EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT COSMETOLOGY
NATURE OF WORK

In 2009, a British job satisfactory survey said that hairstylists ranked No. 1 compared to all other occupations [2]. It’s no surprise. Those who go into a career in cosmetology enjoy beautifying their clients. The satisfaction comes from helping other people become more confident about the way they look and feel.

A cosmetologist is anyone who performs manicures, pedicures, hair cutting, hair styling, shampooing, makeup, or other cosmetology services. Their main goal is to enhance the appearance of their clients. Other workers include beauty, theatrical, and performance makeup artists, and skin care specialists.

Cosmetologists can be trained in all aspects of cosmetology or choose to focus on a more specialized job. These specialties include:

- Nail technicians- those who perform manicures, pedicures, polishing, and nail extensions
- Estheticians- skin care specialists that cleanse skin, give facials, full-body skin treatments, apply makeup, and perform laser treatments
- Makeup artists- those who apply makeup to enhance a person’s appearance. Can work on theatrical and performance makeup to enhance artists’ appearance for stage, movie, and television performances.
- Shampooers- work shampooing and conditioning hair
- Hairstylists- those who color, perm, cut, and style hair

TRAINING/EDUCATION

In order to become a cosmetologist, you will need to attend a training program at a cosmetology school, beauty school, or cosmetology college. The age you can begin training varies from state to state although in most states 16 years is the minimum. Some states require that you have a GED or high school diploma.

Programs differ between schools from general curriculum to more specialized courses, such as hair design, skin care, or nail technology. Regardless, every state requires that you graduate from a licensed cosmetology school in order to work legally.

QUICK FACTS

- A cosmetologist is anyone who is involved in doing manicures, pedicures, hair cutting, hair styling,
- The average annual salary varies depending on the type of job, however, salon professionals can average up to $50,000 annually including tips [1].
- In order to become a cosmetologist you need to attend a training program at cosmetology school, cosmetology college, or beauty school and be at least 16 years old in most states.
- Cosmetology jobs are projected to increase 14% by 2016
No matter what program you go into, you will learn the basic skills of cosmetology including:

• Cutting and styling hair
• Coloring, bleaching, and highlighting hair
• Applying chemical perms to hair
• Nail care and grooming
• Skin care and make-up application
• Hair removal methods
• Use and care of instruments
• Sanitation and hygiene
• Relevant chemistry, anatomy, and physiology
• Recognition of common skin diseases

Education expenses usually range from $6,500 to $10,000. Tuition of course varies based on where you live, training required by your state, and the actual program you will be attending.

Most cosmetology training programs take anywhere from a few months to a year to complete. There are several schools that offer shorter programs, but they do not incorporate all skills necessary to be proficient in the field.

For those of you who have already obtained a cosmetology license, you may be interested in taking online courses in cosmetology to keep you current on the latest techniques in the industry. There are a vast variety of programs that offer online courses with the convenience of taking them where you want, when you want, and at what speed you want. If you are a beginner in cosmetology taking classes with hands on experience is the best. Online cosmetology schools are directed toward more advanced and experienced cosmetologists.
EMPLOYMENT

In 2006, there were about 825,000 people working in cosmetology. Of those, 677,000 jobs were held by hairstylists and cosmetologists, 78,000 jobs were held by nail technicians, 38,000 jobs were held by estheticians, 29,000 jobs were held by shampooers, and 2,100 jobs were held by makeup artists [1].

Cosmetologists mainly work in beauty salons, barber shops, nail salons, day spas, resort spas, and residential care homes. Many are also self-employed. About 46% of cosmetologists own their own salon [1].

JOB OUTLOOK

According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, jobs in cosmetology are projected to increase 14% by 2016 [1]. This is faster than average compared to all other occupations in the country. This growth is a result of the increasing population, the increasing demand for personal appearance services, and the increase of hair treatment needed by teens and aging baby boomers.

JOB UPLOOK

Advancement in cosmetology is usually in gaining higher earnings as experience and client base build. Some cosmetologists go on to teach at cosmetology and beauty schools. Others advance to become image and fashion consultants, examiners for state licensing boards, and sales representatives.
EARNINGS

The average annual salary of cosmetologists varies depending on the type of job you will do, however, salon professionals can average up to $50,000 annually including tips [1].

Where you work, what hours you work, the size of your salon, training, and experience all determine how much you will make. Those working in more prominent cities will yield much higher earnings. A salon’s reputation is also a big factor in determining how much earning potential you will have.
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LINKS

Careers in Beauty: http://www.beautyschools.org/associations/7485/careersinbeauty.cfm

The National Cosmetology Association (NCA): http://www.ncacares.org/

The Professional Beauty Association (PBA): http://www.probeauty.org/

REFERENCES

