

The 5 Biggest Mistakes Most People Make When Choosing an Online School (And How To Avoid Them)

Mistake #1 - Choosing a School That's Not Accredited

There are plenty of diploma mills and suspect schools—especially online schools—lurking on the Internet. A certificate or diploma from a non-accredited school is almost worthless in the workplace—especially the healthcare field. Because the first thing employers look for is that the school you attended is an *accredited* institution.

Make sure that the school you're considering is accredited. Reputable schools are both accredited and licensed. Most are accredited regionally, and then licensed by the department of education in the state in which they're based. According to the US Distance Learning Association, accreditation “provides a type of quality assurance necessary for most tuition assistance programs, the transferability of credits earned, and the ultimate recognition of any degree awarded.”

Mistake #2 - Choosing a School Without Understanding the Differences Between Online Learning and Face-to-Face Learning

For many, taking an online course has become second nature. They know what to expect and have embraced this form of learning. But if you're new to it, distance learning can be a bit intimidating at first.

Is online learning right for you? Do you have the self-discipline, time management skills and organization abilities to achieve success online? Are you the type of person who asks for help when you need it? How do you handle project deadlines?

Finally, how good are your computer skills? You'll want to be comfortable using word-processing software and common Internet browsers, and you should be able to share information electronically.

It's a mistake to think that online courses are easier than traditional classroom learning. They're not. In fact, they require a bit more self-discipline, because it's up to you to complete your assignments on time without constant teacher reminders. The good news is, while online instructors expect a high level of participation and lots of hard work from their students, they also tend to reciprocate with high levels of responsiveness and engagement.

The best and easiest way to find out if online learning is for you is to take a sample or demo course. Look on the website of the school you're considering. Many offer a practice course or demo course so you can see firsthand how it works.

Mistake #3 - Choosing a School That Doesn't Specialize in Your Chosen Field of Interest

This one is commonly overlooked, but shouldn't be. It's a bad sign if the school you're considering for a medical career also teaches motorcycle repair, computer technology and interior decorating like some schools do. It might indicate they're not committed to your learning success. Rather, they're just trying to cash in on as many popular job occupations as possible. Plus, how can they be experts in all these different areas? The fact is, they can't. If you want to be a health care professional, choose a school that trains health care professionals ONLY.

Mistake #4 - Choosing a School That's Been in Business Only for a Short Time

New schools are always popping up to take advantage of a trend. For example, last year a record number of new schools opened in the massage therapy field. The year before that, it was allied health. The year before that, beauty schools. Are these schools really interested in your success, or are they just trying to make a fast buck?

Experts say you're taking a risk if you choose a school without a successful track record of at least six years (preferably longer). Why? For one thing, 90% of all new enterprises go out of business within the first 5 years. What if the school you enroll in shuts down? It happens every year. You could be out a lot of money.

It's very important to graduate from a school that is well known and has a proven track record of success. After all, isn't that why you come to school, for a good job and a successful career?

Mistake #5 - Choosing a School Without Experienced Online Teachers

Since online learning is relatively new, many online teachers don't have much online experience. You don't want to be part of their "learning curve." Choose a school where the instructors have a proven track record—and plenty of experience—teaching online.

Also, make sure that the same student services typically found on a campus are also available online.

A good online program should adhere to the same academic standards as the institution's traditional courses and programs. Students should also have equal access to academic and administrative support services, such as library and learning resources, advisement and counseling, financial aid, placement and other support services.

The best online programs also encourage timely interaction with faculty, and provide for discussion groups and other opportunities for participants to share ideas and learn from each other to further enrich the academic experience.

Here's a simple way you can avoid EVERY one of these mistakes. All you have to do is...

Choose Allen School Online!

The Allen School is accredited by the Council on Occupational Education (COE), and is licensed by the New York Department of Education. For over 45 years, the Allen School has been training people just like you to become medical professionals. The school is known for training over 60,000 medical careers. Think of it – that's enough to fill Yankee Stadium!

The Allen School is focused 100% on training medical professionals and medical professionals only. Its instructors are doctors, nurses or medical professionals who know from experience what employers want.

As an Allen School Online student, you're part of a highly connected online community that includes friends and faculty from all over the country. Everyone is connected and everyone participates. You get customized instruction and one-on-one feedback from your teacher. Plus, through e-mail and discussion groups

you can stay in close contact with your classmates and counselors, and build lasting relationships.

But don't take our word for it. Speak to a career planner. Call toll-free, 1-888-865-5595.

Remember, you have nothing to lose and so much to gain – we guarantee it. Your family and friends will be proud of you in your important new career.

One word of caution. In past sessions we've had to turn away women and men because all the spots were taken. Don't let that happen to you. Call today, 1-888-865-5595.