

Convergence and Collaboration:

A Blended Approach to Bridging Academic and Corporate E-Learning

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Abstract

The proliferation of e-learning is providing the traditionally separated worlds of the academy and corporate training with an opportunity for convergence and collaboration and is resulting in a merging of best practices that are meeting the needs of the life-long learner.

Education

and, or, plus, vs.

The Corporation

“Distance learning is one of the most talked-about topics today in higher education and corporate training.”

(quoted from opening sentence of the 2007 Sloan C celebratory announcement.)

Professional Development and Workforce Training (Track Description)

Perpetuating the Differences :

“An important and increasing segment of online learning involves corporate training, workforce initiatives and professional certification programs. Often the pedagogical approaches applied in such initiatives are quite *different* from those typically found in standard academic offerings. Moreover, institutional issues affecting workforce training and professional development are *clearly different* than those in an academic setting. This track is designed to explore such *differences* and the pedagogical models and institutional strategies that inform them...”

Papers submitted to this track might include...(DIFFERENCES LISTED) or creative partnerships between academic institutions and corporations...”

Disparate Worlds: The Wall *between the Academy and Corporate Training*

Stereotypical Schism

The Academy: Quality education, epicenter of knowledge, critical thinking and analysis drive pedagogical methodologies. Students are learned and academia is complex and superior. A look down on corporate training.

The Corporation: Workforce development and training is skill-based, industry-specific, and drives applied techniques. Academia is lofty and impractical.

Convergence and Alignment

Increased empirical evidence of growing convergence and alignment between academic education and corporate training

- **Knowledge Management Drives Performance**
- **Corporate Universities Spring up Everywhere**
- **Academies Begin to Recognize Value-Added Quality of Corporate Development Programs**

NYU: Forefront of Convergence

Liberal Arts drives business skills development for adult learners

Exemplified in many courses

Organizational Behavior and Change

Managing for Performance Effectiveness

Emotional Intelligence

Corporate Culture & Organizational Learning

Students with strong liberal arts foundation drive critical thinking and high-level knowledge management into the corporate world.

Corporate Universities: Same Training, Just Another Name?

Many say: “No!”

A Corporate University: “...looks closely at the benefits to a company as a whole.”

Bonadido Leadership University: “At the end of the two-year comprehensive program, diplomas are handed out to employees who have successfully completed the requirements.

***Pike University: “We have the university to spend time thinking of what is expected and tailor it to the community and geography around us.”
(Judson)***

Corporate Universities Grasping for Liberal Arts Basics

Taking us from Information to Knowledge

Developing Critical Thinking

Teaching Relationship Management

Addressing Multiple Intelligences

Encouraging Expansive Thinking

***What are the basics and what models
exist?***

Kay Kane's Model of 3 Online Ideals: Learning Objective Competencies

- 1. Content Mastery***
- 2. Critical Thinking Skills***
- 3. Core Learning Skills***

The Blending of all 3 Learning Objective Competencies ensures that students achieve desired learning outcomes. (Quality Matters, Kane)

Same blending of criteria apply for corporate training and resultant career advancement.

Unfortunately, model attributes equal weight to each competency.

Content Mastery

1

Kane: Must be appropriate for type of academic course or module for corporate training. Determined by Subject Matter Expert (SME) or Content Specialist (CS)

We contend:

Content Mastery = Technical

Most Vulnerable to Commoditization

Too Frequently the Sole or Primary Focus in both the academic and corporate worlds

Commodization of Technical Specialization

Proliferation of eLearning allows for it

Expertise is free to flow to all corners of the world

Excelling via technical specialization is no longer enough to thrive

Allows for the white space where liberal arts learning can be the differentiator for the academy, business and the learner

Kane describes the ability to:

Distinguish between fact and opinion, primary and secondary resources

Identify biases and stereotypes

Evaluate information sources for points of view, perspectives, accuracy, timeliness, usefulness, etc.

Recognize deceptive arguments (Quality Matters)

Critical Thinking needs to be optimized at the highest level of speed, conceptualization, and acumen. Process must always be in the immediate.

Critical Thinking?



Core Learning Skills

3

Written and oral communication skills

Manipulation and organization of information in various ways or in using different tools

Understanding what one knows and how one knows it, and also understanding what one does **not** know and what one **needs** to find out

Critique of Kane's Model: Additional Concerns

- 1) **Mastery of Content** needs to be demystified and refuted as a pre-set, static area of expertise. Here today, obsolete tomorrow. Thus, the ease of commoditization.***
- 2) **Critical Thinking** must be emphasized as a continual ever-changing process not a singular learned pedagogy***
- 3) **Core Learning Skills** require high level communication savvy to achieve outstanding relationship management. Successful knowledge managers thrive even when embedded in a dynamic unknown.***

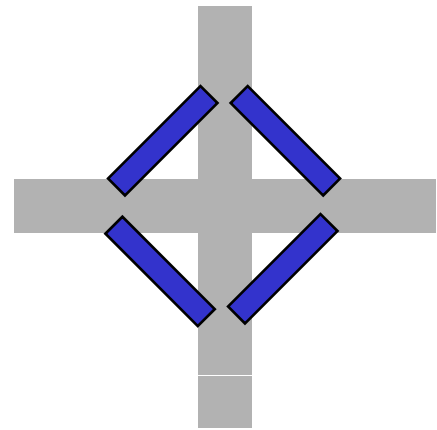
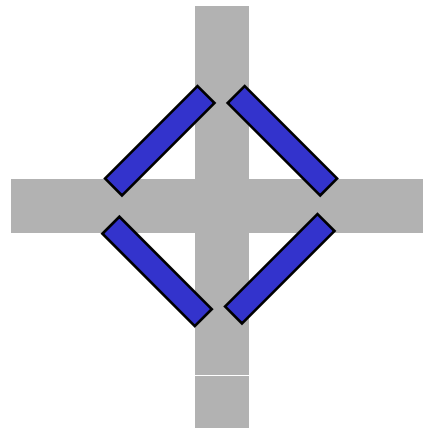
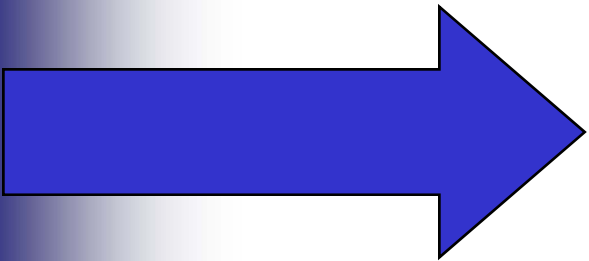
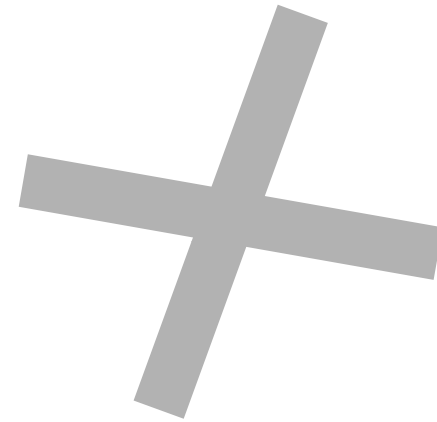
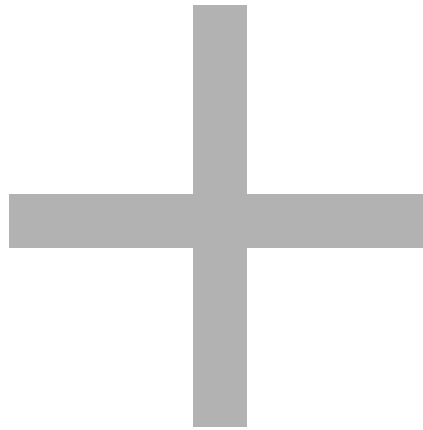
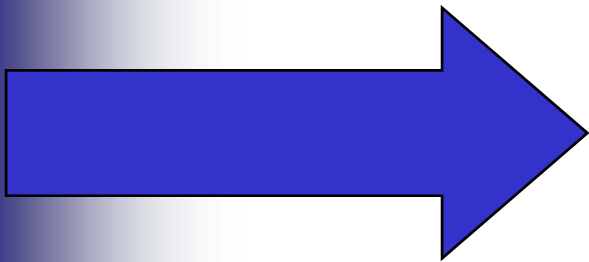
A More Dynamic Model is Imperative

Elements of Kane's model are necessary but not sufficient to succeed in an environment of hyper-change

Kane's online ideals reflect the requisite blending of learning competencies, but in a static environment

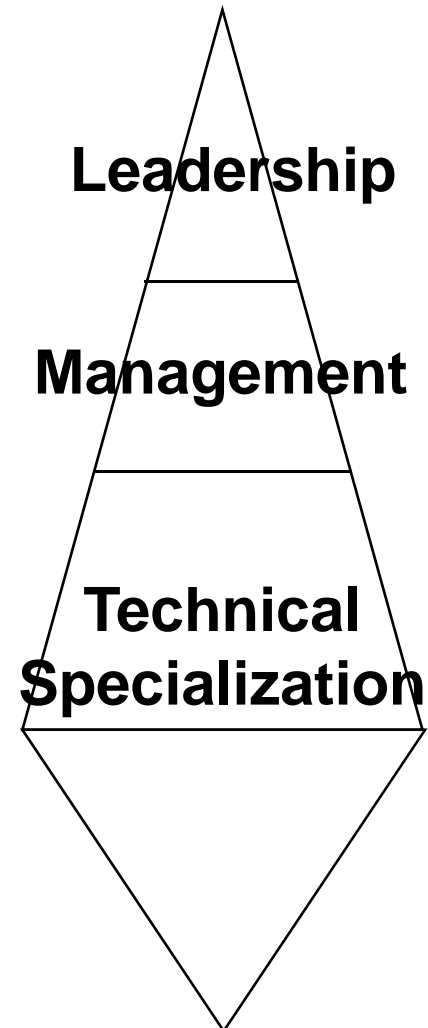
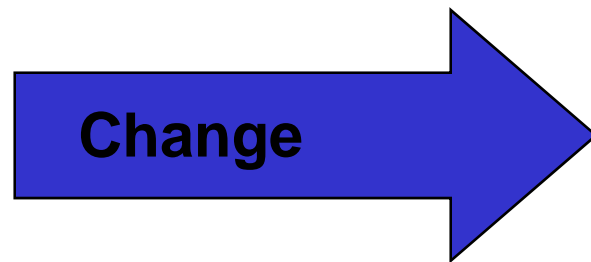
Both academia, the corporation and the learner need to be buttressed against the constant, powerful force of change

Enduring the Winds of Change



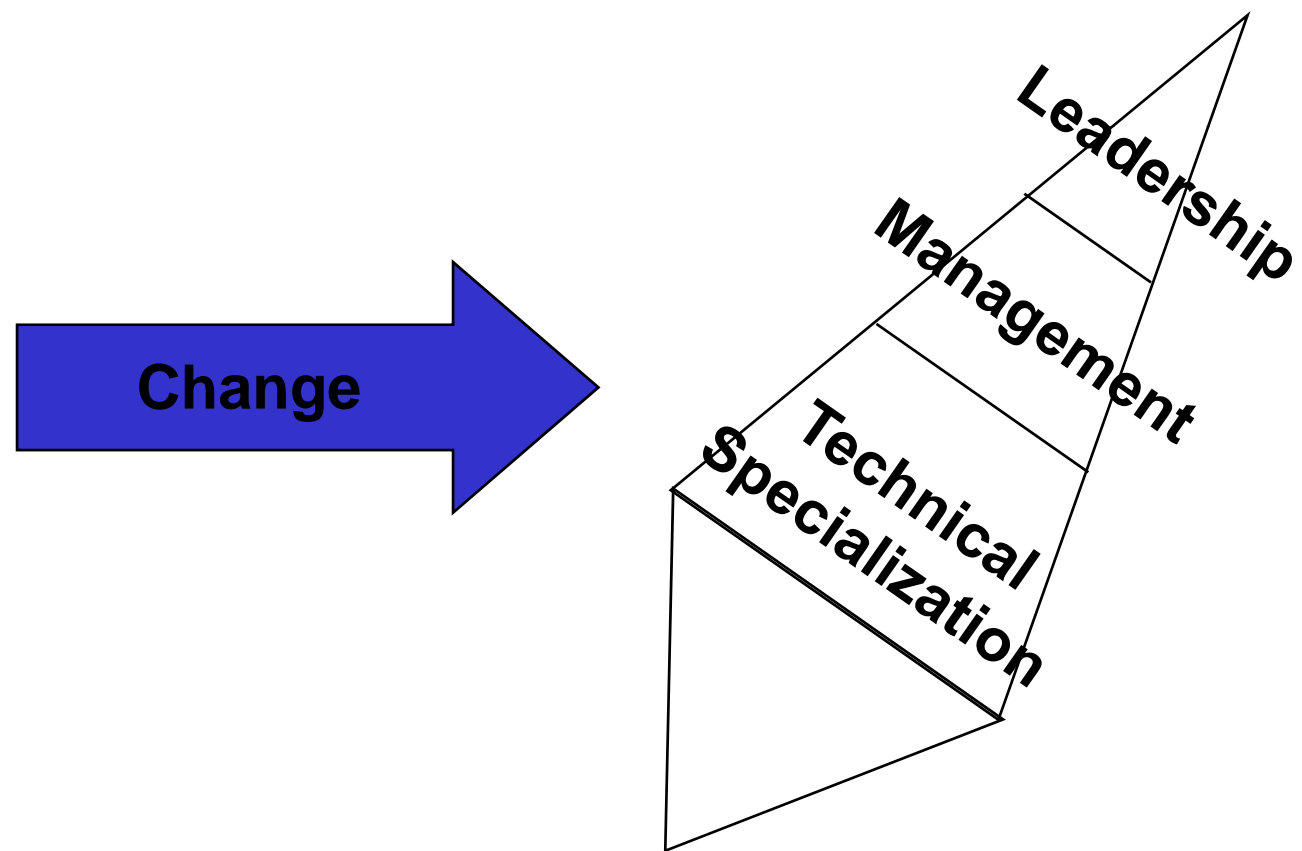
Teetering

Current State



Teetering

Current State



eLearning is Key to Answering “What’s in it for Me?”

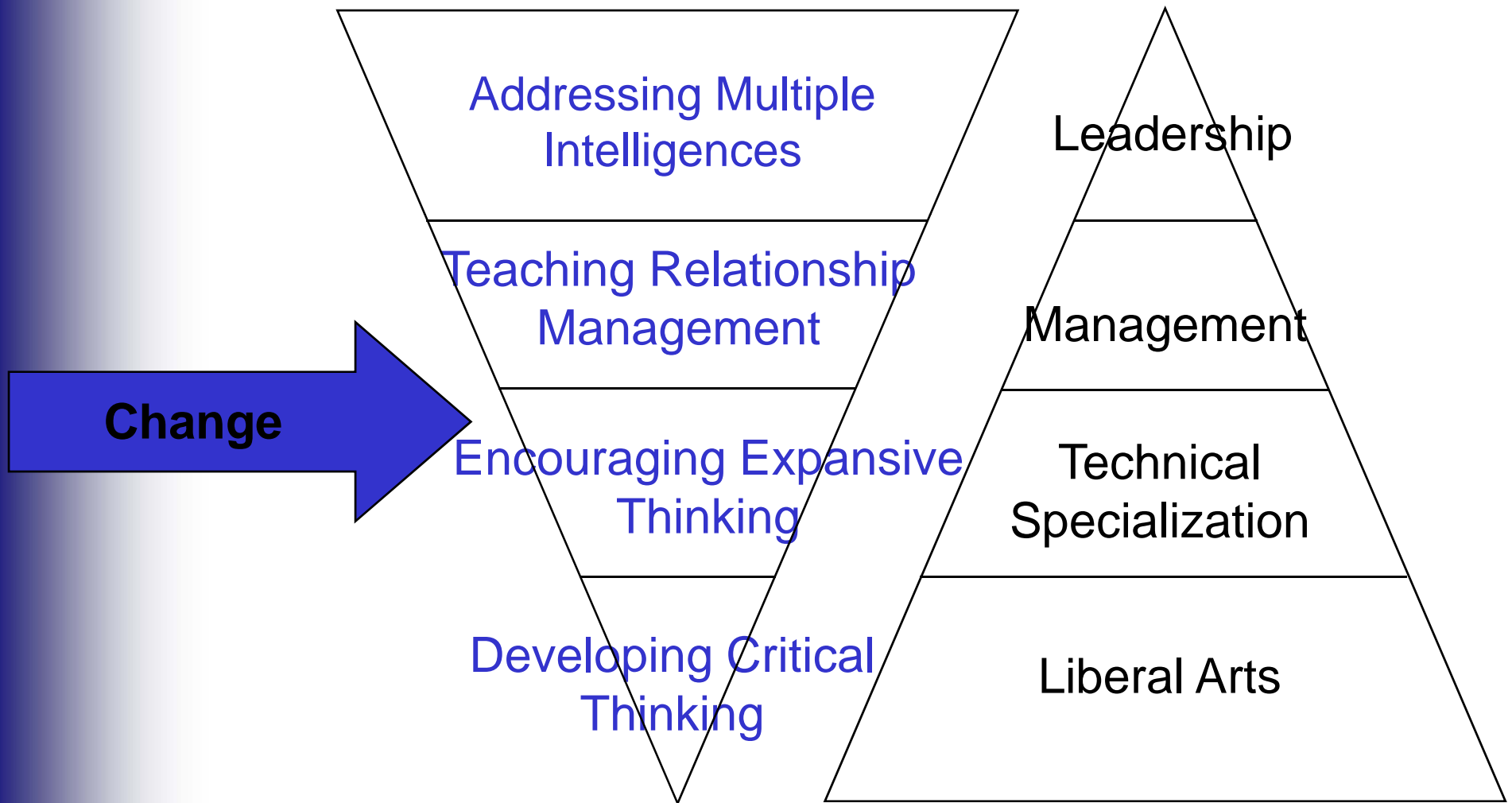
Customization

Cultural and personal demands

Adaptability, resiliency and flexibility

Solution provider

Ireland-Davidson Blended Model



Application

Via

eLearning

Blended

Virtual Management

Conclusion

Back to Basics to Deal with Complexity

eLearning + Liberal Arts =

Answer to Hyper-Change

We are at a unique time and space to leverage the diverse experiences and knowledge of the academy and the corporation. Without doing so, both will lose out in the move toward customized life-long learning. Doing so, opens extraordinary opportunities.