

**Subject:** News and Views and Invitations -- April

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# D-Letter

from DUBLIN CONSULTING  
April 2007

Dear Lance,

Welcome to the April issue of the *D-Letter*.

First, I want to thank so many of you for your emails and calls in response to the March D-Letter. I only hope that I can continue to stimulate your thinking, challenge your assumptions, and inspire you similarly in all of the future D-Letters.

As we begin the second quarter of 2007, there surely is a lot going on I'm excited to share with you: further exploration and learning about creative abrasion and appreciative inquiry; April conferences; my Spring "How-to" Webinar Series; exciting new industry research; and, continuous improvement at DublinConsulting.net.

Thank you for joining me. As always, I welcome your comments, feedback and participation. Don't hold back.

My best,  
Lance

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## Facts for Thought

### On My Mind



"Hello. I'm Lance and I'm a creative abrasionist."

This simple declaration last month generated a truly overwhelming response. It turns out there may be a fair number of 'creative abrasionists' amongst us. And, these inquiring minds want to know more!

I was able to determine

"The problems that exist in the world today cannot be solved by the the level of thinking that created them."

If you don't yet get the the impact of social networking, check out these facts about Facebook:

- 21 million registered users since its inception three years ago, 93 percent of whom are "active," (meaning they log on at least once a month)
- length of time spent on the site averages 20 minutes/day
- ranked as the 36th-most-visited Web site in February with 16.7 million unique visitors and was the 2nd-most-engaging site with 23.6 average visits per visitor during the month
- most-visited Web site for males & females 17-25
- generated an average of 1.5 billion page views a day
- named the second-most "in" thing among college undergrads, tied with beer; only the iPod ranked higher
- worth an estimated \$8 billion (not bad for a another company founded in a dorm room)

Source: Mark May, Analyst, Needham & Co, Inc. quoting a number of other sources



the phrase creative abrasion was popularized by Jerry Hirshberg in the late 1990's. In 1980, Nissan Motor Corp. hired Hirshberg, a bright young designer, away from General Motors. His task was to launch and direct Nissan Design International, Nissan's first design studio in the U.S. Hirshberg went on to write a book about his experience, *The Creative Priority*. In his book, he asserts that differences and polarities are not intrusions into the creative process, but rather a welcome ally and he makes the case for what he called "creative abrasion."

It's Hirshberg's

## Myth Buster



**MYTH:**  
*Communication is about telling and convincing.*

**TRUTH:**  
True communication is a two- way process that leads to understanding and action. All too often organizations spend the majority of their time, efforts and resources on the one-way process of marketing communication (or marcom). While informational activities are necessary - and everyone enjoys trinkets and T-shirts - alone they are not sufficient.

**ACTION:**

Create a wholistic communications program that includes these three phases:

1. Information phase - focus on developing awareness
2. Involvement phase - focus on creating engagement
3. Integration phase - focus on generating long-term commitment

For more insight about this approach to communications, check out the articles in Quick Links or contact me directly.

P.S. If you have any learning or change myths you'd like me to address or you'd like to share, please email me. I welcome your participation.

[Click here to check out all of the Myth Busters](#)

## Spring Webinar Series: How-to ...

It's all well and good to talk about theories and ideas. But, what really matters is figuring out how do you **apply** them in your organization. In this three- part Spring Webinar Series, I will help you understand three key "how-to's":



1. how to leverage the latest and greatest Learning 2.0 approaches and technologies
2. how to ensure you get the return on your LMS investment
3. how to develop a comprehensive learning architecture that takes advantage of the best of what you are currently doing and the newest approaches and technologies

Here's the schedule:

- Thursday, April 26th "How to Make Learning 2.0 Real in Your Organization"
- Thursday, May 24th "How to Get the Best Return on Your LMS Investment"
- Thursday, June 14th "How to Develop a Comprehensive Learning Architecture"

These one-hour webinars are FREE. They start at 2:00pmEST. I suggest you give yourself a few minutes to get connected as we start on-time.

I look forward to 'seeing' you - and your colleagues - online.

P.S. If you want to review a recording of previous webinars, click on the Quick Link.

[Click here to register for these webinars now](#)

## Join Me on Either Coast, Or Both

belief that creative abrasion recognizes the "positive dimensions of friction, the requisite role it plays in making things go. Without it, engines would not work, a crucial source of heat and electricity would be eliminated, and relative motion across the surface of the planet would all but cease." And so, "Rather than trying to reduce the friction that naturally arises between two people working together by diluting or compromising positions, creative abrasion calls for development of leadership styles that focus on first identifying and then incorporating polarizing viewpoints."



I will be speaking at two very exciting events this month, one on each coast: the e-Learning Guild's Learning Management Symposium and Annual Gathering in Boston; and then the ISPI/IFTDO International Conference here in San Francisco.

At the e-Learning Guild event, April 10th-13th, join me for:

- Straight Talk - a 1:1 interview with industry leaders
- Espresso Learning - mini-sessions on "Change Implementation"
- concurrent session - "The Latest & Greatest in e-Learning: What's New? What's Hot? What Works? And, Why Care?"

At the ISPI/IFTDO Conference, April 28th-May 3rd, join me for:

- one-day workshop - "Three Keys to Successful e-Learning Implementation: Engaged Learners, Motivated Managers, and Energized Organizations"
- concurrent sessions - "Next Generation Learning and e-Learning Approaches and Tools: What Works and Why"

and "Engaging Learners, Motivating Managers and Energizing Organizations: Ensuring Success with e-Learning"

For more information on these sessions log onto the conference websites which you can access from the link below.

And, if you will be at one of these events, please let me know so we can arrange a time to get together - in person!

[Click here to check out these conferences and more](#)

## New Industry Research: LMS & e-Learning Tools and Approaches

**LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (LMS): The good, the bad, the ugly ... and the truth** from the e-Learning Guild

The eLearning Guild is a Community of Practice for e-Learning design, development, and management professionals. And, I'm proud to say I am an Advisory Board member of this fine organization.

The selection, implementation, and ongoing management of an LMS is likely to be one of the most costly investments an organization can and will make. This

My research also led me to the eminent John Seely Brown, former head of Xerox PARC. Brown said, " ... So the catch to me is: how do you create a space of pluralism that somehow manages to foster and honor a kind of creative abrasion. So you can get ideas that really rub against each other productively as opposed to destructively. You can use this notion as a way to challenge the status quo, be able to think out of the box and get to be able to examine some tacitly held sensibilities, if not tacitly held practices ... I'm suggesting we now start thinking about

Guild 360o Report offers more than 300 pages of expert data analysis on the single largest pool of data ever collected on LMS systems, interviews with key industry executives, commentary from industry leaders, and more. For this report, LMS market share ratings were based on data from more than 2,300 respondents and satisfaction ratings were based on data from more than 1,200 respondents. In addition, 930 e-Learning professionals were surveyed, representing more than 840 different organizations to definitively show just what the state of the industry is when it comes to Learning Management Systems."

The essay I contributed for this report is entitled, "It's About the People: The Real Key to Success." It addresses the critical people-issues in the implementation, integration and, ultimately, the success of an LMS in an organization.

For more information click on the Quick Link.

**E-Learning Tools and Approaches: How to Reap the Benefits** from The Cutter Benchmark Review

The Cutter Benchmark Review provides in-depth statistics, analysis, and advice on the latest IT trends and challenges that IT professionals face on a daily basis.

Many organizations are struggling with what e-learning really is and how to define and ensure the success of e-learning programs. And, the myriad of new learning tools and technologies available - especially those based on Web 2.0 - often seem to add to the confusion rather than help. The purpose of this report is "to take stock of the state-of-the-art in e-learning." It is based on a survey of "anytime, anywhere learning and training programs delivered via technology in modern organizations."

I was asked to help define the survey, interpret the results, and offer some guidance from a business viewpoint. My contribution, "E-Learning Today and into the Future: Keys to Success" provides an analysis of the survey findings and offers key recommendations for organizations seeking to improve their success with current and future e-learning initiatives.

For more information click on the Quick Link.

[Click here to find out more at DublinConsulting.net](#)

## Continuous Improvement at DublinConsulting.net

Based on your feedback and suggestions I've been working hard to improve my website, DublinConsulting.net. Check out:

creative abrasion as a leadership tool ..."

Dorothy Leonard and Susan Strauss, in the Harvard Business Review article, *Putting Your Company's Whole Brain to Work* make the case the manager successful at fostering innovation figures out how to get different approaches to grate against one another in a productive process they also called creative abrasion. And, managers who want to encourage innovation need to examine what they do to promote or inhibit creative abrasion.

Robert Hruzek, a wonderfully

- Home Page - where creative abrasion intersects appreciative inquiry
- Downloads - my 2006 & 2007 presentations and webinar recordings are now available; podcasts and videocasts are coming soon
- What's New - quick listing of all new features and news
- Resources - all the Myth Busters and the D-Letter archives

[Click here to view the 'new and improved' DublinConsulting.net](#)

thought-provoking blogger, in a recent blog entry, *Hello. I'm Bob, and I'm Abrasive* wrote, "Think of creative abrasion as a continuum, with polishing compound and fine sandpaper on the left (the "quietest form") and fireworks and dynamite on the right (the "energetic form"). Where do you fit in this spectrum?" He also pondered what carpenters, diamond cutters and writers have in common (and I wondered how he would make the connection to creative abrasion). "What these professions have in common is that all of them use sharp and/or abrasive instruments in their work. (The pen is

mightier than  
the sword,  
remember?)  
Each one uses  
these  
instruments  
(a saw, a  
grinding  
wheel or a  
pen) to  
change or  
modify rough  
objects  
(wood,  
carbon  
crystals or  
words) into  
“a thing of  
grace and  
beauty and a  
joy to the  
eye of the  
beholder.”

Beth Agnew,  
who I quoted  
last month,  
also has  
written, "In  
its most  
energetic  
form,  
creative  
abrasion  
brings two  
teams,  
people, or  
ideas  
together like  
flint on steel.  
It creates  
sparks that  
ignite a  
wildfire of  
ideas or  
innovation."

I'm excited  
about igniting  
'wildfires of  
new ideas or

innovations'.  
But, I'm  
moved by  
Jerry  
Hirshberg's  
thought,  
"While ideas  
are  
conceived in  
individual  
minds, they  
are seldom  
born in  
isolation and  
rarely  
realized  
alone."

So, please  
join me in  
exploring the  
intersection  
of creative  
abrasion and  
appreciative  
inquiry. I  
welcome  
your ideas,  
your  
thoughts,  
your  
questions,  
and look  
forward to  
our dialogue.

## Quick Links ...

[Spring "How-  
to..." Webinar  
Series  
Registration](#)

[Webinar  
Recording](#)

[Archive](#)

[Upcoming  
Conferences  
and Webinars](#)

[e-Learning  
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Learning Tools  
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Approaches  
Research](#)

[CLO Magazine  
-- "E-Learning  
Success:  
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Motivating  
Learners"](#)

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