



# WASHING GREASY POTS, REPAIRING RVs, AND OTHER TOUGH JOBS

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It's amazing how quickly you can forget all the long hours of flipping burgers when the oh-how-sweet-it-is paycheck finally arrives. As explained in *For the Strength of Youth*, "One of the blessings of work is developing self-reliance" ([2011], 41).

However, income is only one of the blessings that come from work. All jobs—even the tough ones—have something to teach us.

Still have doubts? Check out these examples in action!



## TOUGH JOB #1: UNEXPECTED MISSION PREP

What makes a job tough often comes down to your preferences. For Mindy F., a couple of tasks at a pizza parlor made her job one of the hardest she'd ever had.

"I absolutely hated talking to people on the phone!" she says. "I always wanted to be in the back making pizzas and let the other people answer the phone."

However, this was a small pizza parlor. Mindy often worked alone while the one other employee on duty was out on delivery, which meant Mindy had to answer phones. "It's such a silly thing, but I hated doing it," she says.

Something else she hated was knocking on doors for deliveries. Even though customers had called for pizza, she still didn't like approaching their homes. "It was so awkward just knocking on a random stranger's door," she says.

Mindy had only taken the job to fill the six weeks between coming home from college and her mission. And yet, it's amazing how a few weeks of practice can help you improve at something. By the end of her six weeks, Mindy felt much more comfortable on the phone and with door approaches.

At the MTC, Mindy was answering phones in the referral center with confidence. Door approaches were also a big part of her mission. And the pizza job had helped with those skills.

YOU CAN LEARN COOL STUFF WHEN YOU TAKE A JOB  
NONE OF YOUR FRIENDS WILL TOUCH.

## TOUGH JOB #2: NOT YOUR AVERAGE OFFICE JOB

It takes a lot of grit, backbone, and just plain courage to accept a job cleaning out raw sewage tanks when the job you applied for was an office position. But if you can pull it off? "Bragging rights!" says Jen F. after she did just that.

Jen was looking for summer employment when she heard about an office job at a nearby RV-rental facility. She applied and was later asked if she would instead be interested in becoming an RV mechanic for the summer. They'd provide the training.

"I didn't know anything about cars, but I figured I could learn," Jen says. She accepted.

The work was hard. And greasy. And it came with long hours. "I was dirty all the time," she says. "I felt gross all the time." Jen was in charge of cleaning out the sewage systems, checking generators, performing oil changes, inspecting for damage, and completing maintenance and other minor repairs on the rented RVs.

She'd come home exhausted at the end of each day. But what did she gain by the end? "This job taught me a lot about self-reliance," Jen says. "I know I can learn any skill that I need to. It was empowering."

She also earned enough money during that single summer to pay for a big trip.

## TOUGH JOB #3: BEWARE THE BLACK APRON

At age 15, Michael M. found his first job. A local cafeteria was the only place around hiring people his age. Most job duties revolved around dishes: busing tables, loading the dishwasher, and so forth. Employees would read their task for the day when they showed up for work.

“If it was busing tables, we’d rejoice,” Michael says. “But the worst thing, what you didn’t want to get, was *pots*.”

Picture a medieval knight poised in battle armor, sword in hand, ready to battle an angry dragon. Now replace the armor with a full-body rubber apron, the sword with a high-pressure sprayer, and the dragon with a greasy, scorched-bottom pot.

That was pots.

The black rubber apron was heavy and hot. The water was even hotter. And the high-powered spray from the hose practically guaranteed a drenching even with the rubber apron and hat. “It was a hot, dirty, stinky job,” Michael says about pots. “We all hated it.”

A lot of teenagers couldn’t cut it. They’d hire on and then bail within weeks. However, Michael and a friend made an agreement with each other to stick it out an entire summer, and they both did.

For Michael, the experience he gained from that job far

outweighed the downsides. “That first job, as awful as it was, made me appreciate the easier jobs I had later.”

After saying good-bye to the cafeteria, Michael worked at a fast-food restaurant, then at a grocery store, and next at a movie theater concessions stand. At each job he had a positive attitude toward the work because of what he’d learned from his first job. “You learn lessons at your first job,” Michael says. “Something good can come out of every job experience.”

### All Honest Work

“A consecrated life is a life of labor,” teaches Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “All honest work is the work of God” (“Reflections on a Consecrated Life,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 16–17).

Again, *all honest work* is the work of God. Even the tough stuff. So the next time a tough job comes along that makes most teenagers cringe, don’t be afraid to put on your work shoes and jump in with both feet.

There’s a lot more than money waiting for you at the end. **NE**

