Vision of Learning

Teaching and Learning at the Speed of Light

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Long Range Learning Opportunities

"When the rate of change outside exceeds the rate of change inside, the end is in sight." (Jack Welch, Former CEO, General Electric)

Vision. Teachers who use technology know it has improved their productivity in current classroom settings. And they recognize the power and potential of technology to advance their role in the 21st century classroom. Because of this vision they want to evolve with new digital tools, social media, cloud computing, and global learning communities. On the one hand, these advancements help today's teachers to improve teaching and student achievement. On the other hand, they help teachers to combine people, teaching, and technology for creating new and better ways of learning. ***This approach -- combining people, teaching, and technology -- sets the stage for teaching and learning at the speed of light.***

Change. The power and potential of technology have already changed the world outside of the education sector. One only has to see the worldwide acceptance of technology as a necessary resource for a business to stay competitive in a knowledge-based economy. For example, the movement by the financial industry to use ATMs; online and mobile tools for home banking, investing, and trading; loan application software; tax preparation and submission programs; and e-commerce on the Internet demonstrates how a vision of technology is constantly changing the industry. To support changes such as these in the business sector, educators will be expected and required to use technology as a way of doing business in school and virtual settings. Otherwise, the education sector will simply not be able to deliver the knowledge and smart skills its students will need to compete in the 21st century workplace.

Trends. Teachers who use technology tools and platforms already recognize the potential and benefits to students. They are already asking for enhancements and features in current web-based tools as well as new cloud-based applications to support the evolution of education into the technology-driven world. This is the long range learning opportunity for the LearningFRONT global learning community membership. For example, LearningFRONT improved its first floppy-disk professional software product -- TaskBuilder -- by creating the Internet version -- TaskBuilderOnline. And then included additional features and related professional development tools known as eLearningTeacher and WikiTasks. And recently, LearningFRONT

integrated social and professional learning tools to help its membership progress during the flow of their work to improve student learning.

Current Thinking and Practice

"The field cannot well be seen from within the field." (Ralph Waldo Emerson)"

Status Quo. Most people still think of integrating technology into their current way of doing business. For example, educators integrate technology into schools by adding computers to a conventional classroom. Business personnel integrate technology into the workplace by using it for administrative purposes. And parents integrate technology into the home for email, word processing, online shopping, and entertainment purposes. In each case, technology acts as a tool for learning and doing more efficiently current education, work, and recreational activities. In these cases improvement is confined to the addition of technology within the limits of the current structure.

Pioneers. One of the pioneers of educational technology, Dustin Heuston[1], pointed out many times that "integrating technology into education" is a conventional way of thinking about technology. He points out that it is similar to trying to improve the pony express by integrating a combustion engine into a horse to improve the speed of delivering the mail. As history demonstrated, a visionary competitor worked to invent a new communication process -- the telegraph -- that moved the message at the speed of light. So, no matter how much improvement takes place in the current system, it simply cannot compete with the new system that is driven by advances in technology. What lesson does this teach us? Well, as Heuston reminds us, the pony express went out of business several days after the telegraph was invented. New technology-driven systems require people to change and to learn and improve the new system over time as the old system becomes obsolete.

The work of Clayton Christensen[2] and his colleagues has set the path for new and better ways of learning through disruptive innovations and jobs theory. These are new and affordable ways of learning that don't compete with the current system and result in highly student-centric models aligned with a technology-driven vision of learning.

Visionary Thinking and Practice

"What would teaching look like if students and teachers could learn at the speed of light?" (Nicholas Hobar)

Learning Venues. Tomorrow students, educators, business personnel, and

parents will think of using technology to learn anywhere and anytime in settings without boundaries. Learning will occur through technology-driven learning networks that offer Learning Layouts for any academic, technical, professional, or recreational topic. LearningFRONT introduced the concept of Learning Layouts to deliver professional learning programs to teachers and administrators to demonstrate the power of this approach. Learning networks will be available in a variety of settings rather than in conventional school buildings. These learning networks -- the Internet and organizational intranets are examples -- will have unlimited hours of Learning Layouts available to children, youth, and adults. For example, learning networks will be available in homes, residential-like child care centers, learning studios for early adolescents and youth, and career enhancement sites for adults.

Learning Layouts. Schools as we know them now will begin to disappear. They simply will not be able to compete with the new learning networks and Learning Layouts. Digitized and interactive learning technologies will deliver Learning Layouts through the learning networks to people regardless of their location. These include Web 2.0 applications that support and facilitate participatory information sharing, user-centered design, and collaboration on the World Wide Web -- and emerging Web 3.0 tools that learn what each user likes, dislikes, wants, and needs through smart apps and AI. For profit learning companies have already aligned their world wide learning services with information service providers to offer such services through mass collaboration. And voice and handwriting recognition, touch technologies, and groundbreaking mobile digital devices that track habits and preferences are becoming prevalent in personal, public, and corporate settings.

Dynamic Learning. Individuals and teams of students, teachers, and workers will learn on-demand, just-in-time, and in real time. Teachers as we know them now will become developers and coordinators of Learning Layouts for a variety of learners. Teachers will not control what and how students learn as they do in today's group-based classrooms. They will help each student to meet their learning goals through the learning networks and Learning Layouts. Their role will be to combine people, teaching, and technology to support the users of learning networks and Learning Layouts. This will lead to unprecedented growth in people and smart skills as technology supports them to work effectively both online and in face-to-face situations.

At the frontier of today's focus on standards-based learning, "Dynamic Learning" will emerge and become accepted as a 21st century learning process. In short, Dynamic Learning is a process that takes the best of current student work and makes it better continuously. Dynamic Learning will help students, educators, parents, and stakeholders to learn more about what students learn by letting "learning" happen and then by analyzing what has been learned, post hoc. This process uses the best of what is learned and shared by students as the current standard of quality with no preconceived limits. And because of smart technology apps, the current standards get

"refreshed" by dynamic student learning and not by a drawn out content standards development process.

Using Dynamic Learning means that each time learning activities are completed and shared through technology, a student(s) may establish a better product or performance than the current standard of quality -- on local, state, national, and global levels.

Today's classroom structure and teacher-pupil ratios make this type of learning growth impossible. Newer versions of integrated social media, learning, and professional learning tools will act as professional devices for accessing, organizing, and offering services to students through Learning Layouts on the learning networks. The focus will be on how to deliver and adapt Learning Layouts to meet the needs and interests of people rather than to offer a standardized curriculum. In all of these cases, LearningFRONT will support this new role of combining people, teaching, and technology to create new and better ways of learning.

Advancing Frontiers. 21st century learning networks and Learning Layouts will emerge, shape, and continuously advance new knowledge generated by the network users. Students and teachers will generate data and apply knowledge to real world circumstances. They will change from being recipients of predetermined content to contributors of new knowledge in Learning Layouts. Success in the use of learning networks and Learning Layouts will occur initially in low performing schools, workplaces, and homes. Then, rapid improvements will follow in learning network and Learning Layouts capacities resulting in unprecedented customer satisfaction about the way children, youth, and adults learn. The highest level of success will be achieved when learning network users continuously improve and apply their knowledge and skills to personal and professional growth and real world applications. Moreover, learning networks and Learning Layouts will become the benchmarks for the delivery of public, independent, and for-profit education rather than for schools to continue as places that integrate technology into the status quo.

In the 21st century, schools will evolve from buildings students attend to the digital technology resources people turn on to access learning networks and Learning Layouts. In short, digital technology will replace school buildings and classrooms as the primary delivery system for education.

> ***And people will combine what they do best -- nurture and support learners -- with advanced digital technology to do what it does best -- process data, information, and knowledge at the speed of light.***

Moreover, each student's digital technology resources will extend the learning process to anyplace on earth and beyond because of the learning networks. LearningFRONT is dedicated to become a worldwide leader in professional digital learning products and services that support this vision of learning in

the 21st century.

Contact

Want to design an interactive webinar to generate visionary thinking in your learning community, school, district, business, or organization about 21st century learning networks and Learning Layouts?

We will work collaboratively with you to plan and carry out a "thinking at the speed of light" webinar to support visionary thinking about combining people, teaching, and technology to create new and better ways of learning.

Also, you are cordially invited to join LearningFRONT, become a colleague, and contribute your ideas and content to improve teaching and learning!

Join LearningFRONT

Professional Learning Programs

About Nick Hobar

Contact Nick Hobar

Contribute to the WikiTask version:

- In the LearningFRONT WikiTask tool, search on the Keyword: Vision

Notes:

[1] **Dustin Heuston:** I learned about the concept of learning at the speed of light through many personal meetings with Dustin Heuston and by reading many of his professional papers. I dedicate my use of his idea, "learning at the speed of light," in this paper to honor his numerous innovative contributions to education.

[2] **Clayton Christensen:** I read Clayton Christensen's book entitled, *Disrupting Class*, and discovered the power and potential of a "disruptive innovation" for improving teaching and learning. I believe disruptive innovations represent the best pathways for changing and improving schools in the 21st century and beyond.