

Technology and Learning

Humanity and technology have been intertwined since the thumb and forefinger found one another. Early in our prehistory, humans found ways not only to create tools, but to represent their world, their issues and their beliefs using available technological artifacts. Charcoal, animal blood, plant dyes and mineral pigments became important means for expressing ideas, explaining events and augmenting limited vocabularies. In addition to artistic displays on cave walls, early humans adopted music, dance and costumes to increase the immediacy and realism of what they were sharing. They employed these means to heighten excitement and even manipulate emotions of joy, sorrow, anger or fear. The costumes, simulations of weapons, organization of space and inclusion of natural elements such as smoke, fire and mood enhancing chemicals (for example, peyote, hemp, mushrooms and alcohol) all contributed to increase the impact of their messages.

Hence, it is not a giant leap from these early uses of media and technology to those of today - photographs, films, television, computers, 3-D and virtual reality - to enrich communications and, of course, learning. Technology, throughout human history, has played a dual role of both fascination and support. It has helped enhance our lives in almost every sphere: health, food, transportation and shelter. It has also displayed a much darker side of dispensing pollution and death.

We professionals in workplace learning turn to technology to help make the acquisition of desired skills and knowledge more efficient, more accessible and certainly more impactful. So long as we use it wisely, technology can be a productive partner in our quests. However, let us never forget that technology can be a seductive force of destruction. Let us continue our history of using technology to make learning meaningful, engaging and effective. Let us also be on guard against overdependence on technology that, if left unchecked, has the potential to overwhelm - even crush - that which we value.

All the best,
Harold & Erica

A Wonderful FREE Gift For You

Dr. Ryan Watkins, Associate Professor, George Washington University, along with Maurya West Meiers and Dr. Yusra Laila Visser, has written a wonderful book entitled *A Guide to Assessing Needs*, published by the World Bank. Visit http://www.hsa-ips.com/E_News/ENews_Apr12/A_Guide_to_Assessing_Needs_Excerpts.pdf to access two excerpts from the book. They describe its approach, structure and contents, and introduce you to their needs assessment tools.

A FREE online or PDF version of the book can be accessed at www.GapsInResults.com.

Stop Wasting Money on Training

The amount of money organizations invest in training escalates each year. Since 1991, annual training budgets in the US have grown from \$43.2 to \$125 billion, a whopping 290% increase! This pattern is found worldwide.

Isn't it time that we asked ourselves:

- Are organizations getting value for their dollars spent?
- Is training doing what it should?
- What's the return-on-investment (ROI)?

Want to find out how? Visit http://www.hsa-lps.com/Emails/Stop_Waste_Money.html to learn more.

About Us

At HSA Learning & Performance Solutions LLC, we've seen a lot over the years. We know the business of learning. We know the role human performance plays in business success. We know how to uncover and address needs, then create appropriate solutions. We pride ourselves on helping organizations achieve high levels of performance - and success. HSA is a leader in workplace learning and performance improvement. Our proven learning and performance solutions have helped maximize employee performance at dozens of organizations throughout the world. Our principals, Harold D. Stolovitch and Erica J. Keeps, share a common passion - developing people. Together they have devoted a combined total of over 80 years to make workplace learning and performance both enjoyable and effective. Their dedication to improving workplace learning and performance is reflected in the workshops they run internationally on training delivery, instructional design and performance consulting. Together, they are co-editors of the first two editions of the Handbook of Human Performance Technology and co-authors of the best-selling, award-winning series of books Telling Ain't Training - Updated, Expanded and Enhanced, Training Ain't Performance, Beyond Telling Ain't Training Fieldbook and Beyond Training Ain't Performance Fieldbook published by ASTD Press. They are also co-authors of the Wiley/Pfeiffer Learning & Performance Toolkit Series. To learn more, visit www.hsa-lps.com.