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Do Our Degrees Match Our Skills?

Growing up in a household very low on the socioeconomic scale, job salary has been a topic of interest of me for as long as I can remember. In a recent publication, The Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce (2014) pointed out that most companies that pay their workers at least \$35,000 per year, enough to be considered middle-class, require at least an associate's degree. Even with this research, there is also research from a separate study reported by Bloomberg (2015) that states 36% of high school graduates sans a college degree earn \$35,000 or more a year as well. This is due to the fact that they work in jobs that are considered to be manual labor, or less skilled positions that do not require formal education.

The question that immediately comes to my mind is that if even administrative assistant and office machine repair technician positions require some college experience, what KSAOs should hiring managers be looking for in the candidates for these positions? In response to this, I would say that the "knowledge piece" hiring managers generally look for as it relates to college experience would be a broad spectrum of knowledge learned from general classes as well as position specific knowledge learned from core classes. The skills in which hiring managers should be looking for would be position-specific skills necessary to perform their daily tasks—many of which are not necessarily learned in a college atmosphere. The abilities that are needed for proficiency at any position refer more to "general enduring capabilities" that one possesses. A hiring manager should look for whether or not the candidate's college experience gave them an opportunity to become well-rounded enough to possess such general enduring capabilities. As for other capabilities, like personality traits, a hiring manager may not be able to look toward one's college experience for help here. Instead, they must use other methods to obtain the

candidates that they want that fit the personality needs they have that best suits their company atmosphere.