New Learning: The Next Generation of Evaluation?

Diane D. Chapman, Colleen Aalsburg Wiessner, Julia Storberg-Walker, and Tim Hatcher
North Carolina State University

New Learning is an innovative process, aimed at collaborative learning in professional and scholarly events, that we suggest may be the 'next generation' of evaluation. In this manuscript we review the literature of evaluation, describe what new learning is and how it works, and then compare and contrast it with traditional evaluation methods and theory. We conclude with implications for future application and research.

Keywords**:** Evaluation, Learning, Collaboration

Problem Statement

Most professional conferences bring people together, yet they focus primarily on sharing information rather than taking that information to the next level – new knowledge generation. Individuals typically leave conferences with their own learning—yet often they do not benefit from the learning of others. Nor do they gain an understanding of the overall learning that took place at the event and that potentially could benefit their field as a whole. To overcome these typical limitations, we created what we suggest may be the 'next generation' of evaluation and call it New Learning (NL). Embedded in conference activities, NL took the place of a more traditional evaluation scheme.

In place of standard end-of-session evaluation forms focusing on presentations and presenters, participants submitted NL forms; accounts of what was actually learned. We thought these innovations made sense: a research conference should not reflect on the past solely, but generate new ways of thinking for the future as well. We agreed with Graham and Kormanik (2004) that too often conferences rely on one-way communication with little time spent on discussion or on ways to use information in future theory, research, and practice.

Evaluation at professional conferences has historically focused on participant satisfaction and reactions to the event. A Web search for *conference evaluation* demonstrates focus on quantitative results and participant reactions. For example, the American Evaluation Association's (American Evaluation Association, n.d.a) 2003 annual conference focused on overall conference satisfaction, with special emphasis on Presidential Strand and Plenary sessions, reasons why participants return, and conference program materials. The 2005 Educational Fund International Conference focused on satisfaction with sessions, relevancy of sessions, and reasons for attendance (Results, n.d.a). The 2003 International Symposium on HIV/AIDS Workplace Policies and Programmes in Developing Countries evaluation focused on whether or not sessions were "good," areas for improvement, identifying issues to learn more about, and recommendations (Joint Bank/Fund Health Services Department, n.d.a).

When we look at stated purposes of conferences, we see disconnects between purpose, theory, and method of typical conference evaluations. For example, AEA's purpose was to "welcome evaluation practitioners, academics, and students from across the US and around the world to *learn from each other* in a supportive atmosphere" (American Evaluation Association, n.d.b; italics ours). Joint Bank Fund Heath Services Department Symposium's objectives were to "share experience with others, identify key factors for developing best practices, pool technical resources and research, and *develop networks with* colleagues who face similar issues" (n.d.b; italics ours). The Education Fund Conference's purpose was for participants to be "briefed in the latest information by experts and *get trained* in powerfully speaking the issues," (Results, n.d.b; italics ours). All of these organizations hold conferences and symposia focused on learning, yet their evaluations focus primarily participant reaction. This focus is no different within most organizations, including the Academy. We saw an opportunity to more explicitly link learning objectives of conferences with evaluation, and created an approach we call New Learning.

The problem as illustrated is that conferences 1) say they want to create spaces for learning but do not evaluate learning that actually does occur; and 2) use evaluation techniques that aggregate individual responses, thereby potentially miss opportunities for finer grained analyses and diverse input. This manuscript includes four sections. First, we describe the problem and research question. Second, we explain our theoretical framework and literature review. Third, we present results and findings, comparing evaluation with aspects of NL. Fourth, we present conclusions and recommendations for future research and application of NL methods.

Research Questions

The questions that guide this research are: What are the similarities and differences between evaluation and NL? What contributions does NL make to evaluation literature? We explore these questions in a comparative literature review (Torroco, 2005) and through review of an exploratory case study conducted at the 2005 AHRD International Research Conference held in Estes Park, CO (Hatcher, Wiessner, Storberg-Walker, Chapman, 2005).

Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

To answer our research question, we looked at two areas of literature. One relates to learning and the second relates to evaluation. We begin with the learning literature that forms the foundation for NL.

Collaborative Learning

New Learning is a process by which we can capture knowledge creation. This *process* of NL stemmed from earlier work at three International Conferences on Transformative Learning, held at Teachers College, Columbia University, in 1998, 2000, and 2003. These conferences were designed and implemented as collaborative inquiries intended to create and capture learning in event contexts in order to build theory (Wiessner & Mezirow, 2000; Wiessner, 2004). *Foundations* of NL are based on the literature in the areas of learning organizations, communities of practice, and knowledge creation. These three foundations were selected through a dialogic process conducted over time between the four researchers presenting this manuscript.

Learning Organizations

Learning organization literature relates to NL for three reasons. First, this literature captures a primary mission of AHRD, and many other organizations, by providing details about roles of dialogue and sharing of 'mental models' in the process of learning (Senge, 1990). Both formal *and* informal nature and contexts of learning are recognized. Second, it enhances the learning paradigm of HRD through both its conceptual and empirical findings (see, for example, Watkins & Marsick, 1993). Continuous learning and capturing and codifying learning, two characteristics of organizations engaged in learning, shape this research. Third, the learning organization concept mirrors a goal of AHRD to support learning as a part of its processes and outcomes. Inquiry, critical reflection, dialogue, and systems thinking, are processes that are valued in organizational learning and e key to NL approaches. Learning occurs on individual, group, organizational and societal levels, yet learning beyond the individual level is not always realized (Kasl, Marsick & Dechant, 1997) and groups do not always benefit from what individuals learn. The organizational learning literature helps to bridge that gap, as applied in NL; facilitating shared learning across several levels "in ways that enable the larger system to learn" (Marsick, Bitterman & Van der Veen, 2000, p. 13).

Communities of Practice

Communities of practice are defined as groups of people bound together by shared expertise and passion for a joint enterprise (Wenger & Snyder, 2000) or "a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and who interact regularly to learn how to do it better" (Wenger, 2004). New Learning studies groups, such as the AHRD conference, with three components: bounded population, shared expertise, and regular interaction to learn.

Knowledge Creation

According to Von Krogh, Ichijo, and Nonaka (2000), new knowledge creation involves five steps: sharing tacit knowledge, creating concepts, justifying concepts, building prototypes, and cross-leveling knowledge. In addition, Nonaka and Toyama (2003) refer to SECI, four stages for knowledge creation: socialization, externalization, combination, and internalization. Of critical importance to these knowledge generation processes is making tacit knowing explicit, based in the work of Polanyi (1973). Both new knowledge and new ways of *creating* knowledge are needed in our work and societal contexts (Nonaka & Toyama, 2003). Of particular interest in knowledge creation is Nonaka, Toyama and Konno's (2000) concept of *ba*; a movable space created for learning that Storberg-Walker (2003) posits as the missing link between individual and organizational learning.

Evaluation

A literature review focused on evaluation was conducted for this manuscript. This section presents a broad spectrum of evaluation theories, classifications, and definitions in order to assess congruency between *evaluation* and *New Learning*. As we demonstrate below, there exists a complicated yet innovative relationship between traditional evaluation and the NL approach. Consequently, we suggest NL may be accurately described as the 'next generation' of evaluation, as it builds upon existing evaluative frameworks and concepts while moving into realms of creating and identifying future individual, organizational, and disciplinary benefits.

Definitions

Merriam-Webster's dictionary defines evaluation in two ways: 1) to determine or fix the value of and 2) to determine the significance, worth or condition of, usually by careful appraisal and study (2004). Note that while the

first definition suggests a determination of positive or negative affect, the second embraces the idea of determination of condition. New Learning fits within this definition, removing the requirement of assigning value or worth.

The American Evaluation Association provides a list of interests the field encompasses, such as evaluation of programs, products, personnel, policy, performance, proposals, technology, research, theory, and evaluation itself (American Evaluation Association, 2004). New Learning fits into several of these interest areas. Initially New Learning seems like an alternative approach applicable to determine the condition of program, performance, and research and theory. Delving further into evaluation literature clarifies where NL's positionality.

Defining Evaluation by Theory and Theoretical Foundations

There is a cadre of researchers who have attempted to define evaluation through theory. Many do so by breaking up the field into realms associated with the use or purpose of the evaluation. We present seven alternative perspectives on the foundations of evaluation below:

According to Alkin and Christie (2004), evaluation theory is built upon foundations of accountability and social inquiry. Accountability and need for control provide the rationale and social inquiry provides the methods. Evaluation models and theories have been categorized using a variety of schema. Alkin & Christie (2004) portray evaluation theories as falling in one of three branches of the same tree: methods, use, and valuing. Methods theories, guided by research methods, focus on knowledge construction. The valuing branch models focus on placing value on data. The third branch, use, represents models oriented toward decision-making.

Scriven (2004) referred to evaluation as formative, done during development of the program, and summative, done at conclusion of the program. He later added the term *ascriptive* to cover those evaluations not tied to the program development process. Rossi (2004) contends evaluation is applied social research, listing three components of this view: 1) evaluation is social research applied to answering policy-oriented questions, 2) the primary aim of evaluation is to help stakeholders in their decision-making, and 3) evaluation involved making judgments.

Chen defines evaluation by the following characteristics: future directedness, scientific and stakeholder credibility, and holistic approaches (2004). Greene sorts evaluation approaches by whose values are being promoted. Her four clusters are those serving 1) efficiency interests of policy-makers, 2) accountability and ameliorative interests of on-site program managers, 3) understanding and development interests of direct service staff and affiliates, and 4) democratic and social change interests of program beneficiaries and their allies (2004).

Guba and Lincoln (n.d.) divide evaluation into four realms: logical positivism, based on belief that knowledge is based solely on observable facts; postpositivism, belief that observation is theory-laden and that research is influenced by theory; pragmatism, which places emphasis on the notion that truth is thought to be "what works for now", and constructivism, based on belief that knowledge depends on knowers' frames of reference.

Reeves (1997) proposed four evaluation paradigms. The positivist-quantitative paradigm relies on the quantitative notion of reducing situations to operationalized variables. The constructivist-interpretive-qualitative paradigm views the world as socially constructed and focuses on social interactions and multiple perspectives. The critical theory-postmodern paradigm rejects positivistic approaches and looks not only at describing the world, but also changing it using theory and reflection. Finally, the eclectic-mixed methods-pragmatic paradigm involves complex evaluation strategies, both quantitative and qualitative and focuses on practical problems.

Cervero and Wilson (1994) slice the evaluation pie in another direction. They distinguish three program evaluation viewpoints: classical, naturalistic and critical. The classical viewpoint, based on Tyler (1949), is highly scientific in nature and proposes four questions pertaining to purpose, content, methods, and evaluation. The naturalistic viewpoint, more situation-specific, uses practical reasoning. "Rather than applying standard principles, the naturalistic viewpoint places primary emphasis on the planner's ability to make judgments in a specific context and to justify them" (Cervero & Wilson 1994, p. 18). In the critical viewpoint, characterized by concern for social and political emancipation, "Planners can make the best judgments in everyday practice…only if they clearly understand that education is a political and ideological activity intimately connected with the social inequalities of society as a whole" (Cervero & Wilson 1994, p. 21).

Feminist Evaluation suggests that evaluation must do more that judge merit of a program; viewing it as a venue for increasing social justice for women (Patton, 2002). It is based on six main characteristics and concepts: 1) A central focus on the gender inequities that lead to social injustice, 2) Discrimination or inequality based on gender is systemic and structural, 3) Evaluation is a political activity, 4) Knowledge is a powerful resource, 5) Knowledge and values are culturally, socially, and temporally contingent and 6) There are multiple ways of knowing; some ways are privileged over others (Sielbeck-Bowen, Brisolara, Seigart, Tischler, & Whitmore, 2002).

Clearly, in the terms of Aiken and Christie (2004), Scriven (2004), and Chen (2004), New Learning is social research but it is not focused on policy questions or decision-making, although it can be used for both. NL is more about making information visible and accessible, than about making judgments. It is not focused on efficiency or

accountability interests, although it does serve that purpose by consequence, and definitely serves interests of staff, affiliates and democratic and social change. NL fits into constructivism (Guba and Lincoln, n.d.).

While NL definitely promotes change, using theory and reflection, it would most reasonably fall into the eclectic paradigm (Reeves, 1997) which incorporates a variety of strategies. New learning fits primarily within the critical viewpoint as described by Cervero and Wilson (1994). With NL planners forgo rigidity of scientific approaches and control of naturalistic approaches in favor of participant freedom valued in the critical approach. NL is concerned with social inequities and promotes ways of engaging marginalized voices and perspectives. Additionally, NL can be considered a form of feminist evaluation because it is structured so that all are heard. The single, individual voice is given as much attention as the voice of the majority. New Learning does not seek to explore and identify consensus opinion, rather *all* opinion.

The seven perspectives discussed here define evaluation by its theoretical foundations and intent. New learning fails to fit neatly into any evaluation category when delineated by theoretical foundation, as it spans across these mutually exclusive buckets. The next section of this paper looks at how NL compares with evaluation perspectives that are based on characteristics of evaluation.

Defining Evaluation by Characteristics of Evaluation

This section presents five additional ways that traditional evaluation has been characterized in the evaluation literature. As demonstrated below, there are many aspects of traditional evaluation that represent the theoretical approach of NL. Distinctions and similarities emerge in the following discussion.

Weiss (1972) provided characteristics of evaluation that distinguish it from other forms of research. *Intent* lies at the core. In contrast to other forms of research evaluation 1) is used for decision-making, 2) asks questions that are derived from the program and not from the evaluator, 3) involves judgment, 4) takes place in an action setting and 5) is wrought with role conflicts between evaluators and practitioners. Additionally, evaluation research is seldom published and evaluation researchers have dual if not triple allegiance. New Learning would therefore not constitute a form of evaluation by Weiss' standards. NL is similar in that 1) it can be used for decision-making, 2) questions are developed from the program, not the evaluator, and 3) it takes place in an action setting. It differs in that NL is not necessarily wrought with conflict, does not involve judgment, evaluators may not have more than one allegiance, and publication is a goal of NL that also furthers organizational and disciplinary goals.

Stufflebeam (2001) suggests "evaluation means *a study designed and conducted to assist some audience to assess an object's merit and worth."* He divided evaluation approaches into four categories, approaches that 1) promote invalid or incomplete findings, referred to as pseudoevaluations; 2) have questions or methods-oriented processes that address specified questions, either employing a wide range of methods or a particular method; 3) focus on improvement or accountability to fully assess a program's merit and worth; and 4) focus on social agenda or advocacy approaches directed at making a difference in society through program evaluation. New Learning may fit in the category of method-oriented or question-oriented approaches, but the category as a whole does not seemingly encompass the intent of NL.

Preskill's & Torres' (1999) work shifts the focus of evaluation from problem-focused to appreciative inquiry, or a focus on organizational successes. Aspects of their model include a reflexive, embedded nature of evaluation; a commitment to partnership between stakeholders and evaluators to apply findings; and an understanding that learning is an important goal of the evaluation process. Preskill and Torres' (1999) EILO model provides guiding principles for NL, as NL mirrors appreciative inquiry by focusing on the future rather than emphasizing the past.

Owen (2004) classifies evaluation by knowledge produced, although classifications also show stages in program development. He presents five evaluation types: 1) proactive synthesizes knowledge for the purpose of program design; 2) clarificative identifies aspects of a program to make them explicit to stakeholders; 3) participatory provides knowledge for continuous improvement; 4) monitoring makes sure a program is staying its course; and 5) impact evaluation determines effects of a program. NL contributes to all of these evaluation purposes.

Watkins and Marsick (1993) look at learning at four levels, including individual, team, organization, and society. In fact, they further characterize *organizational* learning by a change in the organization's capacity for innovation and new knowledge. NL encompassed both organizational and societal learning and innovation evidenced by benefiting the organization (e.g., AHRD) and the discipline of HRD as a whole. And, as described earlier, the organizational learning literature is one dimension of the conceptual framework for NL.

Results and findings

Synthesis of New Learning with Traditional Evaluation

Because there are many ways of defining and categorizing evaluation, no one perspective, theory, or model provides an exact understanding of NL. We suggest that NL is accurately considered as the 'next generation' of

evaluation, and in this section we present characteristics of NL, comparing each to what we know about evaluation. Table 1 summarizes these similarities and differences.

Table 1. *Characteristics of New Learning and Evaluation*

Characteristic	New Learning	Evaluation
Analysis of information	Involves capturing and codifying	Involves judging, valuing, or rating
Comparative nature	Is relative to the event	Is comparative in nature
Time (when)	Focused on future	Focused on past
People (who)	Focused on learner	Focused on presenter
Type of information	Focused on unknown	Focused on known
Guiding questions	Why and how	Good or bad
Impact of environment	Globally situated	Locally situated
Breadth of analysis	Holistic and on-going	One-time snapshot
Use of results	Ability to build from one NL to another	Usually limited to one use
Use	Change	Maintain status quo
Critical nature	Constructive	Judgmental
	Embracing	Discriminatory
Sources of information	Focused on the planned and unplanned	Focus on the planned
	Focused on the formal and informal	Focused on the formal
Audience	Everyone	Formal stakeholders
Purpose	What can we do?	How did we do?
Social implication	Promotes collaboration	Promotes us versus them
Impact	Aimed at field, profession, research, practice	Aimed at program, event, presentation
	Revolutionary	Evolutionary

Evaluation involves judgment; rating or ranking of items according to value or importance. NL does not ask participants to rank or rate their learning – only to capture it. Evaluation is geared toward comparison. New Learning is relative to the event studied; rather than comparing, it tries to understand. Evaluation focuses on the past. New Learning focuses on the future. Evaluation captures what we already know. New Learning captures where we are going and future possibilities. Evaluation focuses on presenters; NL focuses on learners. Evaluation attempts to identify what was right or wrong; NL attempts to capture not only the "what" but also the "how" and "why". Evaluation does not typically involve the environment, or systems thinking; NL considers the environment to include learning that occurs in all aspects of an event. Evaluation is usually a one-time picture of what happens at an event. New Learning presents the event holistically; including aspects of the event well after it is over. Results from one evaluation can rarely be used in the next. In NL, one can enhance and build on results from one event in future events. Evaluation is oriented toward maintaining the status quo. New Learning is oriented toward change. Initial findings, feedback on what was learned are incorporated into the conclusion of the event, another asset.

Evaluation is static, whereas New Learning is dynamic. Evaluation is judgmental; NL is constructive. Evaluation is discriminating, predetermining which factors are important or not important ahead of time; NL is embracing, allowing for previously unidentified factors to emerge. Evaluation focuses on formal presentation, program, or events; NL includes everything that happens, acknowledging that every moment is a potential learning moment. Evaluation is for formal stakeholders; NL is for everyone. Evaluation tells us how we did and NL helps us figure out what we can do. Evaluation promotes an "us versus them" environment; NL is collaborative in nature. Evaluation is aimed at an event, presentation, or program; NL is aimed at the field, profession, theory or practice.

Evaluation and NL share some similarities; both connect to mission and related outputs of systems under study. New Learning is best geared toward knowledge-intensive organizations, such as professional conferences, because mission related outputs of conferences are new learnings. New Learning is most appropriate where knowledge is a primary goal. New Learning, *one* way to evaluate, changes the nature of what evaluation can do for organizations.

Discussion of New Learning In Practice: The 2005 AHRD International Research Conference

Execution of NL at the 2005 AHRD conference was considered a case study because it was an exploratory process occurring in a single setting with a purposefully selected group of people. New Learning used both descriptive and qualitative data analysis methods (Stake, 1995) and satisfied the three requirements of qualitative research methods: describing, understanding, and explaining. "Qualitative data analysis was used to analyze attendee responses of 'what' and 'how' they learned. Descriptive statistics were used to understand trends and differences in attendee

learnings" (Hatcher, et. al, 2005, p 3). Descriptive statistics included both individual and daily form submission counts and analysis of perceived professional status.

AHRD organizational leaders supported the project and communicated support through conference literature, pre-conference announcements, and Academy publications. These communications were aimed at garnering attendee interest and participation in the process, and began three months before the event. In addition, AHRD distributed a white paper on NL as part of registration materials (Hatcher, et. al., 2005).

At the conference, NL '05 was featured in every area of the conference. Red and white banners, signs, and staff T-shirts featured the light bulb logo selected for the event. A NL table sat next to the registration area and registrars directed participants there following registration. Each conference attendee received an overview of the project, an introduction to the data collection materials, and an invitation to participate in the research both through data forms and a scatter gram related to their professional focus and experience levels.

The primary form used to collect data was called *New Learning Data Form* and was included in each attendee's registration packet and available on tables at all scheduled conference sessions. The forms provided a place for participants to indicate the category, formal or informal, of their new learning, and also asked attendees to identify the specific setting in which the learning took place, such as symposium, hotel room, or at dinner. A reflective question prompted attendees to provide deeper information than typical evaluations: "*Please tell us about any new learning you have experienced or any new questions that have occurred to you as a result of the conference.*" New Learning *data collection boxes* were placed throughout the conference venue in areas conducive to informal meetings and spaces for individual reflection. Researchers collected forms after each session and emptied collection boxes each night, dating, tabulating, and recording them.

Each attendee had a unique identifying number to write at the top of each form submitted so that we could track submissions. Numbers were randomly assigned and could not be connected to participants' identities. The numbers were used to analyze number of attendees who participated in the research and number of forms each submitted. Additionally, completion of forms qualified participants for daily drawings for prizes and their unique numbers served as ticket for that purpose. Over forty percent of attendees participated in the research through NL data sheets and their submissions ranged from one to fifty-two forms. In all, they submitted 1,000 forms.

In addition to collecting data through forms, we conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews on selected participants. Because we were creating an exploratory case study, we sought a diverse representation of interviewees. Our selection criteria included scholars, practitioners and students, as well as academy leaders, international members, and participants who fell into marginalized categories of attendees.

In addition to the forms and interviews, we used participant observervation methods. Each member of the North Carolina State research team (four professors and four doctoral students) recorded observations and experiences in research journals. Eleven co-researchers, solicited by the AHRD board from a variety of institutions around the US, assisted with observations. All research assistants participated in both pre-conference training sessions and trial observations with feedback in preparation for their roles. Assigned to each scheduled conference program or presentation, participant observers recorded observations of sessions, reflections on the NL processes, and new learning they experienced in the context of the conference.

To date, our findings have been reported in the Academy newsletter; at the International Conference of Human Resource Development, held in Leeds, UK; and in the Forum of the *Human Resource Development Quarterly* (Storberg-Walker, Wiessner & Chapman, in press). Multiple other research reports are in progress or planning. All of these efforts combine to make the data widely available to HRD scholars, practitioners, and other interested groups or individuals in order to benefit their work and to provide access to the divergent perspectives and experiences of conference attendees. Making NL available is a critical component of the methodology.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Traditional conference evaluation is usually program evaluation or event evaluation related to event planning and facilitation. New Learning synthesized that focus and examined ways in which the program or event facilitated or hindered learning while identifying and capturing what was learned. In other words, NL was about learning and knowledge generation, and not only about event planning and management. NL did collect data related to the conference venue, schedule, organization, processes and other dimensions, and these submissions can be useful to conference coordinators. These typical evaluative measures comprised a small component of the overall process.

Not surprisingly, conference attendees demonstrated unfamiliarity with the NL processes. We noticed many attendees referred to New Learning '05 as a new form of evaluation; many called our data collection forms "evaluation forms". While they seemed to embrace the process and value its potential, they did not know how to categorize it. The research team explained repeatedly that we were not engaged in evaluation, rather in identification

and affirmation of learning. We were not evaluating the conference, rather recording and codifying what happens to conference participants and measuring energy generated by the "coming together" of people.

A few people used NL forms to make reactionary statements about presentations, presenters, and conference venues, as they would on typical conference evaluations. This propensity in itself was an interesting finding for us, with relevant implications for future research. We did not see this use as a negative outcome. We saw it as evidence that the approach was more inclusive and identified a broader range of issues than originally intended. In addition, we found many attendees valued the process' structured time to write and reflect on experiences at the conference. This value was evidenced by many attendees' desire to keep a copy of completed data sheets; indications to us that both individuals and the organization felt the processes added value. Consequently, we initiated use of carbon NL data forms for future NL studies. This adaptation further advances the purpose and vision of NL – to facilitate the creation and extension of knowledge at many levels in order to use it for future learning and development.

Once the value of NL is perceived, participants were less concerned about labeling it than they were about benefiting from it. As one program coordinator and NL participant stated, "I don't care what you call it; I'm getting better feedback on my program than I ever have. It may be about learning for you, but it's an amazing way of doing evaluation for me. I finally know what they're learning and if we're doing what we intend."

Is New Learning the next generation of evaluation? We think so. Not only can New Learning assess congruence of intended outcomes with actual outcomes, it extends popular notions of evaluation. New Learning contributes to knowledge creation, and actually speeds knowledge generation by making what is learned at an event available to a larger audience. New Learning shortens the cycle of exposure to new ideas and theories, giving participants, both scholars and practitioners, more dynamic and responsive ways of learning and constructing knowledge.

Contribution to New Knowledge in HRD

This research advances the mission of the Academy of Human Resource Development in several ways. It encourages systematic study of the field by providing attendees with new tools, methodologies and way of thinking about evaluation. It shows how knowledge can be generated and disseminated through publications, partnerships, contacts and especially, the synergy of group assembly. And, it helps attendees examine how engagement with scholars, practitioners and peers can generate new knowledge and further advancement of the HRD field.

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