

## Change happens

We live in a moment of history where change is so speeded up that we begin to see the present only when it is already disappearing. —R. D. Laing, psychiatrist, 1927-1989

Considering the economic upheaval we've been through the past two years, the adjustments Nevadans have had to make at work and at home, and the pace of technological innovation ... it's hard to find an area in our lives that's NOT changing.

Change can be negative or positive. Either way, it can be challenging to move from the comfort of the familiar through the uncertainty of change toward a new beginning.

There are many models that are helpful to working through change. For example, Dr. William Bridges' *Transition: The Personal Path Through Change* defines three guideposts on the path to successful transition.

**Phase 1 is an ending.** Every transition begins with an ending, a loss. When things change, people leave behind the way things were — and the way *they* were in the previous situation. They may be left searching for a new way to define themselves.

**Phase 2, the neutral zone,** is a confusing in-between state, when people are no longer who and where they were, but are not yet who and where they're going to be. Although the neutral zone can be distressing, it also provides many opportunities for creative transformation.

**Phase 3, the new beginning,** can only happen after people have let go of the past and spent some time in the neutral zone. In this phase, people accept the reality of the change and start to identify with their new situation.

J&E Associates, a professional services and management consulting firm, sees the change process as four stages: denial, resistance, exploration, and commitment. The firm developed a 24-question *Personal Change Assessment*. See which phase you are experiencing most intently at

[www.jeassociates.com/eap/your\\_personal\\_change\\_assessment.htm](http://www.jeassociates.com/eap/your_personal_change_assessment.htm).

### CHANGE MANAGEMENT

#### Basic Principles:

- Different people react differently to change.
- Everyone has fundamental needs that have to be met.
- Change often involves a loss, and people go through the "loss curve."
- Expectations need to be managed realistically.
- Fears have to be dealt with.

#### Tips for applying principles:

- Give people information.
- Give people choices to make.
- Give people time.
- Give individuals opportunities to express their concerns.
- Provide reassurances.

Source: [www.teamtechnology.co.uk/](http://www.teamtechnology.co.uk/)

If we don't change direction soon, we'll end up where we're going.  
— Professor Irwin Corey, vaudeville comic and actor, 1914-

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# Learning in a digital world

Excerpted from a review by Clare Strawn in the *Adult Basic Education and Literacy Journal*, Fall 2009

*A New Literacies Sampler*, edited by Michele Knobel and Colin Lankshear and published by Peter Lang in 2007, presents eight research projects that examine digital contexts of learning. It builds on the theoretical premise that literacy involves the creation and interpretation of meaning in the contexts of practices and social relationships. Editors Knobel and Lankshear suggest that "new literacies" combine new technology with a new "ethos" generated from engagement through the new technology. The book is a primer on the differences between old and new Web practices.

The editors offer a sample of new literacy practices and sociocultural approaches to the underlying research. Both aims are well met and well matched to educators and researchers. The chapters are well written and avoid theoretical and technical jargon. They usually make explicit the implications of the work for educational practice. Each project's research methodology is explained well for the non-researcher, and the collection nicely illustrates a range of approaches to analyzing online content and processes.

A study comparing the reading levels, complexity, multitextuality, and multiplicity of literacy tasks on Web sites with authorized school texts found that Web sites frequented by young people are much more complex than authorized school texts.

Adult education practitioners will find this foray into digital cultures valuable as a way to understand the literacy practices of the digital natives among their learners. Several chapters argue persuasively for the educational value of participation in this popular culture, urging educators to bridge to (but not appropriate) it. The sophistication and complexity of the practices examined in the book challenge dismissive notions of popular culture by pointing out the creative possibilities of learner-driven activities beyond the authorized text.

This text would be useful for graduate courses in sociolinguistics and adult literacy. As a sampler, it offers illustrative examples and provides models for new researchers in the digital arena. I encourage all who are interested in adult education and new technologies to read it.

With Web 2.0, users become collaborators and authors by blogging, writing, and sharing "fan fiction," contributing video and imagery, and performing simulations and games. These new activities are analyzed as literacy practices in this book.

The *Adult Basic Education and Literacy Journal* is co-published three times each year by the Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) and ProLiteracy America. Members receive a discount on the \$65 subscription. Visit [www.coabe.org](http://www.coabe.org) for more information.

## The power of tech

The Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy recently released *The Power of Technology to Expand Adult Learning: Expanding Access to Adult Education and Workforce Skills through Distance Learning*. The 65-page report by Mary McCain of TechVision 21 recommends a national web portal for adult learners and professional users. It fleshes out the technology recommendations made in *Reach Higher, America: Overcoming Crisis in the U.S. Workforce*, the final (June 2008) report of the National Commission on Adult Literacy.

Download the report (NC-CAAL11) at [www.caalusa.org/publications.html](http://www.caalusa.org/publications.html).

## Assess your tech skills

How much do you know about integrating technology into your teaching? You can find out in less than 20 minutes by taking the free *Technology Integration Self Assessment* at [www.adultedonline.org](http://www.adultedonline.org). The tool allows you to assess your skills in 12 competency areas, such as instructional software, using the Internet, assistive technology, etc. It also collects input on how important it is that you can teach each skill. The system then produces a customized professional development plan, provides free or inexpensive strategies and resources for implementing it, and helps track your progress.

The Web site also provides a *Distance Teaching Self Assessment* to help teachers explore the skills necessary to teach effectively at a distance.

Administrators can set up an invitation process so that information can be compiled at the program level.

## NAE News — Board welcomes Horvat, names committee chairs



NAE's Board of Directors recently welcomed its 14<sup>th</sup> member, veteran ESL educator Heath Horvat ([Hahorvat@interact.ccsd.net](mailto:Hahorvat@interact.ccsd.net), 702/799-1719 ext 5322).

Heath began his career as an elementary teacher for the Clark County School District in 1996; last August he became coordinator of the English Language Learner Program, overseeing 42 CCSD schools. He also teaches adult ESL and GED classes for the College of Southern Nevada and science education in the Bachelor's of Elementary Education program at Nova Southeastern University. He holds master's degrees in educational leadership from Nova and in education with a focus on technology and instruction from Western Governors University.

The Pennsylvania native enjoys swimming and music, but what really touches his soul is when he feels he's made a difference. "When I see a former student and hear a 'Thank you, Mr. Horvat, for teaching me English,' I know that I have helped to make that student's life better. By serving on this Board, I hope to help even more of the adult learners in our community."

Dr. Vivian Vasquez Fully, another recent addition to the Board, has agreed to serve as Membership Chair. Sam King, who has served on the NAE Board since its formation, will chair the Advocacy Committee.

Thanks to all three for stepping up to the plate on behalf of Nevada's adult educators and their students!



## Guidelines for changes in adult ed

In November 2009, the National Council of State Directors of Adult Education published Volume I of *Adult Education: Supporting the President's Workforce and American Graduation Initiatives*. The timely 76-page document is NCSDAE's response to President Obama's challenge to education providers to help adults attain at least one year of higher education or career preparation.

It highlights innovations in several states to show how some state adult education services are already addressing workforce and career pathway needs. A four-page chart at the end provides a framework of "decision points" for adult educators to use in developing career pathway programs, based on the *Quality Elements of Adult Education for Work Programs of the National Center on Education and the Economy*, 2009. Visit <http://www.ncsdae.org/> to download the document.



Founded in 2001, the Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy (CAAL) is a national nonprofit public charity. Its broad mission is to help advance adult education and literacy in the United States — to move adult literacy out of the shadows into the mainstream of

American education, as required by the nation's 21<sup>st</sup> century needs. CAAL released several reports in 2009 that address some of the changes in the field. They are available at [www.caalusa.org/publications.html](http://www.caalusa.org/publications.html).

- *Expanding Horizons: Pacesetters in Adult Education for Work* is a 27-page report by Forrest Chisman on the Adult Readiness Roundtable Project carried out jointly by CAAL and the National Center for Education and the Economy (June 2009, NC-CAAL9). It summarizes and analyzes the proceedings of an invitational meeting of exemplary local program providers from around the country. Its purpose is to inform and stimulate thinking and action at the state and local levels.
- *Rebuilding NIFL to Meet Future Needs: A New and Innovative Agency with a Broader Mission* is a 28-page discussion paper by Forrest Chisman and Gail Spangenberg (October 2009, NC-CAAL10). It proposes substantial revamping of the National Institute for Literacy into a new independent National Institute for Adult Learning, with broad responsibilities for adult education and workforce skills development, including stronger governance, leadership in technology, and more adequate funding.

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## Quickly, quickly ... check out this wiki

What's a wiki?  
Wiki-wiki is a Hawaiian word that means very very quickly. (Wiki alone means quick.)  
A wiki is a web page where anyone can add or change text.  
Wikis are used for a variety of purposes where people come together to think and write and add to the knowledge base. The best known wiki application is the worldwide encyclopedia, Wikipedia ([www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)).

The Adult Literacy Education (ALE) wiki (<http://wiki.literacytent.org/>) is a free resource specifically designed for and by adult educators. It has more than 1,300 pages and a like number of registered users. Some add to the content; others simply use it as a resource.

The ALE Wiki is a community of practice with links to information for practitioners, researchers, learners, and others. Topics include adult literacy, ESOL, GED, numeracy, technology, transitioning — and approximately 30 more. There is an excellent glossary of adult education terminology and one devoted to technology, as well. Volunteer topic leaders maintain each section; these experts would top any “who’s who in adult education” list.

Users are encouraged to be active in the community by adding content to any topic. The site holds a wealth of knowledge based on research, professional wisdom, and teaching and learning experiences.

## Join Nevada's Adult Education Community

Claudia Bianca and Dawnne Ernette recently launched <http://nevadasadulteducationcommunity.org>, a forum for open-ended discussions, asking questions, and sharing lessons and resources. The Community Forum is the heart of the site: create an account (it's free!) and post your comments, questions, and ideas.

Contact Claudia ([CDebay@tmcc.edu](mailto:CDebay@tmcc.edu), 775/824-8604) or Dawnne ([dernette@tmcc.edu](mailto:dernette@tmcc.edu)) for more information.