

Career Opportunities for students

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Taking a Break for Work Experience

Many students toy with the idea of taking a break during their studies and spending a year gaining some work experience. There are both advantages and disadvantages of such a move. Before you take a decision, consider the following factors:

1. Working, even for a short time and in an entry-level or apprentice type job, gives you a practical exposure to how working conditions will be in a particular field. Hence ensure that if you are taking up a job, it should be in the area you are considering as a career.
2. Break is better after finishing a basic degree. A break after 10+2 may neither get you a good job, nor enough exposure for you to decide what career is most suitable to you.
3. Ensure that you are the type who will be able to get back to studies, and not get enamored by the money and glamour of being a working person.
4. Finalize a job before stopping studies. It may be paying very less (or in extreme cases, not at all), but the organization should give you opportunities to learn, and not just do routine work.
5. When taking a break from regular courses, keep up your habit of studying either by taking up short term or correspondence courses, or by studying on your own the topics relevant to your work.
6. If you are already clear about what career you are going to take, then it is better to continue uninterrupted studies and acquire higher qualifications.

Should I work while studying?

Many students have a desire to earn some money or gain experience while they are studying. Some parents encourage, while others are apprehensive that work may distract the student, bring down his grades, put him into wrong company, or take away his motivation to study further. Those who do wish to work can follow these steps to determine the right balance:

- First settle down in the new course you have taken up, whether it is PUC, degree or post-graduate. Get thoroughly familiar with your books, classes schedules, traveling time, and how are your energy levels.
- List out the possible careers you are going to take up eventually. Ensure that the job you take up gives you some exposure or experience in one of them. Do NOT take up a job in a field of work that you will not be pursuing, even if the money is good.
- Join an organization where the work culture is such that people share information with you. Do not get stuck in a monotonous repetitive job where you are doing the same tasks every day.
- Do not make a long term commitment, and avoid organizations that slowly start extending your working hours. Periodically check whether you are able to keep up your academic standards while working, and ensure that your employer gives you holidays before your exams.
- If at any time you feel uncomfortable with your work, or you find that you are too tired to keep up with your studies, quit immediately. Do not allow your short term earning to affect your long term success.
- While working, ask your seniors to give you frank and critical evaluation of your work, your strengths and your achievements. This in turn will help you narrow down your long term career goals.

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