

# Obtain Education for a Job

**Y**OUR EDUCATIONAL LEVEL will determine the level at which you enter into a chosen career field. It will also have an impact on your rate of pay. There are many benefits of formal education and training for the employee and the employer. Some sources for education are formal education and continuing education.



## Objectives:



1. Explain the benefits of education.
2. Describe the different levels of formal education.
3. Identify sources of education for a job.
4. Explain continuing education and its importance.

## Key Terms:



baccalaureate  
continuing education  
education  
formal education  
graduate degree  
level of education  
networking  
post-secondary

## Benefits of Education

**Education** is the act or process of training and developing knowledge; it is also the knowledge and skills obtained by such a process. Education determines the level at which an individual enters a career. It is often a lifelong process that produces long-term benefits, such as increased self-esteem. Individuals who are educated possess a better image of themselves. They gain confidence as they are exposed to and learn new concepts.

## ADAPTABLE

A good education improves adaptability skills by making people more adaptable to constant changes. Through being exposed to new ideas, people are better prepared to accept the changes created by technology, the economy, and various cultures.

## ESTABLISH REALISTIC GOALS

Students with a good education have the ability to establish realistic goals. Realistic goals are more obtainable when the steps to get there are laid out in plain view. Education enables people to identify obtainable goals. Educated people are also better prepared to develop the ways and means of obtaining goals.

## OPEN-MINDEDNESS

A good education improves a person's ability to accept new ideas and concepts. Learning about new subjects also prepares people to accept others of different backgrounds, which is increasingly important in today's global economy.

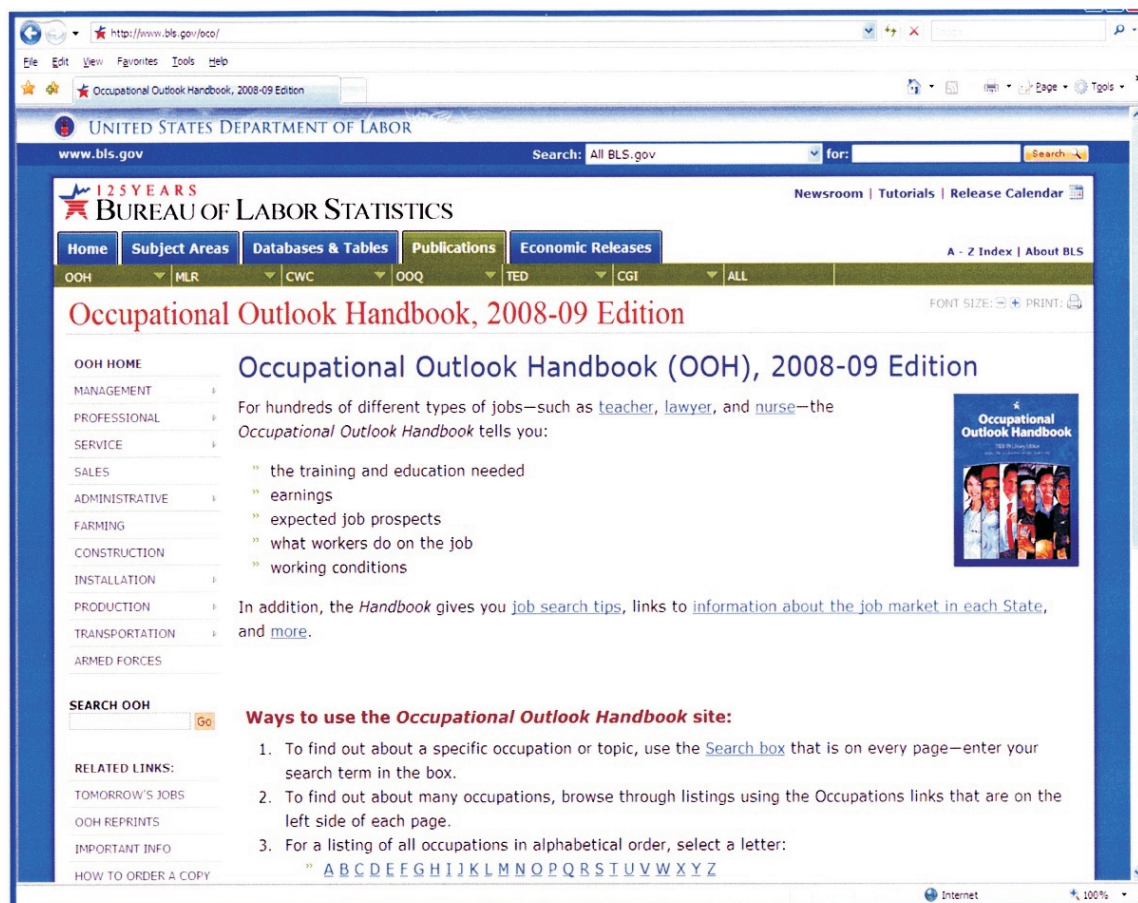


FIGURE 1. The Occupational Outlook Handbook Web site (<http://www.bls.gov/oco>) can be used to research a career interest. (Courtesy, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics)

# Different Levels of Formal Education

There are five typical levels of formal education. **Formal education** is learning obtained in a school setting. **Level of education** refers to the number of years and degrees of formal education completed by an individual. Some jobs require individuals with college degrees, while others require no specific level of education.

## LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL

The first level of education is “less than high school.” This level is defined as individuals who attend high school but do not complete it. These individuals are typically limited to low-level jobs; however, their work is important to business success.

## HIGH SCHOOL

The “high school” level includes individuals who have completed high school but have not gone on for additional education. The jobs available for these individuals are usually at lower levels but are higher than those of “less than high school.”

## POST-SECONDARY

The next level is “**post-secondary**,” which usually involves two years of education beyond high school. Community colleges and technical schools are examples of institutions



## FURTHER EXPLORATION...

### ONLINE CONNECTION: Work Skills Assessment

It may be useful to assess your own skills. If this is of interest to you, complete the skills assessment at the following Web site. Then save your results in CIS favorites in your portfolio (Summary of Selected Skills). You may want to print the results for future reference.

Visit the following Web link:

<http://www.ilworkinfo.com/icm.htm>

Click on the Career Information System section. Go to Occ Sort Classic. Do the activity by clicking on “Continue.” Then go to Get My Results. List some of the jobs on your occupation list. Pick three careers of interest to you. What is your first choice? List the top five skills from your skills assessment list. Next, pick a job from your list of occupations. Read the job overview. How do the actual skills needed for the job compare to what you put on your list? What are two necessary skills for the job? What education is needed? What degree or level of training is required? What additional education, training, or continuing education is needed to continue in this job or to advance? Which job/career is the best match for you? Why?

that provide post-secondary education. The training provided might be specialized so individuals are able to fill jobs that require considerable responsibility.

## BACCALAUREATE

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“**Baccalaureate**” is the next level, and it typically involves completing four years of college and receiving a bachelor’s degree. Colleges and universities provide this level of education. Jobs that require baccalaureate degrees often are on the technical level.

## GRADUATE DEGREE

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The highest level is a “**graduate degree**,” which requires education beyond a four-year college degree. Jobs that require this level of education are highly technical and involve significant responsibilities.

## Sources of Education for a Job

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A variety of educational sources are available for a job in business. Formal education is learning completed in a school setting (e.g., high schools, community colleges, four-year colleges, universities, and graduate schools).

Continuing education may be offered through a school or another private or trade organization. It covers topics that are of use to people doing a specific job. Courses are usually shorter in duration and may include hands-on aspects. For some fields, continuing education is a requirement to maintain licensing with a state (e.g., pharmacists and nurses).



## FURTHER EXPLORATION...

### ONLINE CONNECTION: Career Interest Areas

When you determine a career of interest to you, it is necessary to gather information about educational programs at various schools. To do so, you may visit the following link:

<http://www.ilworkinfor.com/icm.htm>

Click on the Career Information System section. Pick a career pathway, and read the overview. Then read the list of recommended courses. List the courses you have already taken or are currently taking, and describe how they relate to your career pathway. Pick one occupation from each level of education. Read the occupation overview. Write the job titles and the top three things of interest to you in those jobs. Which occupation is the most realistic for you? Why? Give at least three reasons.

# The Importance of Continuing Education

**Continuing education** is also the education you obtain throughout your lifetime. Success and advancement on the job are often directly related to the amount of continuing education an employee receives. Such education provides benefits to employees and employers.

## EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

The benefits to employees include up-to-date skills as well as information regarding current developments and knowledge within the field. This is especially important in today's changing environment, and it allows for cross-training, which is the ability of workers to carry out jobs outside of their normal responsibilities.

## EMPLOYER BENEFITS

Employers benefit when their employees take continuing education courses. Better-trained employees are able to handle changes in technology and are often more productive. In addition, more productive employees lead to more efficient business operations. Also, worker satisfaction is higher when continuing education is offered.

## CONTINUING EDUCATION SOURCES

Sources of continuing education include workshops and seminars provided by trade organizations and community colleges. There are also local, state, and national meetings presented by professional organizations and associations. Such meetings also provide excellent networking possibilities. **Networking** is the interaction of workers who hold similar jobs for different organizations. It can also be interaction with workers from the same organization with different jobs.

People can stay current by reading professional journals, newsletters, and magazines. These publications often contain the latest information on job-related topics. Because lifelong learning is never complete, there is something to be learned at each level of education, at each job, at each environment, and in each challenge.



FIGURE 2. Networking can be useful when looking for a different job.



## Summary:

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Your educational level generally will determine the level at which you enter into a chosen career field and will impact your rate of pay. Benefits of formal education and training exist for employees and employers. There are five different levels of education, beginning with “less than high school” and ending with “graduate degree.”

There are various sources of education for a job, including formal education and continuing education. Continuing education is the education an individual obtains throughout his or her lifetime. The most common types of continuing education are workshops and seminars provided by trade organizations and community colleges.

## Checking Your Knowledge:

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1. How does your educational level relate to the level at which you enter your career field?
2. What are the five levels of formal education?
3. What are the benefits of education for the employee?
4. What are the benefits of education for the employer?
5. What is networking, and why is it important?

## Expanding Your Knowledge:

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Visit your high school career center, and inquire about business education partners. See if there is a participating business partner in the career field of your choice. If there is, check with the career center counselor to see if you can conduct a phone interview with the individual. Be prepared with a sheet of questions that pertain to the individual’s education, training, and any continuing education requirements.

## Web Links:

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### **Career Cruising**

<http://www.careercruising.com>

### **Illinois Career Resource Network: Career Information System**

<http://www.ilworkinfo.com/icrn>

### **Employment Opportunities**

<http://www.ides.state.il.us>