



President's Message July 2010

Well summer is here, hope this newsletter finds everyone in good health and ready for vacation. I took a week off and went to Vancouver BC and enjoyed a pleasant respite from the heat (average temperature (18 Celsius – 64.4 F). I also did a little catch-up reading, “Evidence-Based Training Methods: A Guide for Training Professionals”, by Ruth Colvin Clark.

This is a good book and I highly recommend it. Ruth's style is refreshing and she uses the book's style to demonstrate many of the points made in the book. Of particular note is her first chapter “Training Fads and Fiction”. In this chapter there is a section, “What Do You Think?” and she makes five statements phrased as **Fad** or **Fact**. The first statement is, “To accommodate different learning styles, it's best to explain a visual with words presented in text and in audio.” Later in the book after presenting well-documented research she provides the answers to the statements based on her research. So what do you think is the above **fad** or **fact**?

The answer is **Fad**; According to research, the benefits of using text and audio to describe visuals is a common misconception among trainers. In chapter 6 of her book she examines the evidence and psychology of how to best use words to describe visuals. In her last chapter, “Beyond Training Fads and Fiction”, she again poses some statements which she purposely leaves unanswered:

- A. You will see and hear less about learning styles.
- B. New technologies will be exploited for training in ways that accommodate the strengths and limits of the human brain.
- C. Courses as we know them today, will die.
- D. Universal training panaceas will be eschewed in favor of tactics tailored for specific outcomes and audiences.
- E. Training practitioners will integrate evidence, psychology, experience, and organizational culture and constraints as they plan, develop and deliver learning environments.

So what do you think?