

These ‘AI-Resistant’ Jobs Don’t Require a College Degree – and Starting Salaries Can Surpass \$70,000 a Year

As the cost of a college education continues to climb, with average tuition and fees seeing a 60% jump between 2000 and 2022, some young adults wonder about the return on such a significant investment – and how rapid advancements in AI might impact their entry-level job prospects.

Big Tech companies, including Google, Meta and Microsoft, recruited fewer recent graduates in 2024 than they did in previous years, per a recent report from venture capital firm SignalFire. The firm’s head of research, Asher Bantock, told TechCrunch that “convincing evidence” points to AI as a major contributor.

Related: AI Is Dramatically Decreasing Entry-Level Hiring at Big Tech Companies, According to a New Analysis

Of course, tech roles aren’t the only ones at risk of automation: McKinsey & Company estimated that between 400 and 800 million individuals across occupations could lose their jobs to AI by 2030.

Resume Now, a resume writing service company established in 2004, set out to find the top jobs that don’t require a college degree, are “AI-resistant” and offer starting salaries of \$50,000 or more.

Resume Now's report, which analyzed data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, honed in on 13 promising roles – all of which are growing faster or much faster than other jobs on the market.

Related: The Average Cost of a College Education Is \$153,080. These Are the Majors and Careers That Provide the Highest Return on Investment.

According to the data, several trade professions led the list in terms of median pay: forest fire inspectors (\$71,420), flight attendants (\$68,370) and lodging managers (\$65,360).

“Careers requiring significant human interaction, manual dexterity in unpredictable environments and complex problem-solving in real-time” emerged as those least susceptible to AI's rise, the research found.

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Read on for Resume Now's full ranking of the top 13 fast-growing, higher-paying and AI-resistant careers for high school graduates:

1. Forest fire inspectors and prevention specialists
2. Flight attendants
3. Lodging managers
4. Electricians
5. Plumbers, pipefitters and steamfitters
6. Industrial machinery mechanics
7. Chefs and head cooks
8. Hearing aid specialists
9. Personal service managers
10. Maintenance workers, machinery
11. Insurance sales agents
12. Aircraft cargo handling supervisors
13. Security and fire alarm systems installers

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