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If you're looking for an MCSA (Microsoft Certified Systems Administrator) training program, it's important to realise that there are many different types of training; some are easier than others. You will be able to choose from a number of options, whether you're new to the industry, or have a certain amount of knowledge but are about to polish up your CV.

If you're just getting started in the computer industry, it could be appropriate to pick up some skills ahead of having a go at the first of the four Microsoft Certified Professional exams (MCP's) that are required to gain MCSA certification. Find a company that can tailor your studying to fit your requirements - with industry experts who will assist to make certain that your choices are good ones.

You have to be sure that all your accreditations are what employers want - forget studies that lead to in-house certificates.

Only nationally recognised examinations from companies such as Microsoft, CompTIA, Cisco and Adobe will mean anything to employers.

Students will sometimes miss checking on a painfully important area - the way their training provider segments the courseware, and into what particular chunks.

Delivery by courier of each element one stage at a time, as you pass each exam is the normal way of receiving your courseware. Of course, this sounds sensible, but you must understand the following:

What happens when you don't complete every section? And what if you find the order of the modules counter-intuitive? Without any fault on your part, you might take a little longer and not get all the study materials as a result.

Put simply, the best solution is to get an idea of what they recommend as an ideal study order, but get everything up-front. You're then in possession of everything should you not complete it at their required pace.

It's so important to understand this key point: You absolutely must have proper 24x7 instructor and mentor support. You'll definitely experience problems if you don't heed this.

Never buy study programmes that only provide support to trainees via a message system outside of normal office hours. Colleges will give you every excuse in the book why you don't need this. The bottom line is - you need support when you need support - not when it's convenient for them.

The best training colleges opt for an internet-based round-the-clock package utilising a variety of support centres from around the world. You will be provided with a single, easy-to-use environment that seamlessly accesses whichever office is appropriate any time of the day or night: Support when you need it.

Never compromise with the quality of your support. The majority of trainees that fall by the wayside, are in that situation because of support (or the lack of).

Those that are drawn to this type of work often have a very practical outlook on work, and aren't really suited to the classroom environment, and endless reading of dry academic textbooks. If you're thinking this sounds like you, use multimedia, interactive learning, where learning is video-based.

We see a huge improvement in memory retention when multiple senses are involved - educational experts have expounded on this for decades now.

The latest audio-visual interactive programs featuring instructor demo's and practice lab's will forever turn you away from traditional book study. And you'll actually enjoy doing them.

You must ensure that you see examples of the study materials provided by each company you're contemplating. They have to utilise video, demonstrations and various interactive elements.

You should avoid purely online training. Ideally, you should opt for CD and DVD ROM courseware where obtainable, so you can use them wherever and whenever you want - you don't want to be reliant on your broadband being 'up' 100 percent of the time.

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