



Getting a smart education: Are virtual masterclasses the best way to learn?

By Lorna Titley

“And how is education supposed to make me feel smarter? ...Every time I learn something new, it pushes some old stuff out of my brain.” So exclaimed cartoon anti-hero Homer Simpson, before he goes on to elaborate, “Remember when I took that home wine-making course, and I forgot how to drive?”

While it’s true – as many of us can testify – that as time goes on, we have the impression, like Homer, of forgetting more than we learn, the opportunities for acquiring new knowledge and skills have arguably never been greater. The internet and the virtual world, for all their sins, have opened-up a vast world of information and learning. And all of this available at the click of a button.

Continuous professional education is indeed a requirement for many lawyers, accountants and others, who are expected to undergo a certain number of hours training per year in order to carry on practising. Quaynote and other providers can offer attendees the opportunity to acquire their CPD (continuous professional development) or equivalent points via their participation at industry conferences.

While we like to flatter ourselves that joining one of Quaynote`s events in Malta, Nice, Paris or other attractive locations, with all their attendant networking opportunities, is more entertaining than carrying out your continuous learning at a draughty night-school, we recognize too that jetting off somewhere to update your industry knowledge is not always practical.

Enter then, from stage left, the virtual masterclass. This is not a new concept, and during the pandemic some of you may have taken online courses in everything from classical history to fine art, yoga or learning a foreign language. Moreover, educational institutions have long been embracing the digital world of learning, but as Laura Spinney writing in the Guardian points out, "the pandemic has given learning a huge shove towards the virtual. Overnight, schools and universities closed and teachers and students had to find ways to do what they do exclusively via the internet."

Although a global report based on a survey amongst teachers by McKinsey & Co in 2021 showed that "kids learn better in class than when studying from home", the same may not be true for professional learning. The demand for MBA programmes delivered digitally held up well during the pandemic and online learning, which can be accessed more cheaply and efficiently compared to on-campus courses, attracts a broader range of executives from all levels within companies rather than just an elite group of top leaders.

The reality, at least for the foreseeable future, is that neither in-person or online education are about to replace each other. There are benefits to both types of learning and the best way to see them is as complementary rather than competing forces.

Against this backdrop, the Quaynote Academy, which offers a series of Masterclasses for superyacht and business aviation professionals, was launched in January 2023. Focused initially on the business jet industry, masterclass topics will cover everything from Top tips for the first-time buyer, to aircraft management, financing, registration, crew and operations.

Zoe Layden, Chief Business Officer at Falcon MGA, who presents the Aviation Insurance 101 masterclass at the Quaynote Academy has this to say: "Aviation insurance – and indeed the business aviation industry overall – can appear to be shrouded in mystery. Even to a non-aviation insurance professional, the acronyms and curiosities of this sector can appear baffling. In my masterclass, I help to lift the lid for the uninitiated so they can take a fascinating peek inside."

Quaynote Academy masterclasses are structured with a short online exam at the end of each. Once students have successfully completed a set number of masterclasses they will be awarded an accreditation certificate. "Learning can be done whenever suits the student, allowing busy executives to complete continuous education in a virtual, self-paced environment", explains Alison Singhal, Director at Quaynote. "The Academy builds on our formidable reputation as event and communications specialists, with each masterclass presented by respected leaders in their field," she adds.

For those of you still weighing up the learning benefits of attending a networking event in say Monaco or Geneva, versus taking an online masterclass to upgrade your professional skills, I shall leave you with the thoughts of another famous figure in the world of animation. Charles M. Schulz, creator of the beloved Peanuts cartoon strip offered this advice: "Try not to have a good time. This is supposed to be educational."

For more information about becoming a masterclass lecturer at the Quaynote Academy, please contact us at alison@quaynote.com or lorna@quaynote.ca. To enrol for the masterclasses, visit our website at www.quaynote.com, or contact us directly for more details about upcoming courses.



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