

SO YOU'VE GRADUATED ... NOW WHAT?

JOANNE RICHARD
POSTMEDIA NETWORK

More than half of working Canadians want a diploma do-over

Regrets, you've had a few ... so, too, graduates. Especially if you just graduated with a degree in cultural anthropology, sociology, or philosophy? How about medieval history or English?

While some degrees bring on the ecstasy of an immediate job, for others it's the agony of regret, debt and unemployment. More than ever what you study is the best indicator of future employability and earnings potential.

As students wave goodbye to their university and college days, and say hello to the real world, Facebook news feeds will soon be flooded with happy grad images. But in reality, there'll be lots of doubts and distress behind those huge grad grins.

A survey by Totaljobs.com has found that more than four in 10 graduates wish they'd studied a different subject at university. Add to that more than half of working Canadians who would want a degree/diploma do-over if they could go back in time, reports a new Monster survey.

Ryan C. wishes he had taken a different program. The newest addition to stocking shelves at a local grocery store, Ryan asked to omit his last name since his "useless BA" degree cost him \$70,000, one-third of which he owes in student loans. "It's embarrassing. For me, it's one costly mistake and I

still don't know what I want to do," says the 25-year-old Mississauga resident.

If he could have a degree re-do, he'd go for one with real-world applications, like marketing, but right now doesn't have the money to retrain. "Talk to people in the profession, research the outcomes and get feedback — that's what I should have done!"

Getting degrees are no longer synonymous with getting a job — and if you bucked the sciences and went heavy on helping kids and families, your paycheck is likely going to be on the meagre side, and likely your job prospects too.

But hold on, CIBC World Markets recently reported that completing post-secondary education is still the best route to a well-paying, quality job in Canada. And

a recent survey reports that 87% of university grads are employed within six months of graduation, and almost 94% within two years.

According to the survey released by the Council of Ontario Universities (COU), university graduates in full-time jobs earn an average salary of almost \$42,000 six months after graduation; two years later it's up by \$7,000. Employment rates and earnings for university under-

graduates are higher than any other level of education, reports the survey which polled more than 83,000 Ontario university

grads in 2013.

Six months after graduation, 72.3% of graduates working full time considered their work either closely or somewhat related to the subject matter of their program; two years after graduation, that number goes up to 77.9%.

If you're regretting your last four years, keep in mind that all education has value. According to Crystal Campbell, president of c2 coaching + consulting, "remind your-

self that you made the best choice with the data and level of self-awareness that you had at the time. Don't be afraid to start over or pivot in a new direction. It's an

opportunity to build what you really want for yourself."

Reframe the situation

Ask yourself, what can I control? What's the opportunity? "There's a chance you're exaggerating the impact of your seemingly less-than-ideal degree choice, causing yourself unnecessary worry and stress. Think about how you want to take charge of your circumstance and be in the driver's seat to move you ahead," says Campbell.

Show some self-compassion

None of us have a superhero ability to see into the future and know what

it will truly take for us to land fulfilling jobs, says the career and leadership coach. "Life is messy and complex, and career paths don't always follow a straight line from degree completion to career success."

Learn from the experience

Think about what attracted you to the degree initially. Looking back, what do you know today that might not line up with what you first thought about the program? What would you do differently now? "Remember FAIL is an acronym for First Attempt In Learning."

Stay positive

Sometimes the smallest step forward following what seems like an epic fail ends up being the biggest and best step yet.



Crystal Campbell



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Want to be a millionaire? Take your pick — included are the percentages of millionaires that studied each subject:

1. MBA (12.1%)
2. Engineering (10.7%)
3. Economics (8.2%)
4. Business studies/business administration (5.9%)
5. Law (4.7%)
6. Accountancy (2.9%)
7. Finance (2.1%)
8. Management (2.0%)
9. Commerce (1.9%)
10. Computer science (1.9%)

— SPEAR'S MAGAZINE AND WEALTHINSIGHT

Worst cities to find a job:

1. Kelowna
2. Peterborough
3. Calgary
4. St. John's, Nfld.
5. Kitchener

6. Sudbury
7. Barrie
8. Saskatoon
9. Brantford
10. Halifax

— BMO LABOUR MARKET REPORT 2016

Some of the worst degrees to find a job within six months of graduation:

1. Physical sciences
2. Agriculture/biological sciences
3. Journalism
4. Forestry
5. Fine and applied arts
6. Mathematics
7. Humanities

— COUNCIL OF ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES

Best degrees to find a job:

1. Vet
2. Therapy and rehab (tied)
3. Medicine
4. Optometry
5. Pharmacy
6. Dentistry
7. Law
8. Kinesiology
9. Nursing
10. Education

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