



usOWLs.com *LookOut*

Welcome September! . . . and the back to school or maybe it's back to work season. Be aware that doing either makes new demands on usOWLs.

I have been working from home as a "basecamp" for all my endeavors since my daughter moved out over 20 years ago, and it seemed a wonderful way to work at any time, or whoops, all the time?

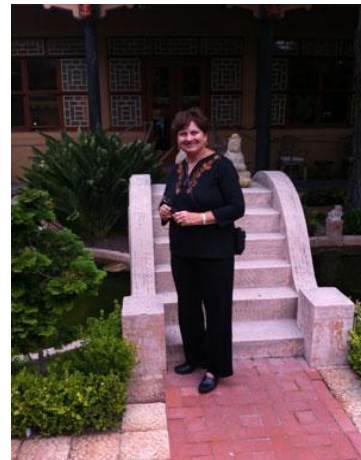
Back to School! Yes. Keep on Learning . . .

For those who always wanted an education and could not afford one-guess what? You still cannot afford it as costs skyrocket to get basic and advanced degrees. However, you cannot afford to let your mind deteriorate into simple brain exercise and puzzles either. You still have a LOT to offer that is still needed. There are many opportunities online or through community colleges to boost your knowledge, or skills, in all your intelligences (plural deliberate). According to research on seniors, you can learn a language better than others, play a musical instrument well because you can and will practice.

Wanted: Highly skilled,
mature, and motivated
workers (aka usOWLs!)

Back to Work?

Like many others, you may need to go "back to work." As we get older, we make the best employees-being reliable, energetic, and skilled at both service delivery and the solving problems from their wealth of experiences. Employment agencies for older workers and the retired are sprouting up all over the country. Knowing you do not need child care nor health benefits is an advantage.



Michele at Pacific Museum, Monterey, CA

Working from home can be wonderful or horrible. You will save thousands of dollars, and not need parking. I knew I could save thousands of dollars with no office. For me, the drawback as a writer and creative person, was that I could work 24 hours a day if I wanted to and in my PJ's. No heels, nor makeup was necessary to do my best, but I was working on projects 60 plus hours a week creeping into this 8th day work mode.

In Home Businesses -

The Upside: You get to determine the quality of your life.

The Downside: You may not have a life!

1. **Distractions and noise** - The doorbell rings, or they start blowing those terrible leaf blowers when I am concentrating, or worse on a conference call. Unaware I am on the phone, my husband's intelligent comments, questions, or his singing in the shower nearby can disrupt very important marketing.

2. **Lack of real focus or discipline** when no one is watching. It is easy to go to the closet, and then start clearing up that closet. Go to the pantry for a food break that you don't need, and notice dates on cans or packages. You clear out the pantry. Dust those non-electronic-website spider webs screaming at you, and papers are lost costing minutes if not hours of diversion finding them.

3. **Work clutter increases faster than normal life clutter.** You are working in the supply room not the Executive Suite like you imagined. Papers, books, things essential to your work proliferate, and soon you are working in a storage container not the Executive Suite. Your email piles up while your phone stops ringing because you are in, and NOT out making contacts. You may have so many piles you, fall in your space trying to get out.

4. **Worse, you are alone**, missing out on hallway and parking lot conversations that lead to creative ideas, and important social interactions that keep brain and body healthy, and relationships intact. It can feel like solitary confinement after awhile, and you can get very serious and depressed without the smiles and laughter of others. Allocate fixed times out of the office, and out to lunch.

Going Back can be a Move Forward to new Adventures

It is a great idea to re-enter the workplace, but do it on your own terms. While you may run into prejudices, resentment about your hours, and just plain meanness that you are taking up a job, stay at work changing these beliefs and stereotypes.

Quote overheard in cafe:
"I need more money not
more retirement
advice!"

Younger workers find usOWLs loving, helpful, and SMART- We do know how to get it done and get it right! In China it is also true that the communities with only 20-somethings face epidemic depression and suicide.

So, go back to school, to work, open an in-home business, but stay connected, concerned and competent. Do the things you always wanted to do - and for the money you need!

Michele Jackman MSW, MA - Chief Executive Officer and Marketing Director - **usOWLs**

{ The usOWL Minute }

us OWLs really likes Lynda!

Here's a little background we found at Wikipedia . . .

The **Lynda.com Online Training Library** teaches computer skills in video format to members through monthly and annual subscription-based plans. The company was founded in Ojai, California and has since moved to Ventura and Carpinteria, California, where it currently employs more than

200 full-time staff members and more than 140 teachers who earn royalties from their shared revenue model. The company website was created in 1995 and the company was incorporated in 1997.

Lynda.com evolved from its original conception as a free web resource for Lynda's students, to the site for her books on web design, to the registration hub for physical classrooms and conferences, to an online virtual knowledge library, where today, members may watch software and technology courses in several categories (3D and animation, audio, business, design, development, home computing, photography, video, and web and interactive design). The company also produces documentaries about creative professionals.

The company received \$103 million in venture capital funding in January 2013, led by Accel Partners and Spectrum Equity.

usOWLs Talks about Working from Home

During the last 10 years of my past career, I telecommuted. All of my friends and colleagues were jealous and I felt that I could handle telecommuting well. From home I supervised multi-state computers operations with frequent trips to sites. What I found out about myself during this tenure was that I became obsessed with working, and I needed outside interaction. Luckily, I found out about my obsessive tendencies to work discipline 12-14 hours a day 7 days a week and my need for outside interaction early in my telecommuting career. Working from home is not as easy as one would think and one has to be disciplined.

I thought I would love telecommuting, not fighting the traffic commuting to work, no more employee interruptions, more time to myself, etc. What I found out was that I had to treat telecommuting the same as commuting. I would designate my office hours, and let my employees know when I would be available. I would shut my office door as if I had left my former office. I would not take calls after hours unless it was an emergency. All of these things helped to organize my telecommuting time, and my personal life, as well.



Once I had my office time organized, I needed to go outside and interact with others. So, I researched volunteer opportunities, and join several groups to help others where I could impart my knowledge of computers. By going outside of the home, I could leave the business behind and enjoy my new found volunteerism, as well.

What is important about working at home is to not let the business consume your day. Set a schedule and live with it and enjoy activities outside of the house.

Patricia Brem, MBA, MA - Chief Operations Officer - **usOWLs**

Make Decisions!

At the usOWLs.com website, you will find a section dedicated to links to other websites that assist those who are in transition . . . looking for a new job, contemplating starting a business, or keeping a job by enhancing skills.

[Employment Help](#) - Self-employment, interviews suggestions, state-by-state look at the American Jobs Act, and more

[Resumes](#) - How to write the right resume with examples

[Tips for Finding and Keeping a Job](#) - How to dress for an interview, how to perform at your best

[Searching for a Job](#) - Creating a new business

Lou Thompson - Director of Creative Technology - [usOWLs](#)

Coming in October

Falling for Yourself



[usOWLs.com](#) is looking out for you . . . spiritually, mentally, and physically . . . with tips for living, working, retiring, and traveling. We hope you'll join us on the ride!

Sincerely,

Michele Jackman

Chief Executive Officer and Marketing Director

Patricia Brem

Chief Operations Officer

Lou Thompson

Director of Creative Technology

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