

IS IT EVER TOO LATE TO EARN AN M.B.A.?

Summary: *Is it possible and practical to earn an MBA in your 50s? Find out in this article.*



Question: How valuable is an M.B.A. to someone in her early 50s? Can it still be helpful if I am planning a career change or considering consulting? Couldn't it demonstrate my continued commitment to growth and new experience?

Answer: Obtaining an M.B.A. at 50 certainly could be used to demonstrate continuous learning. Unfortunately, it is likely that you may still encounter age bias as you compete for openings with your Gen-X classmates.

Add to continuous learning the marketable business skills developed through the program, networking contacts through classmates and alumni, potential internship opportunities and access to on-campus recruiters. If you are able to capitalize on these features of an M.B.A., it may well be worth your while, particularly if your current employer is willing to foot the bill—or at least contribute toward the degree.

If tuition and expenses are coming out of your pocket, figure the full cost of the M.B.A. and compare it to your estimated salary gains over the remaining years in your career. To help with a final decision, if the gains don't outweigh the costs, you might be better served by taking a couple of business classes to demonstrate your commitment to grow. Then you can build a network through professional associations, conferences and business connections.