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## Continuing a Higher Education Online

by: Steven Ross

When it comes to gaining a higher education, online opportunities are quickly becoming one of the most popular options around. If it's not the user friendly features of online learning, then it's the cost effective aspects that appeal to the average working adult. This is the person who is greatly interested in the benefits that come from a higher education, just not the rigid schedules and the pricey tuitions that tend to go with it. The benefits of online learning go beyond time and cost to offer a sense of accomplishment once the new Associate's, Bachelor's or Master's degree is in hand. With technology consistently changing the shape of the landscape of nearly everything, the history of e-Learning has evolved and continues to evolve into great legitimacy in the world of education. While conventional classrooms still have their place, the virtual classroom is seeing more and more students each year. With the accreditation of online schools offering not only a number of degrees and qualifications, the opportunity for financial aid also makes online venues even more attractive. For some, there is just no beating the practical experience one receives in online degree programs. This is especially true when career advancement hangs in the balance. Whether opting for a particular qualification or needing to get a general education online, prospective students will find just the right courses they need in almost every subject. For some, online education can offer a chance to either broaden horizons or narrow down career options. Selecting a variety of subjects can help define a career path when a student finds they gravitate more toward certain subjects more than others. Often, online credits are considered transferable and can help in achieving one's degree. It is doubtful that distance learning could have ever reached the level of effectiveness that it has without the help of the internet. Though this type of learning has been in place for a great number of years, it is the information superhighway that has changed the face of education from a distance forever. Where students waited weeks and months for correspondence from distant universities, one now merely needs to take a few seconds to log on to their virtual campus to get assignments. The virtual learning environment provides not only learning tools but collaborative software featuring such options as chat, discussion boards and even audio-conferencing. This can make long distance learning seem like anything but. The advent of computer-based testing allows for students to gauge their skills and focus attention right where they need it. This leads to another bonus in the world of online education in the form of handy online tutoring. Students will find that supplemental learning options are readily available to those who may need the extra help from time to time. Many have come to realize that the only way to get around the frustration that sometimes comes with learning new skills is understanding the material better. Most online programs generally consist of CBT (computer-based training), WBT (web-based training), interactive media, educational animation and a whole slew of other types of educational technology. Rapidly improving technology continues to develop these features at every turn, making online learning more and more efficient. Learning management software allows students to take control of their education and organize it right down to the specifics of career planning using ePortfolios. Of all the things the internet has proven itself to be useful for, online and distance learning continue to make their appearance at the very top of the list. The ability to cut across the distances in the blink of an eye and share common information also crosses the borders of the amazing. Every new technological enhancement ensures there will be no stopping the world of continuing education.

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