

SelfInformed

Published by the National Association for the Self-Employed

April 2023

Member Spotlight

**Kecia
Terrelonge**

Trucking Transportation
Academy LLC



GROWING AND LEARNING

WHILE SELF-EMPLOYED: A CASE FOR CONTINUED EDUCATION



Whether it's an economic upturn or downturn, continuous learning is crucial for self-employed and small business owners. In fact, education renders long-term benefits for self-employed individuals and plays a crucial role in their success.

When you're managing a plethora of responsibilities on your own, it is normal to put off continuous learning. But in the age of rapid tech advancement, digital transformation, and changing economic and industry dynamics, continued education is the answer to achieving professional and personal growth.

Let's touch on the benefits of continued learning for small business owners and self-employed individuals, the types of classes you can take, and the need to leverage online education tools.

Understand the Importance of Continued Education

Small business owners and self-employed individuals can no longer be at the mercy of old-school business practices. In fact, the last thing you should do is overlook your untapped curiosity.

When you continue your education, it allows you to transform your business activities. It's also a perfect way to get in touch with other experts working in your industry and gradually build a big network.

Why Should You Continue Taking Classes?

As a sole proprietor, investing in education is arguably the best thing you can do for your professional growth. But it may often dawn on you whether or not you should continue

your education, and that's fair. Professional responsibilities often pile up and spiral out of control.

Ideally, you should continue to master your skills to keep up with changing market dynamics and industry competition. There are thousands of stories where continued education became the source of professional accomplishment. In time, continuous learning allows you to steer the course of your business in the right direction.



Reasons and Benefits to Continue Education for Self-Employed

Keep up with Your Industry's Trends

Continuing education is that it keeps you aware of any new changes in your industry. This is a great approach to be competitive and always be on their toes to deal with complex issues.

For instance, the growth parameters and needs of a company operating in California would be different than one in Georgia. You can look at continued education through the lens of training that helps you better understand your industry and target customers' needs.

A Chance to Innovate and Grow in Your Industry

No matter what industry you operate in, without innovation, you cannot survive. Continued education works as a foundational element. It is a proactive and progressive step that allows you to move forward.

Apply Your Knowledge

It's not enough to learn various new skills — you also need to figure out how to apply them in a variety of practical settings. When you can apply learned knowledge to action, it helps you take strategic steps to be more competitive in your industry. Learning and applying knowledge is not about being intellectual; it's about how you solve business problems and make use of practical applications.

Build an Expansive Network

Business owners understand that to grow a business is to grow a big network. While your main goal is to continue your education, it is a great opportunity for business owners and the self-employed to build a network. Whether it's training, a conference, or a class, when you get an education with other individuals in the same field, you can brainstorm partnerships and other collaborative business ideas.

Create a Flexible Work Environment

If you're working non-stop and have no time to learn and grow, then you'll end up going backward. Instead, create a flexible work environment in your small business space so that you can meet your business needs and have enough time on your hands to take educational courses and training. From seminars to in-person events to classes, you can have many ways to continue your education. You can also take online education programs, classes, and courses to continue your education.

Inspire Others

While small business owners can leverage education to drive professional and company growth, it also allows them to inspire others to be dedicated, inspired, and motivated for continued learning. This is an effective way to better engage with the employees and ensure more development and growth for your company. From the perspective of a small business owner, there is no reason not to inspire your staff to continue their education and take advantage of different educational opportunities.

A New Way to Think

Continuing education helps business owners evolve and grow, and that means forming new perspectives and understanding other opinions. When entrepreneurs and small business owners continue their education, it helps them think in new and better ways. A change in thinking fosters broadmindedness that helps you make decisions to strengthen your small business and ensure it is less vulnerable over time.



What Types of Classes Are Highly Useful

Small business owners and the self-employed can take foundational courses and classes to learn new skills and hone existing ones. However, finding the "right" course can seem like a difficult starting point. After all, there is an endless list of courses and classes targeted for learning.

The good news is that many of the best online courses small business owners can take are free. Whether it's small business accounting, marketing, or management, take one step at a time rather than taking multiple courses or classes at once.

The classes and courses most useful to you depend on your business type and the industry you operate in. Here are a few classes that self-employed and small business owners can take:

- **Finance and accounting:** to learn to manage your own finances
- **Management and business leadership:** to develop and master leadership qualities
- **Sales and support classes:** to render high customer satisfaction
- **Advertising and marketing:** to find new ways to promote and market your small business



Leverage Top-tier Online Education Tools

As a small business owner, you have the opportunity to continue your education through direct or online learning methods.

Here are some essential online education tools:

SkillShare

This is probably the most popular online learning platform. It is a community-driven learning platform where you can find courses as online videos. While there's no accreditation on any SkillShare course, it is a great platform for self-employed and small business owners to learn the most valuable skills in the business world and grow their understanding of operational processes.

Coursera Business Programs

This is an online learning platform ideal for small business owners and the self-employed. As far as business specialties go, Coursera offers a broad range of certifications, degrees, and courses. From branding to marketing analytics, you can select from a comprehensive selection of courses.

Google Digital Garage

This is one of the most underrated and underutilized learning hubs for learning skills online. From coding to marketing, Google Digital Garage offers the most in-demand courses and certifications.

Future Learn

Future Learn offers business-specific courses from only accredited academic institutions. You can learn new skills in business strategy, marketing, CRM, entrepreneurship, and analytics.

Apart from these online platforms and learning communities, there are many options available for self-employed and small business owners. For instance, you can opt for free Harvard Business School online lessons. If you have the budget and time, you can always seek out courses directly from universities and colleges.





Enter: MindEdge

Over the years, millions of self-employed and small business learners have leveraged MindEdge. MIT and Harvard laid the foundation of MindEdge which for over two decades has helped small businesses and the self-employed get more education and even become dedicated MindEdge partners. Whether you want to learn about data analytics, entrepreneurship, management, or leadership, you can get a wide range of **certifications and courses** on MindEdge with your NASE Membership.

Continued Education for Self-Employed and Small Business Owners

In retrospect, more and more small businesses and the self-employed now understand the long-term value of continuous learning.

In the tech-driven and digital age, there is no shortage of learning opportunities. Oftentimes, small businesses are targeting the same top talent in the market. Continued education is one of the best ways for small businesses to level the playing field with large corporations. It's a chance to move toward more development and growth opportunities.

Continued education ensures small business owners don't fall behind. In hindsight, if you want to ensure your small business remains competitive and drives consistent growth, you'll need to leverage the best education opportunities. This will also help you be more committed to your entrepreneurial and small business efforts.

See the Latest Press Releases from NASE



NASE President to Moderate Panel on Digital Tools & Rules

Mar 15, 2023

As the American small business community continues to grow and expand, NASE will participate in Entrepreneurship Exchange 2023 (EX23), hosted by the Small Business Roundtable, in London, UK on Thursday, March 16th.

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NASE Awards \$28K in Growth Grants to Support America's Record-Shattering Growth in the Small Business Community

Mar 06, 2023

As our nation's small business community continues its record-breaking surge with more Americans choosing to open their own small business than ever before, NASE announced today \$28,000 in Growth Grants to seven local small businesses for the fourth quarter of 2022.

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Your Business Could be Featured in our Monthly e-Newsletter!

We want to hear from you!

Throughout the year NASE publishes a new Member Spotlight in our e-Newsletter called SelfInformed, a national newsletter sent to over 50,000 members across the country with the latest news about the self-employed and micro-business community. As part of this national e-Newsletter, we want to shine a spotlight on those members, regardless of where they live, who are operating successful businesses that are growing and thriving.

GET FEATURED



ANNOUNCEMENT



Now Accepting Dependent Scholarship Applications

Multiple College Scholarships of \$3,000 are Awarded Each Year

This program is open to legal dependents of NASE Members, ages 16–24. To apply, students need to be high school students or college undergraduates planning to enroll in college for the upcoming fall semester. The application period is January 1st through April 30th.

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New!



Member Benefits

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Special insurance savings through Farmers Insurance ChoiceSM!

Farmers Insurance ChoiceSM is an easy way to compare and shop for auto and home insurance. Additionally, most policies on the platform are customizable to fit members' particular needs.

Take advantage of special savings.

Program Description:

As a NASE member, you have access to discounted insurance coverage from a variety of carriers using Farmers Insurance Choice. Through the platform, members can quote with several carriers for insurance. In addition to auto and homeowners insurance, other policies are available, including **Renters, Condo, Personal excess liability, Boat, Motorcycle and RV.**

Program Discounts and Features:

Members who choose Farmers GroupSelect have the opportunity to save money. The NASE discount code is **BIV**. Group discounts, Automatic payment discount, Good driving rewards, Multi-policy discounts, Multi-vehicle savings and 24/7 superior service.

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NASE Partners with Payanywhere for \$4,000 May Growth Grant

Payments Solutions Company Poised to Help Small Business Owners

Payanywhere is the all-in-one payments platform that powers your business. Designed to offer you and your customers maximum payments flexibility, allowing you to accept nearly any payment method at your business, on the go, and online.

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- Contactless payments like Apple Pay and Samsung Pay.
- Online payments over the Virtual Terminal.

Use a Payanywhere Smart Device to accept payments in or around your store or wherever your business takes you. You can even transform your own smartphone or tablet into a portable point of sale solution with a Payanywhere Bluetooth Credit Card Reader. Get paid with one-time or recurring invoices that your customers pay online while choosing from pay as you go or custom pricing with Same Day or Next Day Funding to keep your cash flowing.

To get started, simply create your **account**, download and install the Payanywhere app, and pick the hardware and pricing that suits your business best.

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The threat of identity theft is real.

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Visit [Save With UPS](#) for specific services and discounts.



AARP is committed to supporting older entrepreneurs. AARP is collaborating with the NASE as a supporter of the **Growth Grants program**. The grants are targeting NASE Members who are minority business owners aged 45 and older. Through this partnership NASE and AARP are working to provide greater access to capital for business growth.

[Click Here to Apply!](#)



Member Spotlight

Kecia Terrelonge is the Owner of Trucking Transportation Academy LLC located in Suffolk, Virginia. The academy offers CDL School, Class A & B Training, Pilot & Escort Training, Driver Improvement, Hazmat Endorsement, Freight Broker and Dispatch Training.

When and why did you join the NASE?

I joined 2022 for the outstanding benefits and information provided by the staff and the experts.

What inspired you to enter the field you are in?

I was inspired to my field because I was intrigued by the world of logistics and the many facets of the transportation industry.

When and why did you start your business?

I started my business in 2022, the same year I joined NASE. The reasons for starting this business are two fold. First, the need for CDL Drivers in the industry is in high demand. Second, I am inspired to help reduce recidivism by providing opportunities to the prior incarcerated population and give them a chance to become a productive citizen in society with training and support. Trucking is a friendly occupation to those looking for second chances and I am eager to be a part of it.

Member Spotlight

How do you market your business?

The main ways I market my business are through social media and word of mouth.

What challenges have you faced in your business?

The primary challenge I face is Individuals not being able to pay for the services and/or training provided. I usually train them anyway in hopes that it pays off in the long run.

Do you have any employees?

Yes, currently I have two CDL instructors, one Administrative Human Resources person and one Director.

What's your schedule like, what's a typical day for you?

Good Question! I typically work at least 10 hours a day, some even say I work in my sleep. While working, my focus is on compliance, education or safety as they are very important. Also, I am always ensuring all the rules and regulations are followed.

What's the best thing about being self-employed?

Freedom, I used to work 16 hours a day and I am now able to spend time with my family.

What's the best compliment you've ever received from a client?

The best compliment I received was when someone said, "Thank You for caring about me. I appreciate your help."

What's the most important piece of advice you would give to someone starting their own business?

Be patient and consistent. Hard work pays off.

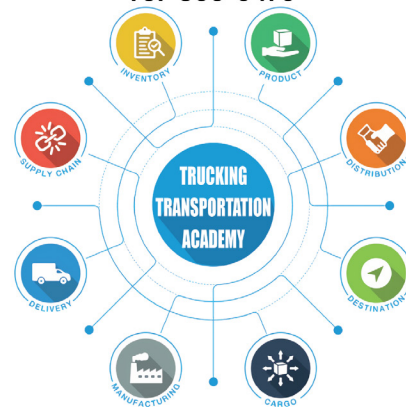
Which NASE member benefit is most important to you?

I utilize most of them and appreciate the variety.



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IRS Announces Long-Term Strategic Transformation Plan

On April 6, 2023, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) announced a 10-year strategic operating plan that shows how the IRS will deploy the tremendous resources appropriated under the Inflation Reduction Act to ensure the IRS is a customer service orientated agency. The IRS has faced intense scrutiny for its shrinking workforce, enforcement capabilities, and its ability to resolve audit issues in a timely fashion. Even with the challenges, in 2021, the IRS processed 269 million returns, collected \$4.1 trillion in tax revenue, and disbursed 492 million economic relief payments during the Covid-19 pandemic. But as outlined in their strategic operation plan, there is more to do.

The plan lays out an ambitious plan to overhaul the agency and ensure that it is meeting the needs of the over 200 million Americans the IRS interacts with annually.

For small businesses, interfacing with the IRS is a necessity that only grows more complicated as your business grows, you hire employees or contractors,

and/or you provide benefits. To that end, the strategic operation plan, specifically lays out the modernization efforts that will specifically benefit small business owners. They include:

1. Expanded online service tools
2. New ability to respond to notices and file online
3. Simplified, mobile-friendly forms
4. Expanded digitization to eliminate paper-based processes and expand service options
5. Help small businesses understand and claim credits and deductions.

You can learn more about these **enhanced benefits for small businesses here**.

The National Association of the Self-Employed will continue to provide feedback to the IRS to ensure accountability as it relates to the ambitious (and needed) reforms they have laid out.

Katie Vlietstra is NASE's Vice President for Government Relations and Public Affairs; You can contact her at kvlietstra@nase.org.