

For example, if you made \$8 per hour, after 40 years, you would have earned \$665,600. But at \$12 per hour, your earning in 40 years would be much greater...actually totaling almost a million dollars (\$998,400).

These examples are a quick way of answering, "what's in it for me?" to spend my time, money and energy in a training program. But a better job and more pay are just part of the answer – today's answer. Looking down the road at job responsibilities and growth after training provides even more to think about.

<b>TABLE 1: YOUR MONTHLY PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT</b>						
	<b>Based on \$8 per hour Amount</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Based on \$12 per hour Amount</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>MONTHLY DIFFERENCE</b>	
<b>INCOME:</b>	\$1386	100%	\$2078	100%	\$692	
<b>EXPENSES:</b>						
<b>Food</b>	\$260	19%	\$260	13%	---	
<b>Housing</b>	\$300	22%	\$300	14%	---	
<b>Taxes: (EI/CPP)</b>	\$235	17%	\$353	17%	\$118	
<b>Transportation</b>	\$110	8%	\$110	5%	---	
<b>Clothing</b>	\$97	7%	\$97	5%	---	
<b>Personal Care</b>	\$28	2%	\$28	1%	---	
<b>Total Living Expenses</b>	\$1030	75%	\$1148	55%	\$118	
<b>Profit</b>	\$356	25%	\$930	45%	\$574	

### **FOR YOURSELF TOMORROW**

***When employers hire someone in a minimum wage job, they expect a day's work for a day's wages.*** Such work is usually not long-term. If there is less work, the employee will be laid off. If work picks up again and more workers are needed, then there always will be other people around to take the job.

People in minimum wage jobs are often treated like spare parts, used only when needed. You may be a great busboy but your services will no longer be required if business slacks off. Businesses with changing work needs usually hire a lot of unskilled workers.

Another concern with unskilled jobs is the lack of possibilities for advancement. Such work doesn't often involve much training or the chance for development. You may increase your chances to get a better job if there is an opportunity, but most unskilled jobs do not provide such opportunities. You may receive a few dollars increase from time to time which can improve the way you live today, but how about tomorrow?

Teaching you skills that will help you get a better job, make more money, and climb to a level where you are hard to replace in a company is what private career colleges are all about. Having marketable skills is a form of security for you!

## FOR YOURSELF

***“Money isn’t everything” is an old saying, but there may be times when you wonder whether it is true.*** Think about those talks with your friends. What do they want out of life and how do they feel about what they do for a living?

Maybe you think it is enough to find a job which will put a roof over your head and food on your table; but, in addition to needing a paycheck, most people want and need to feel that they are valuable and that what they do has meaning. Of the 16-17 hours you are awake each day, 10 are usually spent in the business of working...2 hours going and coming from work and 8 hours on the job.

The people with whom you work are usually the people with whom you socialize. They are the people who know you and who influence how you feel about yourself. So a job means more than just finding work and making money.

***Today, people are demanding more from their jobs...they are looking for careers. Why?***

1. A career can involve working with interesting things, people and ideas.
2. A career can provide stability and security with a job that you feel will be there tomorrow regardless of changes in the economy.
3. A career is a job with a future, allowing you to learn new things so that you can be promoted and earn more money.
4. A career will demand abilities and talents that not everyone has, that you can be proud of having mastered and that are appreciated by your employers.

You will have reached your first success when you get that new job – the one that requires training. You will have spent money, time and energy planning for this career change. Your success will be the result of deciding on a goal and following the steps described in this guide. You will have proven to yourself and to others that you can plan for your future.

**TABLE 2: COST OF ATTENDING COLLEGE PROGRAMS**

Tuition, including books, lab fees, student fee, etc for 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> year of college forgone income	+ Room and Board	Money you would have earned if you were not attending + college	= Total Costs and (forgone income)
<b>TOTAL COST FOR ATTENDING 1<sup>ST</sup> YEAR</b>			
\$4,000-\$4,500	+ \$5,000-\$6,000	+ \$16,000-18,500	= \$25,000-29,000
<b>TOTAL COST FOR ATTENDING 1<sup>ST</sup> AND 2<sup>ND</sup> YEAR</b>			
\$8,000-\$9,000	+ \$10,000-12,000	+ \$32,000-37,000	= \$50,000-58,000
<b>TOTAL COST FOR ATTENDING 1<sup>ST</sup>, 2<sup>ND</sup> AND 3<sup>RD</sup> YEAR</b>			
\$12,000-13,500	+ \$15,000-18,000	+ \$48,000-55,500	= \$75,000-87,000

## YOUR INVESTMENT

Reaching your future goal will be costly. However, the money you will spend is definitely **investment money**. It's not risky investment money such as it might be if you were to invest in the stock market or even speculate in the housing market. It is money that you will invest in yourself. **You are** in control of your investment.

Not only will you be in control of your investment in yourself, there are not a lot of stocks or real estate investments (over which you have much less control) which will give you anywhere near the kind of return you will receive when you invest in yourself and your training.

Let's look at the cost of your investment. Not many people realize that their training / education investment is often one of the largest investment decisions they will ever make.

## SUMMING IT UP

The first thing that surprises most people when they look at the cost of their post-secondary education is that tuition is always the least costly part about going to school.

There is no question about it. The third column in table 2 shows that the loss of forgone income is the largest single expense of training.

But let us get back to looking at your cost of furthering your education in terms of your investment. Salary surveys show over and over again that the gap between the unskilled and the skilled employee in remuneration (not to mention opportunity) – already wide -- is widening dramatically. In your 40 year working lifetime, it would not be at all unreasonable for you to turn your training investment decision into a half million dollar additional salary.

There is no doubt that your education investment decision, **INVESTING IN YOURSELF**, although costly, can be one of the most important decisions you will ever make.