

Dear New Cisco Academy Student:

You may not even realize it yet, but you have made an incredibly wise decision to attend the Cisco Academy at CVCC this year. It says a lot about you that you have decided to rise to a challenge rather than look for an easy way out of the last two years of high school. Deciding to step-up doesn't mean that it won't be fun . . . . it will be fun! But I also promise you that it will be a very busy two years.

The secret to being a successful IT engineer is to **be curious!** Have a desire to want to know how something works then study it until you understand it!

"The cure for boredom is curiosity. There is no cure for curiosity." ~Dorothy Parker

You are about to embark on a path to a professional IT career that can lead to tremendous personal gratification and financial success. However, nothing is guaranteed. **You** are the only person who can decide that **you** are worth the effort to be successful (*it's all about you*). I can help you learn, but I cannot force you to learn anything. If you want to learn I'm here to help guide and help you. If you don't want to learn, that is your decision and you must live with the negative consequences of your decision.

**There are no shortcuts** to IT career success. You must:

- Put forth the effort
- Put in the time
- Make sacrifices
- Attain the knowledge and skills you need
- **Learn how to apply that knowledge** to solve real-world IT problems

Your employer is going to expect you to fix things – to make things work that are not working with the skills and knowledge that you have learned in our class and labs.

The 2024/2025 school year will be my 23rd year as a technology teacher; and my 20<sup>th</sup> year teaching the Cisco Academy. I love the Cisco Academy experience! The academy is an awesome way to learn introductory IT concepts and develop very valuable skills. Many of the 100's of former students have graduated from college, have fabulous careers, and have told me that taking this Cisco class was the best decision they made in high school. Others, however, didn't believe in themselves, the opportunity, or simply decided not to work very hard. Consequently, some of those past students who didn't seize the opportunity are working in drab jobs, frequently for very low pay. Some of these students I see again at Tri-C attempting to take the entire class yet a second time!

You won't get to redo this high school opportunity – you'll only get one chance. The Cisco Academy can change the trajectory of your life and make it better – it's your decision to make. **The power that you have is in the decisions that you make.** Treat this class just like any other class that you've taken just to get it over-with and the result will be just like any other class you took just to get it over-with. You won't be any better off and it will have just been a big waste of your time.

Some people find learning harder than others. It's not fair, but that's life. People who find learning more difficult just have to work a little harder than others. Everyone's a little different, but everyone can be just

as successful if they are very sincere about their desire to learn and willing to put forth the effort. A strong work ethic has more value than high I.Q. in almost any profession. My job is to help everyone be as successful as they can be – I can't learn it for you and learning takes effort. Show me that you take the course seriously and I'll do whatever I can to do to help you be successful. Show me that you don't care, don't want to work, cheat, and I'll give my time and attention instead to those students who do want to learn.

**Dream about your future.** Visualize yourself being who you want to become! It is very powerful to visualize who you want to be. Think about where you want to be in five years; in ten years; in twenty years. Think about the decisions you will have to make for you to get from where you are today to where you want to go, who you want to be. Have a vision of what your life will be like when you've "made it".

Online games, Facebook, and texting your friends can be a tremendous distraction. Learn how to create a balance between work and fun. Prioritizing your time is an important life-skill. After finishing class for the day, think about what we have done in class and make sure you understand it. If you didn't quite understand something, study the concept at home until you understand it. If you struggled with a skill in class, practice it at home until you can do it easily in Packet Tracer. You will have access to almost all of the resources at home that you have in class.

We are going to work together on your personal "brand." We want your brand to be so appealing that any employer will choose your brand over anyone else's brand.

These last two years of high school are a transitional period in your life when you must decide to become a serious young adult who is getting ready for college or a career. Making mature decisions proves to everyone (including your family) that you are successfully making this transition to adulthood. Demonstrating that you can make mature decisions proves to both you and your parents that you are not a child anymore and that you are becoming a young adult.

At the same time - enjoy! The last two years of high school can be one of the best periods of your life. You'll never get a chance to enjoy them again – ever. It's all about balance. I'm really excited about watching you in the next two years become even more awesome than you already are!

Mr. Tim R. Moore  
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