

Analysis time – community colleges.

Community colleges still don't get the dollars of their four-year counterparts(1), but they're standing very much in the spotlight(2) these days. President Barack Obama made them the focus last week when he unveiled(3) his proposed budget. Why all the attention? One reason is that so-called(4) 'middle skill' jobs - requiring more than high school but less than a full college degree - look like the most promising source of fuel(5) for quickly revving(6) up an economic recovery. Federal data show they account for roughly(7) half of all jobs, and even when unemployment was over 10 percent, companies reported shortages(8) of qualified workers.

1. Counterpart is a very effective word for referring to a related item, especially if you want to avoid repetition. So, instead of saying : Community colleges still don't get the dollars of four-year colleges, you substitute in 'their four-year counterparts. We usually use a possessive adjective with counterpart(s) because it relates to the subject. Also, often an adjective or two about the counterpart are often given in order to make it clear what the counterpart actually is. In the paragraph 'four-year' obviously relates to larger, full-time universities.

Ex: He was much faster than his stronger, heavier counterparts on the team.

Ex: The country dental clinics are more personable than their larger, urban counterparts.

2. To be in the spotlight, or to stand in the spotlight means to have a lot of attention. It's a great visual description of someone or something having all eyes on them.

Ex: Senator Brown is very much in the spotlight after his comments on the new tax bill.

Ex: The financial difficulties of Greece are still very much in the global spotlight.

3. To unveil is to show something for the first time, or to show something that has been hidden.

Ex: The sculptor unveiled his latest statue that has been donated to the city.

Ex: The city has just unveiled plans for a new park.

4. So-called is used to qualify a description that might not be accurate.

Ex: He's the so-called 'King of Pop'. So-called here shows that perhaps not everyone agreed with the title. There is no way of measuring if he really is the king of pop.

Ex: The so-called free medical care has proven to be quite expensive.

5. Fuel, in this instance, doesn't mean actual combustible fuel. It is used to show the idea that the President wants to stimulate or ignite the economy. It is implied that he wants the economy to grow like a fire gets bigger and bigger.

Ex: I wouldn't argue with him. You'll just add fuel to his argument (fire).

6. To rev up is similar to the word fuel. It is short for revolutions. To rev is usually used with engines, when you push the accelerator in and out and make the engine noise increase and decrease. It is often used figuratively.

Ex: Wake up, have your coffee, let's get revved up for the meeting.

Ex: My neighbor likes to rev his engine, even though his car is tiny.

7. Roughly is often used instead of approximately or nearly.

Ex: The company has increased production by roughly 50 percent.

Ex: Roughly a third of elementary school children are obese.

8. Shortage(s) is often used for a lack of. We see it a lot when talking about employment or produce of some kind.

Ex: There is always a shortage of laborers and nurses.

Ex: There will be a global shortage of wheat this year.

Let's hear the paragraph one more time at normal speed.

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