Reasons for pursuing a career in ICT

Today's world is a digital one, where technology touches every aspect of our business and personal lives. Information has become the currency of the new economy, and businesses are scrambling to find the digital skills they need to survive. This alone is making a career in ICT a compelling option for many school leavers, but it is far from the only reason this sector is an excellent choice.

Gary Bannatyne, MD and co-founder of Level Up

Gary Bannatyne, MD and co-founder of Level Up, discusses his top reasons for pursuing a career in ICT.

Firstly, technology is an incredibly wide field with a huge variety of career choices. It is highly diverse and goes well beyond IT support or fixing PCs. A foundational course in ICT enables students to steer their careers in a number of different directions, from architects and engineers, to mobile or Web developers.

There are also a number of C-level roles in ICT, including chief technical officer, chief information officer and chief digital officer. Essentially, graduates can specialise in their area of interest, and as this is one sector where the pace of change is unprecedented, they are unlikely to get bored or become stagnant.

In addition, jobs in the tech space are generally extremely well paid, as the job market and demand for skills is constantly growing. The digital skills gap is highly publicised, so those with the right skills can almost cherry-pick the organisations they would prefer to work for.

Hands-on and practical

Another benefit of pursuing a career in a technological field is that a large part of any course or programme will be hands-on and practical. Those who fear growing bored with endless theory need not worry, there are plenty of opportunities to write code and make cool things. While knowledge is crucial in any career, learning is both easier and more enjoyable when you can see what you're learning by applying that knowledge.

Another good reason for studying ICTs after school is that this career is more flexible than most. If you're a team player, there are many roles in ICT that enable you to do just that. If you prefer working solo, there are a number of jobs out there that require this.

Technology never sleeps, so many roles allow you to work according to your own schedule and preferences. Being able to structure your work and personal life according to your specific needs leads to a happier, and more satisfying life too.

Further opportunities

There are also opportunities to earn on the side, as many ICT professionals start and run small IT businesses on the side, in addition to their full-time roles. This not only helps grow your skills faster, but helps supplement your income, and could just see you being the next founder of a successful startup.

In a digital world, management professionals need to have a basic knowledge of software and hardware to be able to talk the language of technology. Those who don't understand technology on a foundational level will find it difficult to manage techies and information risks being lost in translation.

Moreover, one of the greatest areas of potential, is for technology to create new behaviours or systems, as opposed to simply changing the way things are currently done.

Technology plays a vital role in the business world, providing the tools and functions on which almost all organisations across the world run. It helps generate new products and services, which in turn improves productivity, output and innovation.

Remember, the need for ICT professionals will only grow over time, and the better your skill set the more in demand your experience will be.