

The Importance of Lifetime Learning

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The bad news is that an engineering degree must be constantly maintained; otherwise it will become dated in less than five years. The good news is that it is fun and easy to keep an engineering degree current. What you learn during a 4-5 year University, Industrial & Systems Engineering (ISE) program will become dated at some point, if you don't constantly keep renewing your technical knowledge. This shows the importance of "lifetime learning", as you continue in your career.

Many companies require ongoing learning, to stay up on advancements in their products & services. Many industries may encourage ongoing learning, as the field evolves and new information is encountered. Often companies provide on-hours training and online training, to help you keep up technically. Often your job duties may broaden, requiring you to take additional on-hours or off-hours training.

Some of the best ways to maintain your degree are to:

- Attend professional engineering conferences (like those offered annually by IISE)
- Join a local chapter of a professional engineering society
- Take some online courses (often leading to a certification)
- Learn new software
- Buy technical books & study them
- Read technical magazine articles

It may also become necessary to get an advanced degree, whether attending a University or completing it online. As you progress in your career, the need for an advanced degree (either a Masters in Engineering, or a Masters in Business Administration) may become necessary for your advancement. Often these advanced degrees are paid for by your employer, if completed off-hours or online.