Think “Exciting”: E-Learning and the Big “E”

By Bernard Luskin

- The exploding new media and communications environment has implications for the future of both K–12 and adult learning as media, technology, and learning psychology increasingly become tools for learning in and outside the classroom.
- The “e” in e-learning means much more than “electronic” when applied to e-learning — think instead of a big “E” for “exciting, energetic, engaging, extended” learning.

Technology, globalization, and new knowledge about how people learn are having dramatic effects on diverse approaches to teaching and learning worldwide. Most of the literature about these changes refers to physical technology, however, such as computers, iPods, iPhones, MP3 players, and the overall proliferation of gadgets and gizmos.

The exploding new media and communications environment has implications for the future of both K–12 and adult learning as media and technology increasingly become tools for learning in and outside the classroom. Media studies provide a frame for the situation, including research into the devices being used, how they are being used, and their effectiveness. Both educators and technology experts need to understand not just the hardware but also the “wetware” of human behavior in response to technology-supported teaching and learning. Theories of psychology and active learning are growing in importance and represent strategic advances underlying the progress now being made. Many theories apply, and technology professionals should study psychology to understand how media elements (pictures, graphics, and sound) combine to influence behavior. “Pay attention” has meaning. Think about it.

A Broader Definition of “E”

New online teaching organizations, schools, and colleges increasingly use diverse technology. I am on the Board of Trustees of HiTechHi L.A. for example, a California high school that exemplifies the successful use of blended learning and computer learning in education. I also follow and participate in the debate about the various devices and technologies. As a learning psychologist, I believe it is important to open our minds to a broader definition and understanding of the “e” in e-learning. To many, the “e” means electronic, but I assert that the “e” means more than electronic when applied to e-learning. It actually means “exciting, empirical, empathetic, extra, emerging, energetic, exceptional, early, eloquent, everywhere, ephemeral, extended, effortless, epic, evangelistic, eclectic, engaging, extended” learning — and more. The point is that e-learning may be individual, tutorial, a significant part of a mentoring process, and a tool for personal communication that is not well understood. I want to help make the case that there is a new learning psychology in which the “e” has vastly broader implications. The psychology of media is an important emerging field, and an understanding of psychology is central to the most effective use of new media in society.

In support of this position, note that magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) research into behavior, along with more sophisticated methods, advances learning psychology, including our understanding of the “ways and the why’s” people learn and grow. The new learning psychology draws on existing theories in psychology and applies to e-media in facilitating learning. As I wrote in 2006:

> Media studies include media psychology. Why? It is no longer sufficient to combine money with technology and creativity to achieve a successful product. An understanding of human behavior is crucial as well. University courses in media psychology include topics like the physiology and psychology of learning, cognitive and sensory psychology, theories of trying, success, persuasion and attention.

Examples of theories in psychology that follow are not specific or unique to media or to learning. Nonetheless, these examples of concepts and theories in learning psychology and human behavior must be understood for e-learning to continue to improve. We must open our minds and understand that it is not the how of the “e” that drives changes, but the excitement of the “e” as it stimulates behavior. If we study theories of learning and think of them in the context of a big “E” for learning, we think of theories of motivation, success, intelligence, mastery, psycho-visualization, believability, color, sound, cognition, repetition and attention, personality, semantics, persuasion, and control. Then we can begin to realize the implications that arise from recognizing the potential of these theories in transforming opportunities for learning. As Marshall McLuhan said, the medium is the content and the message. McLuhan also understood that it is the behaviors — the human responses — that reveal the effects achieved through media and communications.

A New, Blended Model

Media, communications, and learning psychology combine in a new growth area. The first blended model of master's and doctoral programs in Media Psychology were launched by Fielding Graduate University in 2002. PhD and EdD graduates of the Media Psychology and Media Studies program at Fielding are now teaching in other colleges and universities. New programs also have been launched at NYU, The New School, Touro University, The University of Michigan, and UCLA. In addition, the growth of Media Psychology, Division 46 of the American Psychology Association, fosters media in learning as a priority. A stated objective is to:

> Support research on the effects of media on the public, and the effectiveness of media in transmitting psychological information.

Stuart Fischhoff provides a personal definition:

> Media psychology is concerned with the inter- and intra-personal psychological dimensions underlying the impact and use of any medium of communication, irrespective of the nature of the subject matter being communicated.

Media Psychology has also attracted the attention of the community of family therapists, and media and the family is a growing area of professional attention. New programs have launched worldwide in learning, media, and communications psychology, as well. A search for qualified faculty is underway, looking for those with the skills to develop, launch, and teach in these new programs. Educational institutions will need faculty and staff who understand higher concepts in the media arts and sciences and how to apply them for effective learning.
Much of the discussion about e-learning still revolves around gadgets and gizmos — the important devices that we use in daily life. I would suggest simply that individuals in all segments of educational leadership take steps to advance progress in education by including in their conversations how to:

- Apply theories of behavior
- Add the human experience

Technology administrators, CIOs, CLOs, academic administrators, and educational leaders at all levels should make conscious efforts to facilitate the understanding of why new technology is having behavioral effects on society, on individuals, and in products entering markets. Let's think about why people behave the way they do as we recognize that the meaning of e-learning will continue to evolve far beyond the small “e = electronic” to fulfill the promise of the big “E = exciting.”

Endnotes

5. See the FAQs for Marshall McLuhan’s work, which explain the seeming mistake in “the medium is the massage” and other points of his philosophy.
for different learning situations. E-learning can be in agreement with face to face teachings. The pioneers of E-learning supports that "e" in E-learning stands for exciting, energetic, enthusiastic, emotional, excellent, extended and educational in addition to electronics [9]. Other scholars suggested that "e" in E-learning should refer to everything, everyone, engaging and easy [12]. It was in 1960s that Illinois University planned to teach students based on technology and it. Think "Exciting": E-learning and big "E". What is the History of Online Education? Degrees. and Courses From top Colleges and universities. I. INTRODUCTION E-Learning is the latest fashion of learning. It is very cheap, reliable and very easy to reach with global communication getting networked [1], so called Internet. Reading a book is much different than reading a document on screen. There are various factors that affect your reading. A book is convenient and is ever with you and remains same throughout but an E-Document can be resized modified and require gadgets to open. Hence the understanding capacity for a reader is different in both the cases [2]. Though E-Learning is cheap and convenient but a reader loses interest very soon as compared to reading a book. Think “Exciting”: E-Learning and the Big “E” by Bernard. Luskin. [4]. How Students Learn In 2020. Now, over 6 million students around the world pursue higher education through online courses, with that number set to keep rising. The demand for professional skills increases rapidly as the job market evolves. Things like coding, modern business skills and digital design were becoming increasingly popular with the new workforce entering the job market. But it’s a demand that traditional educational institutions seemed unable to meet. This led to the creation of tertiary providers that focused on one specific skill set or industry. When hiring, companies are now recognizing the value of certifications that come from specialized providers, as opposed to solely prioritizing those from traditional institutions. E-learning statistics UK show that people between 16 and 24 are most likely to use online learning materials. E learning Market Size & E learning Growth in Recent Years. Since 1998, when elearning began, the online education market has experienced exponential growth. With the sudden shift to online learning, many experts think that elearning will continue even once the pandemic is over. Even before the pandemic, there were major investments into the online teaching market. Here’s the deal: How big is the eLearning market? In 2018, the size of the elearning market reached $160 billion. It's expected to reach a mind-blowing $370 billion by 2026. E-learning reaches out to the global audience through digital course delivery platforms and learning management systems (LMS). How to create LMS website or how to create a School Management System Software you can read in our special articles. Though not all of them are developed equal. High employee turnover rate is one of the biggest challenges large enterprises face. E-learning creates an atmosphere of professional growth and constant development. This enables your employees to value you as an employer and stay loyal to your organization. Got convinced and excited about e-learning advantages? At HuskyJam, we fully share your excitement! Contact us to discuss how we can tailor a unique e-learning experience for you.