

Who We Are and How Did We Get Here?

The [January 2016 edition of the HSA e-Xpress](#) offered new features such as Harold's Reading and Viewing Guide and Readers Speak Out. In this issue, we launch a third new feature, Personal Musings, in which we share lessons learned from having toiled in the field of workplace learning and performance improvement for a combined total of over 85 years.

During this lengthy period, we have accumulated a wealth of professional experiences...sometimes, unfortunately, the hard way. We thought you might enjoy learning about some of our adventures, discoveries and reflections on these. First, some background on us.

Harold started as a primary school teacher in Canada after graduating from McGill University. After a six-year stint at the university's demonstration school, he set off to central west Africa (Cameroun) for five years as a teacher and secondary school administrator for the Canadian government. On his return, he enrolled in Indiana University's Instructional Systems Technology graduate program where he obtained a master's degree and then a PhD. He continued with a post-doc year of studies in special education technology. For a career path, he chose to travel the academic route becoming a university professor, dean of research and program director of the graduate programs in instructional and performance technology at Université de Montréal. He is now an emeritus professor, specializing in workplace learning and performance. Throughout his career, he has focused his research and professional practice on engineering learning and performance systems that produce measurable results valued by all stakeholders.

Erica began her career, after graduating from the University of Michigan, as a market research analyst for a large department store chain. That career was cut short when the training department, seeking someone with strong analytical skills, launched a search to fill a key position. Erica was selected. Once in the training field, she felt that she had found her home. However, Erica quickly learned that "training" does not solve all human performance problems at work. This led to her MEd in Behavioral Psychology at Wayne State University. Erica chose to continue along the corporate path and began the application of behavioral principles to improve performance in the workplace, initially in the retail sector. Later, as a consultant, she expanded her repertoire to instructional and performance technology, applying their principles, processes and practices in the service sector. After joining Harold, her world of application soon expanded to include manufacturing, military, government, transportation, mining, police, high tech and many more workplace sectors.

We hope these brief bios will provide the background to enjoy our Personal Musings series. It begins with the Who's Learning Now? article in this issue.

Peace,
Erica and Harold

Harold's Reading and Viewing Guide

By Harold D. Stolovitch

After receiving wonderful feedback on my last set of recommended readings and viewings (you can read them [here](#)), I am happy to present you with three excellent publications. Two of these are quite short and can be accessed online for free, and the third can be purchased online for \$4.99 (click on book titles). Happy reading!

[Myths, exaggerations and uncomfortable truths: The real story behind Millennials in the workplace](#) is a research report - very readable - produced by the IBM Institute for Business Value. As IBM and other organizations plan for the future, it is essential to determine the extent to which Millennial workers differ from those of previous generations as they will constitute 50% of the workforce by 2020. Are there significant differences between Millennials and other workers with respect to career goals, employee engagement, preferred leadership styles, recognition, ethics and other important dimensions? Conducted in 12 countries and across six industries with almost 1,800 employees, the researchers compared the behavioral patterns and preferences of Millennials (21-34), Gen X (35-46) and Baby Boomers (50+). The researchers especially focused on five commonly held beliefs about Millennials, which all turned out to be myths. The exciting news: across generations, workers are far more alike than different.

[The Conference Board CEO Challenge® 2015 Research Report](#) reveals what CEOs consider to be their current priority business challenges and reports on what they believe are the best strategies for dealing with them. The Conference Board has been conducting the CEO Challenge survey annually for the last 16 years. It is the most comprehensive study of this nature and includes respondents from across the globe. The 2015 report is based on 943 CEO, president and chairmen/chairwomen responses from the US, Europe, Asia, China, India, ASEAN and Latin America. At the top of the list of challenges is human capital. The top five are all highly dependent on the performance of people in the workplace. This is an extremely important document for anyone professionally engaged in the improvement of human performance at work.

[Eureka! The Science of Genius](#) is an ebook published online by Scientific America (\$4.99). It contains a series of articles authored by some of the world's most knowledgeable experts on intelligence and human performance. The articles examine genius, not just in terms of IQ, but also with respect to extraordinary accomplishment in science and the arts. To affect learning and performance requires a thorough, well-rounded and up-to-date understanding on the nature of intellectual, creative and expert accomplishment, as well as the important role the environment plays in fostering highly valued achievements. Can we enhance intelligence? Can we build better learners? Can we, ourselves, become smarter? All of these questions, as well as many more are addressed in this clearly written collection.

Personal Musings: Who's Learning Now?

By Erica J. Keeps

The back, back story: Years ago, we had a great conversation with Bob Mager, a true master and leader in the fields of learning and performance. He informed us that each year, he enrolled in a course in order to remember what it was like to be a learner. Bob shared that in this way, he had learned luggage making, ventriloquism and so much more in his quest for knowledge about being a learner. His passion and dedication to learners made a powerful impression on us. We frequently reminisce about this chat and every once in a while try to emulate his example.

The back story: I have never been a cook. Truth be told, in our first year of marriage, I burned up three kettles. No one I know is as consistent as I am at cutting or steaming themselves while preparing a meal. Almost every time I venture into the kitchen, some form of disaster strikes. Of course, Harold is always to blame! After all, as he is fully aware of my lack of domestic skills; he should be doing everything possible to protect me, our home and our future by keeping me out of the kitchen, right?

Over the years, I have lost almost all confidence in my culinary capabilities. We eat more meals out, have guests over less often at mealtime and basically keep our refrigerator stocked only with ingredients that can be tossed into a salad. Fortunately, one of my brothers is a chef. Unfortunately, however, he lives thousands of miles from us. As a result, home-cooked eating only comes with a brotherly visit. Frankly, I believe that he got all the cooking genes in our family. Anyway, that's my story and I have faithfully stuck to it.

The story: A restaurant we frequent happens to be located near a culinary school, Chef Eric's Culinary Classroom (www.culinaryclassroom.com). One day, on a whim, I decided to drop by to explore the possibility of taking a cooking course. Embarrassed at first by my lack of skill, I was hesitant to sign up until I learned that it offered a basic culinary skills program for people just like me. To show Harold I was seriously interested, I invited him to join me. He immediately replied, "Yes!"

Week 1 was quite intimidating. Knife handling turned out to be both a skill and confidence challenge. Manipulating these sharp tools felt almost life-threatening. Nevertheless, I gathered up my courage and actually ended up slicing, dicing and mincing without injury.

There also seemed to be so many recipes we had to follow. How could we accomplish everything in the time available? Vocabulary was another mystery. I found myself unfamiliar with a lot of the terminology the chef-instructor used. Others seemed to understand everything. I had to constantly ask what was being

said (e.g. braised, caramelized, sautéed, pilaf, blanche, deglaze). However, as a motivated learner (with a spouse who was also both supportive and hoping for a miracle), I put fear aside and gave it my best shot. Surprise of surprises, what I cooked ended up tasting really good. I left exhausted, still intimidated, but also amazingly satisfied by my limited accomplishments.

By Week 2 I was truly looking forward to the experience. Much as I had wanted to, I still had been unable to bring myself to actually apply the skills at home. But change was in the air. Come Week 3, I was proudly able to share with the chef-instructor and classmates, complete with photos, what we had tried at home by applying what we had acquired in our first and second weeks' lessons. Then, throwing caution to the wind, we invited our first dinner guest, cooking up a storm that included our three weeks of learning. By Week 4, graduation week, I was sad for the class to end.

The moral to the story: Truthfully, I am still far from a chef. Nevertheless, I have gained enough confidence to give home cooking a whirl. My perspective on food preparation and a number of my behaviors have significantly altered. I shop differently now, plan time to prepare dishes we enjoy, am getting up the courage to have a dinner party and am proud to say I haven't yet burnt or cut myself.

Just as Mager pointed out all those years ago, the best way to get in touch with what it means to be a learner is to become a learner yourself. Who isn't afraid or at least concerned about mastering a new, seemingly intimidating skill? Who doesn't need to build confidence along with competence? Who doesn't respond well to the encouraging words of a respected instructor? If you haven't taken a course in a while, in other words, planted yourself in a learner's shoes, what are you waiting for? There is no better personal and professional development opportunity out there! Be a learner. It will result in your becoming a much better trainer.

Harold's ATD Telling Ain't Training Farewell Tour

For over the past 10 years, Harold Stolovitch has delivered his Telling Ain't Training ATD event to thousands of trainers, providing them with the foundation and tools to produce sound learning sessions resulting in measurable learning, on-job application and improved performance. 2016 begins his farewell tour.

Don't miss your chance to learn from the man who made "Telling ain't training," a popular expression that has spread across the globe. Join us July 28 and 29 in Los Angeles or November 3 and 4 in Chicago and participate in one of the final [ATD Telling Ain't Training events](#).

Harold has been delivering trainer training in-house worldwide for over 20 years. For interested organizations with seven or more trainers requiring trainer training,

in-house training sessions with Harold can be scheduled through ekeeps@hsa-lps.com or by phoning Erica at 310-497-8466.

Readers Speak Out

"Thank you so much for presenting to our organization. We appreciate your insight, experience and compelling stories that you bring to Performance Consulting. We were honored to have you join us." - Anna and Martin, Performance Consultants

"I wanted to let you know how your book, Telling Ain't Training, has positively transformed a company's training program and me!

I was approached two years ago about taking a company training team 'to the next level'. I was given wide latitude on how to do this and complete creative control. After reviewing too many publications on training, I happened upon Telling Ain't Training and was instantly hooked.

I used your book as a basis for a program I call Prepare to Train. In our first session each participant is instructed to "train" us on a topic of their choice; with no additional constraints or suggestions. Then each participant (and there have been 70+ to date) was given a copy of your book. (Believe me, we have kept Barnes and Noble busy!) The next three sessions were then spent discussing (participant led discussion) on your book and how it applied to our professional and sometimes private lives. Additionally, their original "training" session was discussed on what could have done better/differently/etc. During our last session, each participant selected one activity from your 25 Training Activities list and delivered to the group.

They have used their new skills to create a technical training program using the principles from Telling Ain't Training and of course the Training Session Planning sheet. They retrofit another training program and are currently in the process of creating another new training program.

The exciting part has been the comments from the new hires that have gone through the training - "it's so organized," "it's so easy to understand," "this is the best training I've ever been through..." The most incredible part is the feedback from the current staff concerning the high level of the new hires after training and also the fact that the current employees are so intrigued with the new training; they want to go through it themselves!

Thank you for such an enlightening, easy to understand, transformational book!"

- Pam Sullivan, Charlottesville, VA

**Do you have feedback on our books? We would love to hear from you.
Please share your comments with us at ekeeps@hsa-lps.com.**

Ask Harold

Do you have a burning learning and performance question? Visit http://www.hsa-lps.com/Expert_Q_A.htm and ask your question for Harold Stolovitch to answer. Here is a recent submission that might intrigue you:

Why don't more findings from learning research make it into everyday teaching/training practice? I am blown away by what I observe instructors and teachers doing that, from my limited exposure to research studies, are unsupported, while research findings, some of them long-standing, fail to influence practice.

To read the response, visit http://www.hsa-lps.com/Expert_Q_A.htm. To ask your own question, fill out the form on http://www.hsa-lps.com/Expert_Q_A.htm#Questions and click submit.

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 85 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.