

Looking for a recession-proof career?

With the rising cost of gas and food and the crisis in the financial markets, there's no doubt that the economy is on everyone's mind. If you are worried about losing your job, you are not alone. The American economy lost 84,000 jobs in August and the unemployment rate rose to 6.1 percent, the highest since 2003.

The economy is also a major issue in the presidential election, as the two candidates debate how best to shore up the credit markets and reduce housing foreclosures and unemployment. This focus on the economy is not just politics as usual — nationwide, 9.4 million Americans are unemployed, a figure that has grown by 2.2 million in the past year alone.

If you are one of the millions of Americans who has lost a job, Dr. Ben Carlisen, program director of Business Administration and General Education at Everest Institute in Hialeah, Fla., suggests that you consider whether you need a new career, not just a new job. "In times of recession, retail and manufacturing jobs are often the first to go. But the fact is, skilled labor is always in

demand," says Carlisen. Despite our economic slowdown, the need for skilled labor is growing fast. According to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, the percentage of professional and technical jobs in the United

States grew from 15.7 percent in 1988 to approximately 19.4 percent in 2008. The total number of professional and technical jobs is estimated to be more than 31 million in 2008.

Carlisen says that sometimes returning to school may be the best option for workers who have been laid off from a job. "Individuals and for the future."

Carlisen explains that education is crucial to getting a recession-proof

legal positions. Regardless of the industry, the Department of Education estimates that 90 percent of the fastest-growing jobs over the next decade will require some form of post-secondary education.

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legal positions. Regardless of the industry, the Department of Education estimates that 90 percent of the fastest-growing jobs over the next decade will require some form of post-secondary education. Going back to school will not only help prepare you for an in-demand, recession-proof career, it can also help you earn more money. Research consistently shows that higher education leads to considerable and measurable improvements in the financial prospects of graduates. On average, a person with an associate's degree earns 20 to 30 percent more than a high school graduate, while a person with a bachelor's degree earns 77 percent more than a high school graduate. And this money adds up over a person's lifetime. U.S. Census Bureau data shows that while a high school graduate earns \$1.2 million over his or her lifetime, an associate degree holder earns about \$1.6 million and a bachelor's degree holder earns \$2.1 million. "At Everest, we focus on ensuring that all our graduates have the skills they need to be successful at their careers. We know that there is no substitute for the peace of mind that job security brings," says Carlisen.

