

No, It's Not the Degree

I often see people say things like, "Sure, they say you don't need a fancy degree to get the job, but then they hire people with fancy degrees."

It's not because companies are lying about not needing a degree. It's because candidates are totally lame and uninteresting.

In a pool of generic, flat, 2D resumes and applications, the better formal credential will get more attention, because there's nothing else to go on. In such a pool it's also true that anyone who can show anything more interesting than a paper credential will also get more attention. That is a really low bar.

Degrees are incredibly weak, flabby signals. Anyone with average or above intelligence, drive, or ambition is undersold by the signal of a degree, since they are already capable of proving more with just a tiny bit of creativity and work.

Don't blame the credential. Be more interesting.