

Use holidays to learn skills



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As Senior Four and Six students come to the end of their national exams, many wonder what they are going to do with all the time they have at their disposal during holidays.

Many students have plans of what they want to do, while others have no plan at all. They have left everything to fate. Some will embark on searching for jobs, while others will help out their parents in various activities.

With such a small economy riddled with unemployment, you cannot expect that many of the young high school leavers to have any meaningful productive employment.

To make the long vacation productive, I advise parents as well as holidaymakers to take on vocational training. They should not wait until examination results are released by the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) next year.

Even those whose ambition is to go to university, it is just prudent that they take on vocational training during the long vacation.

The course will add value to one's skills, even with a university degree.

Vocational courses, such as carpentry, welding



Students can use the long holiday to embark on vocational training, such as bakery, clothing and textile, welding, carpentry, adornment and decoration, among others

(metalwork), bakery, adornment (decorations), clothing and textiles, fashion-designing, among others are some of the vocational courses high school leavers can undertake.

Of course, in Uganda there is still a strong negative perception towards vocational education. There is a widely circulated misnomer that only academically weak people should undertake vocational courses.

This is an attitudinal cancer that has to be dealt with, changing the mindsets of students and parents by clearly explaining to them the benefits of vocational training to the individual learner, community and the nation.

Parents and teachers should campaign for vocational training, students take such courses.

One of the advantages of vocational training is that it focuses on practical skills

TOP TIP ✓

A vocational course will add value to one's skills in life, even with a university degree

which students can put to use, for survival in earning a living.

Vocational training programmes focus on teaching students how to perform the tasks that would be required of them in the workforce. Since the training is related to their fields, students often find jobs easier than people with general academic backgrounds.

Another benefit of vocational training is that training programmes can prepare students to get into the workforce more quickly than many academic education programmes. Vocational courses prepare

students for specific career fields in a short period of time, which is a significantly smaller commitment than doing a four-year university course.

The programmes tend to be less expensive than longer academic educational programmes. This means that for a good number of parents, this is a greater option children to make money and study at the same time.

Otherwise, undertaking a university degree in a purely academic programme for three or four years, with a lot of money invested, but at times with no practical skills.

It is alright to go for any course after the Uganda National Examinations Board has released the results.

However, until then, take time and improve your skills. Take that vocational course. You will never regret it.

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