

# A Degree is a Signal, But Not the Kind You Think

The signaling theory of higher ed is correct, except it's not a career signal, it's a social signal.

You can build a better professional signal and better career in a fraction of the time for a fraction of the cost outside college conveyor belt.

What you can't get is universal praise from parents, peers, etc. Even unemployed degree holders get more social praise than successful opt/dropouts.

If you want to conform to cultural superstition, get a degree. If you want to build a career, don't waste your time.

Apply to 10 jobs under 2 aliases. One with resume/degree, one with personalized pitch deck/video, project demonstrating value creation for the company. See which signal matters more.

No one bothers to check what degree really gets them careerwise or whether roles of interest need it.

They're not buying career enhancement. They're buying paper prestige for mom and dad and strangers.

"If this were true everyone would be opting out" is false.

It's true that healthy eating and exercise make you fit, yet vast majority don't do it.

Show me an employer whose *highest* value is social conformity, and I'll show you a bureaucratic hellhole.