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Up Front

[Haidee Allerton's] Front Page column [July] spoke to me. As my purpose in life is to improve the way people follow through on what they learn, the opportunity to [write about effective learning design] is a gift to integrate work and life.

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Trends

[Re: "How to Speak Game" by Jennifer Salopek (Trends, June)] Well done!

The car I first learned to drive was a Model A. I grew up on the big bands, propeller planes...and 78 records. Old Blue Eyes transitioned to the Beach Boys, electric typewriters...and 30 years with *Fortune* 200 companies to find a computer on my desk with the note, "This is how we do our work here." I adapted, becoming a trainer and an OD consultant...and now CEO of my own little company. This journey is still happening. However, I find [a lack of] enthusiasm and fidgety attitudes from younger people I teach and work with. Salopek helped explain their reaction.

My concern is that with the intuitive, or jump, reasoning younger people do, they become more reliant on a constant flow of information and when it stops, they may not have a full

grasp of the principles to think on their own. In systems thinking, we first have feelings, then develop ideas about those feelings, then create a conceptual synthesis upon which to make decisions on similar and dissimilar experiences. At the pace of younger people, I'm not convinced they're thinking; they only have time to develop feelings about their grasping (or not) what's coming at them and little time to develop sound conceptual syntheses. Without the buzz of a constant flow of information, a kind of a high, they tune out. And that's exactly the look I sometimes get from them. Maybe my concerns are unfounded; maybe I'm a curmudgeon and need to put myself out to pasture, which I doubt I'll do till I'm 85.

Anyway, thanks for the stimulating article.

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How do you partner with a training supplier?

[In his July article "How to Partner With a Training Supplier"] Michael Rosenthal gives us some excellent tips. [But] he barely scratches the surface in one factor that is critical to supplier success: relationship management. Negotiating a deal is important, but that's only the beginning. As a vendor

manager, I've learned that the ongoing communication and management of the relationships with your suppliers is paramount.

The dialogue that begins during the contract negotiation needs to continue throughout the life of the supplier relationship. Both supplier and customer must share accountability for maintaining ongoing communication and managing the relationship for productive results. Through effective initial negotiation and consistent management, you can build the relationship into a true partnership.

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Editor's note: Rosenthal's article purposely focuses on the negotiation phase of the supplier relationship, and he does suggest that give-and-take negotiation helps pave the way for a true partnership, which we agree involves other important aspects.