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Knowledge is really power and online and distance learning has opened doors to more people who would otherwise not pursue higher education to accomplish their education goals online.

Best of all, these online learners, who are mostly non-traditional learners are finding that degrees from accredited online colleges and universities are increasing their earnings potential, giving them greater responsibility in their professions, and best of all giving them the chance to accomplish an important goal without completely interrupting their current obligations.

There are many reasons to why people are choosing to go back to school even at a later stage and age in their lives. The following are some of the top reasons why online education and distance learning has become so popular:

Secure your future by investing time today - Many of the non-traditional learners are working for various institutions, governments, businesses and military in foreign countries, and while keeping a full-time job, they use their spare time to earn a bachelor's, masters or a doctoral degree that will have a direct impact on their future job opportunities and professional advancement.

Certify your knowledge - Many students taking online education classes have years of experience in their professions, and just lack a college education to certify their knowledge. Having the chance to pursue higher education by distance learning gives these professionals a chance to use their knowledge at work while at the same time earning degrees that showcase they're experts in their respective fields.

Get an education on your schedule - While online education degrees and distance learning courses have scheduled classes where you interact with classmates and instructors, you can pace through the studies according to your schedule. You take classes at times when it fits you best. You can rewind lessons giving you an advantage to move at your own pace, something a traditional classroom cannot always offer.

Acquire more marketable skills - Distance learning courses are designed not only to teach you the specific subject but because the courses rely heavily on the use of technology tools to accomplish learning, in the process the learner gains more technology and Internet skills that they can transfer to their profession or other facets of their lives.

Re-train for a new career - "the world is changing and some old professions are disappearing while new professions emerge. To keep up with the changing demands of the societies that we live in, online education is great alternative for anyone looking to acquire new skills to enter into a new profession. Distance learning gives you the flexibility to study for a new career while you keep your current job and lifestyle.

Connect one-on-one with instructors- online education gives students the opportunity to interact with their instructors to a greater depth than is typically possible in larger, more traditional classroom settings. This fosters a better educational experience for the distant learner.

Learn for life - "online education increases access to learning and encourages life-long learning making it possible for many people to fulfill a dream of lifelong learning and discovery.

Institutions of post-secondary education reported an increase of over 12% per year for students who

enrolled in online programs between 2004-2009, an indicator that online education is gaining more acceptances. Recent statistics indicate that online students are reporting more satisfaction with online classes as they are with traditional ones; an observation that signals that online education is here to stay.

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