Options for Life Long Learning

Source of Learning	Examples	Types of Information Provided	Advantages	Disadvantages
Traditional Forms of Education: *(Formal Learning – Leads Towards College Credit)* *See Document: "Types of Schools" for more detailed information*				
Community Colleges	Cypress College, Mt. SAC, Los Angeles City Colleges *(California community colleges)*	Formal training which can lead to an Associate's degree, or equivalent level of certificates in various vocational (skills-based) training; and first-two years of general education classes which will lead to a bachelor's degree.	Open access, technically means anyone can attend college regardless of their background. Students have more flexibility of courses of study than many other options.	Formal learning is usually structured and individuals need to adapt to commitment requirements. State institutions are affected by political, economic and legal issues. State schools are more likely *(but not guaranteed)* to possess minimum levels of accreditation since it is expected.
State Supported Colleges/Universities.	California State Universities (CSU) University of California (UC)	Formal academic degrees: Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctorate. *(Most schools also have a "continuing education/non-credit" division as well.)*	Less expensive than private schools. Makes higher education more accessible to the general public.	Formal learning is usually structured and individuals need to adapt to commitment requirements. State institutions are affected by political, economic and legal issues. State schools are more likely *(but not guaranteed)* to possess minimum levels of accreditation since it

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				is expected.
Private Schools	USC, Claremont Colleges, Chapman University	Training in programs that are consistent with the mission and values of the school. Private colleges and universities are more likely to emphasize a "liberal arts" education (i.e. general education) over skills-based education programs.	Private schools are not regulated by state laws to the same extent as public schools, so they often have the freedom and flexibility to respond and adapt as needed to trends. May not be as affected by political, economic, governmental and legal issues.	Usually more expensive than state-supported equivalents. Accreditation should not be assumed since they are not regulated by the state government. Appropriate accreditations should be verified.
Religious Schools Religious schools are always private since the government cannot endorse any form of religion *(i.e. separation of church and state)*.	Biola University, Brigham Young University, Azusa Pacific University, Loyola Marymount.	Training in their religious views and often offer specific professional career preparation programs such as psychology	Good for individuals who want to incorporate their faith and religious values in to their education. May not be as affected by political, economic, governmental and legal issues.	Usually more expensive than state-supported equivalents. Accreditation is not as likely to exist since they are not regulated by the state government. Individuals who don't embrace the religious teachings of the particular school may not be well suited to the school's culture or mission.
Vocational Schools	ITT Technical Institute DeVry University UTI	Training for specific skills-based careers, such as medical assistant, computer	Good for individuals who want job-preparation, skills-based training only, and don't	Technical skills-based education is often not transferrable to other careers or to four-year

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		technician, automotive repair, etc. These can also include police and fire academies	want to spend much time or energy on general education type classes. May offer easier admissions criteria.	colleges and universities. Lowered admissions criteria may lead to higher dropout rates since students may not be ready for the academic challenges.
Non-Traditional Forms of Education: *(Non-College Credit Learning)*				
Mass Media *(General, Introductory Information)*	New York Times, LA Times, USA Today, CNN, Nightly News, Local News	General, introductory, basic information of interest to the general public.	Learning about trends and keeping up on current events.	Information is basic, generally not useful for experts and other "opinion leaders".
Online Search Engines	Google, Wikipedia, etc.	General, introductory, basic information of interest to the general public.	May give introductory or background information on a particular topic.	Cannot guarantee accuracy, objectivity, currency, or credibility of author. Searches may yield either too much or too little information through which to sort.
Continuing Education *(Short-term structured classes)* Local Adult Schools/ Non-Credit Divisions of colleges and universities	North Orange County School of Continuing Education, Cal Poly Pomona College of the Extended University -- One-day seminars on "personal growth" issues; workshops or training classes on learning the "latest and	Varies widely by institution offering it. Best to check with those institutions which offer degrees in the subject area of interest.	Keeping skills current, needing only a few classes, and professions which require life-long learning credits. Normally do not need to meet admissions criteria normally set by colleges and universities.	May or may not provide academic credit should you later decide to pursue a degree in the subject.

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	greatest" software brand; and taking just a few classes to learn about a new subject.			
Scholarly Journals *(Research findings within a specific academic area)*	Communication Journal, National Association of Academic Advisors, and American Medical Association Journal	Usually reports on theoretical and research developments within a specific field.	Gaining specialized, in-depth information on a topic. Discovering what the latest research findings offer on a specific topic. Information provided is usually credible since it has likely been subjected to a rigorous screening and editing process.	Written for academic scholars (those people who possess doctorate degrees), therefore the writing style may be difficult for some people to read. Usually contains a lot of statistical data, graphics and vocabulary.
Professional Associations *(Keeps you posted on latest developments within a profession)*	American Psychological Association, American Bar Association, Public Relations Society of America, National Association of Student Personnel Administrators American Psychological Association, American Bar Association, Public Relations Society of America, National Association of Student Personnel Administrators	Through conventions, trade shows, journals, list serves, websites, blogs, etc., practitioners in the industry provide examples of best practices, trends, research and new laws which affect that profession.	Keeping industry or professional knowledge current. Information provided can usually be considered credible since advancing professionalism in the industry is often a mission of such organizations. Information provided is usually digested, which will likely minimize how much time your time you need to spend keeping up with the	Does not provide academic credit leading to a degree. *(But may offer "Continuing Education Credit" for some professions.)*

Rev: 3/14/11

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			changes.	
Online Blogs *(Subscribing to blogs and social media feeds such as Twitter and LinkedIn from industry experts, special interest media, or opinion leaders)*	Most celebrities, public figures, journalists, and industry leaders now have blogs.	Gives the authors insight and perspectives on current events affecting his/her world. Some blogs may have multiple authors who are considered to be experts in their fields.	Blogs are often not regulated by governing bodies, and therefore are often not censored. Individuals may give perspectives based on their own experiences. Responses can be immediate to current events.	Very time-consuming since information often is not digested for end users *(Information Overload)*. Information provided may or may not be researched. Need critical thinking skills and training to discern difference between fact and opinions provided. Credibility of source not verified.
Special Interest Media *(Designed by experts and opinion leaders who share a common interest in a particular topic)*	Newsletters from political parties, environmental activists, and political action committees, etc. *(i.e. MADD: Mothers Against Drunk Drivers, etc.)* Corporate newsletters, annual reports and corporate training programs.	Organizational newsletters, promotional materials, corporate sponsored training.	People who want to advance a particular perspective on a situation.	Information is often biased since it is usually given by people who have an agenda.
On-The-Job Training *(Employer-provided training)*	Management training programs, formal mentoring programs, professional organizational	Information and training that furthers the employer's mission. Professional and/or "technical" skills	Employees who are willing and able to take advantage of what their employers offer. Employees limited to	Information is usually biased since it is often given by people who have an agenda. Will not count towards an

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	development workshops.	development. Some employers will sponsor employees to develop their basic skills and/or computer skills, and or formal academic degree pursuits.	employer-sponsored programs. Usually training provided by an employer is free, and sometimes employees are paid for their time in participating.	academic degree. Offerings are limited to subjects of the employer's interests.
Distance Education *(Alternative Education: Correspondence Schools & Online learning)*	"Degree by mail" programs, on-line degrees or classes, continuing education programs offered through the mail or through online. Available for both traditional and non-traditional education	Topics covered in traditional education, but delivered through alternative methods such as through the mail or via the Internet.	People who have limited mobility or access to traditional educational options *(disabled, incarcerated, or too far to commute for in-person classes, etc.)*, and individuals wanting flexibility of learning hours.	Lacks "rapport" of traditional classrooms. Requires individual to be self-disciplined, self-directed, and have good learning skills. Online learning also requires good computer skills. Some programs lack accreditation and/or reputation.
Informational Interviews/Job Shadowing, etc.	Interviewing (or following around) a doctor about to find out what a typical day on the job is like.	Real-world exposure to the profession.	Real-world perspective from someone who actually does the job.	Typically only receiving one person's opinion, which may be biased.

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