

Apple, IBM, and Google don't care anymore if you went to college

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Four-year degrees not required. Woo hoo!

Recently, the job review site Glassdoor compiled a list [of 15 different companies](#) that don't require job applicants to have college degrees. The list includes high-paying tech outlets like Apple, Google, and IBM, in addition to service-oriented companies like Costco, Starbucks, and Chipotle.

Abandoning the four-year degree as a qualification might feel like a dramatic break from hiring orthodoxy. But in some ways, it's more surprising that so many companies still insist upon a degree in the first place.

"Academic qualifications will still be taken into account and indeed remain

an important consideration when assessing candidates as a whole, but will no longer act as a barrier to getting a foot in the door," Maggie Stilwell, Ernst and Young's managing partner for talent, [told the Huffington Post](#) when that company dropped the requirement.

In other words: Companies will hire the candidates whose experience and skills best suit them for the job. Many of those successful applicants will have university degrees. Some of them will not.

Google acknowledged several years ago that college transcripts and test scores are worthless predictors of later job performance. (The only exceptions were [very recent graduates](#), and even then the correlation was weak.) At IBM, where roughly 15% of new hires in the US don't have college degrees, CEO Ginni Rometty [has said that](#) vocational courses and on-the-job experience offer more relevant training for many tech sector positions than a four-year college degree.

It's not that college degrees are useless. For many people, university is the place where they acquire skills employers value. But automatically discounting people who earn that same knowledge through a different path can be counterproductive.

Which hypothetical resume offers a more convincing case for a candidate's work ethic or motivation: one from a recent college graduate who majored in computer science, or that of a self-taught coder who acquired those same skills while also managing full-time employment? What a person knows is more important than how they learned it.