

Benefits to Employee Tuition Reimbursement

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Are there benefits to offering tuition reimbursement to employees? As the costs of college continue to rise, so do the debt loads of graduating students. Students are constantly told that they need to pursue an advanced degree to make it in the world but the amount of government funded loans and scholarship awards is decreasing each year. It is true, students do need continuing education to advance in the business world but how can they do so without going broke?

Well, that's where you come in. If you do not already have one, you should really look in to starting a tuition reimbursement program at your company. Large and forward thinking companies know that they need to be competitive in today's tight job market to attract and retain the best and brightest employees. Tuition reimbursement programs are one way they can do this.

Tuition reimbursement programs, if you are not familiar, work like this. Your employees work for your for a certain period of time before they become eligible for this program – usually somewhere around six months to one year. Once they have become eligible they can submit the grades they receive from the coursework and you in turn cut them a check to cover the tuition and expenses. It really is that easy.

However, you do not have to cover expenses for someone who is not studying in a field that will benefit your business. If you are an insurance company, you do not have to reimburse someone who is going into art, unless that person will become your web or graphic designer once he or she graduates. Remember, continuing education that you reimburse should benefit your company too. You take advantage of the new

knowledge they have acquired to increase the brain bank at your company.

Many workers say that tuition reimbursement programs are a big draw for potential employers. In fact, many students even say that is one of the biggest things they look for in employers when comparing job offers. Those are the employees you want to attract: they are clearly ambitious, smart and are looking to continuing education to increase their knowledge and worth to their field and company.

You may wonder what happens if one of your employees takes the money from your tuition reimbursement program to obtain a continuing education degree and then quits for a better job offer. Well, most companies have a clause in their tuition reimbursement agreements for this sort of thing. They will require that students who are reimbursed for their continuing education expenses continue to work for the company for a period of time after completion. If they quit early they may be required to pay back the money to the company.

It is in your best interest to look in to ways to increase your company's competitive stance in the job market. Start a tuition reimbursement program today and begin to see the quality of your job applicants increase almost immediately. It is a win-win situation for everyone involved.

Are You Too Old to Go Back to School?

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You want to go back to school and continue your education. Perhaps you'd like to earn your first degree or would like to

earn a new degree in a different field. You've been dreaming of that degree but haven't dared believe your dream can come true because you think you are too old.

You aren't. It really is that simple. I don't care what your age is, as an experienced college-level educator I can assure you that you are not too old, because there are many nontraditional students on college campuses today (and likely some of those are older than you are), your life experience gives you many advantages over more traditional students, and with the growing nontraditional population many colleges have programs and services especially tailored for the nontraditional student.

I went back to school in my 30s and today I teach college. Yes, I have many traditional students in my classroom but every semester I have a large percentage of nontraditional students as well. I have students in their late 20s as well as 30s, 40s, 50s, and up. I have students who have retired from one career and are looking to move into another. I have students whose children (or grandchildren) have left the nest so they are looking to enter a new stage in their life.

I also have many students balancing school with work and family. I have students who are the traditional age but are in nontraditional circumstances including children and family, work and military service, as well as sports and other activities. You are a unique person, but your situation is not as unique as you might think.

In many ways, your age, or rather your life experience, will be a tremendous asset for your return to school. Nontraditional students understand much better than traditional students how to manage their time and prioritize tasks. In addition, nontraditional students are often much more motivated and goal-oriented than their more traditional counterparts. Finally, your life experience also gives you a great deal of knowledge and experience to fall back on or pull

from when it comes to understanding, applying, or adapting the new knowledge you gain through college. I regularly see my nontraditional students outperform traditional students in many ways, but it ultimately comes down to a maturity of thinking and reasoning that can only come with growing up. I know when I returned to college as a student after working for a number of years that I did much better in the classroom and also handled my work load much better than I did when I was a more traditional student.

Today colleges recognize they have a changing student population and offer classes in a variety of formats including on campus, off campus, televised, and internet as well as a range of schedules including days, nights, weekends, and accelerated. In addition, there are now support services available for students who fall outside the traditional student role. Many financial aid and scholarship programs also exist specifically for the nontraditional student.

In the end, it really comes down to your own gut feeling. Do you really want that degree? Are you ready to change your life? You can do it and there will be help and support available for you. Don't use your age as an excuse not to pursue your dream.

What is Continuing Education?

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Although many people may think of preparing for the GED as continuing education, technically it's not. Continuing education means progressing with your educational career after you've either received your high school diploma or you've received an alternative GED certificate.

So what does continuing education include? Well, technical schools, college classes, and online classes to progress in your career are examples of forms of continuing education. These classes and programs are intended to help you continue your education after graduation.

Technical schools were created specifically to help adults progress beyond high school. These schools have programs that help learners master the skills and technological expertise they need to secure good jobs. Also known as vocational education, technical schools can train you for jobs such as an auto mechanic, a bookkeeper, or a cosmetologist.

Community colleges are a main source of continuing education classes. In addition to helping people work toward a degree, community colleges also offer programs such as nursing, respiratory therapy, and law enforcement. The community college environment is perfect for people who want to advance in their current job or move on to a better job.

Many college campuses offer evening and Saturday classes just to make learning convenient for adult students. They also have classes you can take online so that you will be able to make time for learning. Continuing education offerings at these campuses range from complete programs to individual courses that can help you master new skills. Your local community college is a wonderful place to look when you're considering continuing education options.

Naturally four-year colleges also offer continuing education classes. You can earn a degree at these colleges or simply take additional classes to help you progress in your career. Many professionals find that returning to college to get either a Bachelor's or Master's degree can really boost their career.

In addition to classes for degrees, colleges offer specialized classes that can help you master certain skills.

For

instance, you can take classes that will help you learn specialized computer programs. You also can learn new skills and talents, such as how to create multimedia presentations. More employers these days are encouraging their employees to explore continuing education options. The more skills and talents you possess, the better chance you have of landing and keeping a good job.

If you think you're too busy to take continuing education classes, think again. These days your options are practically limitless. Not only can you find traditional classes, you can take online classes, use interactive DVD and online programs to take a class, and even take tele-classes by watching your television. These new delivery methods make it easy for practically everyone to find a class that is convenient.

To start your search for continuing education classes first analyze your goals. Do you want to get a degree? Learn the latest technology? Advance in your career? Decide what you want to accomplish and then research your options. The Internet contains a wealth of information about continuing education opportunities. With just a little effort you're bound to find the right opportunity for you.