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Do Potential Employers Value Distance Learning Degrees?

With the technological expansion of the Internet, distance learning degrees have become increasingly popular. With great support facilities and the convenience of online degree programs, parents and workers can still have a family and a job while receiving an education. Unfortunately, the Internet has also provided an avenue for individuals making money by selling bogus degrees over the Internet. In a 2003 report by USA Today, 400 diploma mills are already in operation, with the shameful industry already worth \$500 million per year, and the numbers are still rising.

However, despite all the unpleasant information going around about distance learning degrees, the fact is there are plenty of legitimate universities and colleges offering online degree programs. These colleges are legitimate and not involved in any way in offering dubious and fake diplomas. Instead, these colleges are going the extra mile to provide quality education online by taking advantage of all available instructional resources such as quality instructional design coupled with video lectures, online digital libraries and proctored exams to ensure their students get quality education and a valid, qualified diploma. Unfortunately, numerous employers have not yet been sold into this alternative way of acquiring education, thus they still regard such degrees as invalid or dubious.

To address the misinformation, 6 accreditation agencies have been authorized by the U.S. National Education Board to weed out the unscrupulous bogus programs. Then, the agencies give accreditation to the colleges and universities that meet the minimum standards for legitimate learning institutions. In addition, the Distance Education and Training Council (DETC) also provide accreditation specifically to distance learning schools. The DETC has the backing of both the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and the Department of Education. Therefore the students can rest assured their education has matched, and often exceeded that of their traditional peers.

In addition, specific programs in specialized areas can obtain accreditation through the agencies associated with the subject matter. For example, the American Health Information Management Association provides accreditation for qualifying health programs; accounting programs are assessed by the International Association for Management Education. However, it only counts if the agencies are endorsed by the Department of Education or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

Why should a student be concerned about an educational institutions accreditation? Basically, it is to ensure everyone is receiving the same quality education, whether they are attending classes on campus or seeking distance learning degrees. Before granting accreditation for online degree programs, an agency assesses whether the basic requirements for support, education, and learning facilities are in place. In addition, specialized programs must submit curriculum to be evaluated, based upon the pre-determined standards of the specialty, regardless of the college or university.

Distance learning degrees from accredited institutions assure graduates, parents and prospective employers any degree earned is well deserved. The work completed has met the standards of adequately preparing people in their major area of study. Conversely, it also means colleges and universities not granted accreditation do not meet the standards of excellence required. Nevertheless, for the student who is only taking classes necessary to an area of specialization, only the courses need that all important stamp of approval.

The onus is on the employers to evaluate the credibility and validity of a campus offering distance learning degrees. Due to the rise in fake diplomas, it has only made employers become stricter in checking every applicant's diploma to ensure it is a valid one from an accredited institution. And since this can sometimes be complex and cumbersome for the employer, as a job applicant, you can make this process easier by providing any vital accrediting information to your prospective employer as you make your job application. This will ensure your application is not over-looked and will elevate your chance of landing a job interview.

Mary Jackson writes articles on legit [distance learning degrees and programs](#) and campus-based [colleges and universities](#) for your educational goals.

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