

NOTE: Training is not a science. It's an art. But it should be based on the science of learning/education. Nevertheless, Ron Zemke's "Behavioral Repertoire" column in "Training" magazine for September, 2003, seems to disparage trainers who think that they're educators.

Both arts are aspects of instruction; neither is inherently better for every type of learning situation. Education teaches principles with which to meet future, unknowable (problem?) situations; training deals with selected knowledge and methods that solve the problem immediately at hand. No other distinction seems to work reliably. So speak of instruction! And then prepare to solve the problems.

Materials below present both current circumstances and available options that confront you and the field.

CIRCUMSTANCES:

LOOKING AT TODAY'S REALITIES:

There's a new reality evident in any business' outlook on its meetings. That reality has been catapulted into the business mainstream by a number of previously-discrete considerations that have combined to establish new opportunities for business to retake the meetings field.

You can help to take back the meetings/training discipline from the advertisers; the freebie magazines in the commercialized meetings- industry; and the sycophantic associations that have misled their own members for decades in order to get free publicity from the freebies. The associations are playing catch-up now.

Five critical findings affect you, and your company's, executives, including the VP/Sales, CLO, Advertising Director, Training Director, department heads, and even line managers--everyone whose personal job performance results depend in large part on the performance of others.

However, none of those Five Findings alone established or created the current climate for change--their recent coincidence did.

Here, correlated, are those findings and interpretations, developed and held after nearly 50 years in meetings/training professions and trade(s)--distinct from the overly-commercialized meetings-industry.

Cavalier's conclusion in advance: Almost anything that's not an intrinsic part of the message itself can distract from delivery of that message. Shades of our 1973 and 1983 published positions re: split attention spans. Independent (corroborating) statements from third parties follow, below:

First finding:

Recent studies and literature indicate that 'expertise' in performance requires about 10,000 hours of 'deliberate practice' in nearly any field.

That '10,000 Hour Rule' was first established regarding athletic performance but has been found to be valid in virtually any performance skill--arts, athletics--and jobs?" Malcolm Gladwell, the author of "Outliers" and source of the Rule, was interviewed on TV by Charlie Rose, where you don't witness irrelevancies. (For citation, see Document Locator at base of this file, Note #1)

Don't take our word for it. Just search the term '10,000 Hour Rule' on "Advertising Age," specifically, and/or web engines, generally.

Regardless of the extent to which the 10,000-Hour-count applies to non-performed, intellectual endeavors, it's finally unarguable that there's a significant and substantial practice period related to any appreciable new skill. . .and it can probably be codified for any discipline.

In a current scramble to appear competent, a major meetings user-association is describing 'new levels' of meeting-planners' requirements (known since the '70s) as 'cutting edge'. . . but 'new' only to that meetings-industry, not to the related professions or trade(s). More, below.

Why? That finding of 10,000 (or however many) hours needed to hone any skill destroys those meetings-industry magazines' (and their dominated meeting-industry associations') claims of leadership and expertise. Remember, we view the overly-commercialized 'industry' as being distinct from the related 'professions' and 'trade(s).'

Although already covered in some business publications, the '10,000 Hour Rule' has not been noted in the meetings-industry press. Self-protection? Most of the meetings-industry's 'magazine writers' have no experience whatsoever in planning meetings and so can't understand the significance of deliberate practice as a qualifier. . .or how and why their writings are inadequate in terms of Meetings Management.

All salesmen who demonstrate are performing. Most sales training occurs in meetings-rooms. No, they don't need 10M hours (five average years) with each color of widget, but with all widgets together, probably yes. Spoken text aside, once these salesmen have demonstrated widgets and ancillary products and services for multiple thousands of hours, they're probably on their way to becoming decent sales people. Demo-with-errors can be wisely accommodated privately, in the training room, not disguised with fancy stuff for potential customers to view while not listening.

Do additional thousands of hours produce sales-aces? Don't wonder: just take a survey of applied-hours among your best and mediocre salespeople. Build your training around your own findings and statistics! You can't buy solutions for your specific problem from off-the-shelf generic materials--those need to be edited, if used. However, starting-from-scratch usually yields better results. . .if you know what you're doing: use ISD!

Early sheltered-practice and good sales-script outlines build confidence and can make a real difference in early sales results. That was demonstrated in the 1960s by Motorola's Mobile Radio experience, via their training as revamped to already-proved methods. How?

When brought inside as Training Manager, an ace-salesman hired an assistant who understood and used methodologies that approximated the military's later ISD (Instructional Systems Development) program: Training-know-how plus sales-know-how. It worked in tandem like gangbusters! That chief's successor re-evaluated and re-adopted that initial program with minor changes. The successor also placed a consulting project with the departed once-assistant. Professionals recognize valid programs!

Skills take time to learn but can often be learned in less time if taught by authorities/experts. If not teaching, authorities must still provide the essentials to be covered and measured. Facts remain facts and should drive all of your programs!

Second finding:

'Pay-for-Play' can cause even paid-circulation magazines to trade free PR space for paid ads (see "Advertising Age" or Google; search that term). Once-upon-a-time, PR space was earned by merit! Now PR space can be meretricious. Good luck in trying to determine by publication's title.

The disinformation and misinformation in the meetings-industry freebie (advertising give-away) press was astounding. Reading their superficial and often misleading articles of that time will prove the charge. The offending freebies all had the word 'meetings' in their titles but apparently not in their editors' commercial objectives.

Why should you believe in any magazine when your reading could be an exercise to create a 'sales-target-you'? That lamentable practice by a few is injuring the credibility of the entire publishing industry.

The fact of 'P-f-P' in publishing now indicates that such advertising dominance could have existed as charged in the '70s against the meetings freebie press--the only meetings press. The fact of these Five Findings has demonstration that the freebies' early model of advertiser-dominance has failed. It's time for a change, but for progress, not just novelty.

'Freebie' signifies an advertising give-away that you're really not getting for free! You haven't 'arrived': you've been targeted! 'Free' will cost in skewed information and recommendations. The term P-f-P itself was derived decades ago from the phono-records scandal. So much for the Chicago Professor's "The market can regulate itself."

Specific denials now denied by advertisers:

--A training company placed a full-page ad in "Training" magazine (Doc Locator, Note #2, at base) that stated, "Don't blame the technology--it's the presenter." Blame? As in 'meetings failure'? Don't the meetings-industry's freebie-press blackouts work on unwanted topics anymore?

--Also a major hotel chain placed an ad in the "New York Times" (Doc Locator, Note #3) that stated in part that a facility "could be wrong" for your group. Yes, it could be wrong because of travel-class or chopped-up space; but that would be the fault of the buyer (the only possible fault--as the meetings-industry has taught for years). In this case, the hotel is what it is; the buyer might have chosen poorly.

But hotels can also be the wrong because of officious staff attitudes, higher-than-justified charges, and fine-print up-charges, or over-booking of clients with conflicting needs for limited-numbers of limited-English housekeeping/set-up staffs: never-mentioned faults. Yes, bilingual chiefs supervise all set-ups but can't be available everywhere for everyone simultaneously.

Nevertheless, this hotel "Times" ad is the first acknowledgment (that we've seen) that advertised potential misfits among items that are regularly advertised in the meetings-industry freebie publications, whether or not any ad provoked any specific sale.

Any helps available? For recommendations re: specific Meetings Management methods, including hotels, see the five Cavalier blogs on the website of the University of California/Santa Cruz (Silicon Valley): svprojectmanagement.com. (Doc Locator, Note #4).

See also "Chapter 18" under the "SMTW" book (Doc Locator, Note #5).

Objectionable practices that are never acknowledged in print (other than in Chapter 18) include delays in room-set-ups; limited bilingual house-crew chiefs who usually supervise multiple-room set-ups simultaneously--but are not always available when needed; sales of 'unused' public space to third parties after dissuading the given organization from reserving that space in written contract. 'Observably unused' and 'essential purpose' are different concepts.

Third finding:

In the 1970s, Cavalier's business columns and book treated the issue of split attention span when discussing the negative effects of 'maxi-media'--anything in excess of communication needs. Today the operative term is 'distraction.' It sounds 'new' while being the old, recirculated. Search both 'distraction' and 'constant distraction' on the web.

The newest entry in the distractions-derby regards music. We all believe that music is only-beneficial to the listener. Not really. The medical field has long known about the power of music to distract patients from their perceptions of pain.

"Music Impairs Certain Acts of Memorization," reads The Wall Street Journal's article of August 10,2010; pD-2. Apparently much depends on the listener's own tastes and the compatibility of the selected music to those tastes. Nevertheless, all music can interfere with the ability to memorize.

Today, much targeted (no communications-general) research has established that multi-tasking tolerates the juggling of tasks (for Mom: cooking while washing clothes and tending kids) but prevents reflective/critical thinking (for Mom: quality considerations about the local school district and her potential need to move).

Constant-distraction or constant-interruption (most-tested re: web and web-messaging) might aid the discernment of patterns among multiple, similar items but also prevents reflective/critical thinking.

Does your job and/or corporate plan value juggling or thinking more? Which one should predominate? Extrapolate--that's also an aspect of reflective/critical thinking. Managements claim to value the ability of employees to multi-task, but that's in fact a negative: serial single-tasking presents superior results: So prioritize, and complete one project first; then tackle another.

So, via Cavalier, with 1970s-revisited: "Maxi-media in technology and audio/visuals can, by calling attention to itself, distract the viewer from the message that should be delivered." The purveyors of A/V technology for meetings still won't like that message. . .and the meetings-industry's obedient freebie magazines still won't print it. But it's fact.

Further third party backup, re: long term consequences:

Michael Bugeja, Journalism professor at Greenlee School of Journalism, Iowa State; writing in "The Futurist" (JanFeb,'08; vol 42,#1): Head: The Age of Distraction: the Professor or the Processor?" Subhead: "Due to academia's reliance on technology and the media's over-emphasis on trivia, we are failing to inform future generations about social problems that require critical thinking." Pay attention to the concept, not the school setting, because that concept controls participants' reactions to your messages and plans. . .and any meeting's success.

In Agreement with Bugeja: Nicholas Carr, "The Shallows" (NYC: Norton, 2010). Also, check his other books on related topics.

Early studies of car phone-related accidents found double the accident rate among hand-held talkers at accident time, vs. non-talking drivers. Later, revised: higher under specific conditions. So hand-held units were banned in California, in favor of speaker-phones; but the higher accident rate persisted. State's conclusion: the fact of concentration on the conversation (not the fact of the hand-held unit itself) was the culprit. New laws? No surprise.

In its own published study, "Car & Driver" magazine studied the problem. In every driver test, concentration on the conversation or texting resulted in slower reaction times for the driving component. Worst results, for texting--high concentration. Split-attention. Also, no surprise.

Big surprise: the same problem exists with cellphone-walkers! When people are checking their text pads, they're not watching where they're walking. . .and some have had serious accidents at about double the expected norm. Why should we require accidents before believing studies?

Valid early research--revalidated!

The US military's research had discovered--decades ago--that we cannot maintain vigilance in two sensory channels simultaneously. Yet, business still swears by multi-tasking practice, although serial single-tasking obtains better results. Choose between fads and facts! Cell phone laws are only the latest and most specific application of that split-attention principle by previously-lax governmental agencies.

Other ignored research was noted in Cavalier's "FirstTake" article (1985) (Doc Locator, Note #6). Where in the meetings-industry are the new practices or methodologies that would honor all such previous and subsequent research? Where is that meetings-industry's own research if it claims to be 'professional'? No, surveys-taken is not research.

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See Nicholas Carr, "The Shallows" (NYC: Norton, 2010). Also, check his other books on related topics.

The facts are out there--simply ignored by the meetings-industry.

Folks who want to sell you something--regardless of its value to your program--are out there too. Even at meeting-planner associations. It's not their problem if their (or advertisers') slogans and widgets don't solve your problem. . .especially if you don't yourself understand your group-communications problem.

Then ask yourself why the meetings-industry has failed or refused to examine the realities of the field and/or to do valid research of its own. Most claim that multiple surveys are 'research.' That's cheap, easy, and always provides predictable answers based on unfounded prior teachings.

You must provide your own answers to the military's programming questions in Instructional Systems Development (as replicated in Cavalier's "ISD"). ISD is slogan-proof and foolproof! It's self-help.

Since AOL bought 'Huffington Post,' the web folks are re-adopting the belief that 'Content is King.' That truth was also overpowered by the sales appeal of the new gadgets, which still need to deliver something: content! Content in your meetings is termed 'message.' And despite Marshall's push for the medium, "The Message is (still) the Message": Cavalier, 1973 & (1983 & update) books. What's old is new again!

So pay attention to the message and its support needs, if any. Then reconsider all Five Findings (including those above and below) . . .and take control of your own meetings. . .every time!

Fourth finding:

After three-plus decades, a major association of meetings-industry suppliers has designed a code of 'acceptable practices.' Which suggests that unacceptable practices (a few, below) were already common. Those unacceptable practices were also published in 1970s' related business publications--simply ignored by the meetings-industry. Deficiency is finally being admitted.

A recent survey of 157 members by the American Society of Business Publication Editors (ASBPE) found a lamentable ethics situation among publishers. Over two-third of those editors who responded indicated a need for better practices and guidelines. Remember, you've been believing their printed text--and buying accordingly?

Fault and failed meetings are simply denied by the meetings-industry.

Currently, the meetings-industry's largest corporate-user association has 'discovered' new levels of 'cutting edge' skill and requirements for member planners who wish to improve their capabilities--to 1970s standards, previously ignored. Of course there are other deficiencies:

Few working Meeting Managers write pop articles. Those persons who do write rarely challenge objectionable practices by the industry's many suppliers. By choice? Might 'publish-or perish' cause misconceptions or compromise among related professionals who themselves don't have the requisite hours of Meetings Management experience?

Will export of defective methods via associations' foreign convention locations provide enough static so that the associations can avoid acknowledging their years of inadequacy. . .as reflected in their past meeting-planner-certification programs? Under the circumstances and broader view, are those not Certificates of Inadequacy?

Biggest deficiency: Coverage of photogenic-events and convention exhibits is no substitute for know-how in Meetings Management. Advertising aside, most industry magazines promote stage shows as guaranteed photo-ops.

That reflects their 'unintentional' misunderstanding of one of our first client's published remarks:

Joseph L. Koach, then-Convention Manager of the Linen Supply Association of America (newly 'Fabric Rental') wrote about a touch of show-biz for good-for-speaker relief. But the magazines turned it into an opportunity for promoting show-biz extravaganzas! Good for ads and advertisers--not so good for your message and budget. There's a built-in conflict-of-interest among freebies magazines in probably all fields!

Koach's article--smudgy photocopy of the original carbon plus a re-key--is found on this website, as indicated below. Koach wrote of Meeting Management (distinct from planner) in 1960, an early general use of the term. However, PCMA (the Professional Convention Manager Association) had been formed in the medical field in 1956-7, quietly. (Doc Locator, Note#7). So the distinction between Meeting Manager and meeting planner did not originate with Cavalier. The professionals recognized it but the meetings-industry did not. Enuf sed?

Discrepancies between associations' and advertisers' bald claims and truly authoritative response to 'expert' requirements have resulted in numerous business meeting failures--or 'disappointments,' in politically-correct terminology. The meetings-industry didn't officially notice meeting failures in the past: therefore, very common failures 'didn't exist.' The web ended that censorship and deception.

Fifth finding and related history lesson:

A guru of classic training technique, Malcolm Knowles, had long ago stated: "Entertainment provides present-moment satisfaction; training requires present-moment dis-satisfaction in order to promote learning."

Comment: Applause is not a measure of learning. Applause for the show-biz values indicates present-moment satisfaction--an entertainment value that can contribute negatives--as does any spectacle with maxi-media (anything beyond need).

Knowles 'dis-satisfaction' was ignored by the meetings-industry and its press, too--in favor of their own opinion-mantras, "It's gotta entertain 'em'; and "It's gotta be face-to-face." Besides, your budget can't compete with Hollywood; so don't even try. Learners need to be engrossed, not coddled.

Knowles was no unknown lightweight. Search his name on the web. If you read some of his books, then you'll want to deliver meaningful company-material that matters to your learners because it matters to their lives.

Worse: "Inc." magazine printed a ludicrous cover banner for its supercilious story (August, '07): "Fun! It's the New Core Value." A mini-quote tag: "Good for employees, good for customers, good for business." (Doc Locator, Note #8).

Really?

Does a 'have fun at work' attitude imply an employee's added can-do ability to do the job? Will-do, possibly; but not studied. But will-do is not synonymous with 'can-do' in any case. If seen as a job benefit, fun might encourage the less-able employees to stick around if they can't get a more-fun job. The most-capable will leave when they feel that they're not contributing meaningfully or growing personally. Thank Abraham Maslow's pyramid for that perspective--decades ago!

Research (decades ago) by Dr. Frederick Herzberg had long ago established employee dissatisfaction with management quality as the prime dissatisfier in the business-employee world.

--How does fun improve management capability and/or leadership?

--How does fun improve the employees' abilities to do the jobs?

--Where is the supporting evidence from valid research?

--Who besides the fun-&-clowns companies would benefit from such a misplaced value structure?

--And why was the "Inc." editor conned so easily? Answer: Because he trusts the old, meetings-industry's press version of meetings life.

Consider the overall matter of industry-manufactured opinions, which plagues other venues besides the meetings/conventions-industry:

When discussing the matter of cable air time given to ex-elected/ military officials and putative pundits who double as undisclosed paid lobbyists for private interests. "The Nation" (Doc Locator #9) quoted ethics committee chairman, Andy Schotz (Society for Professional Journalists), regarding Pulitzer Prize-winning David Barstow's related exposes in the NY 'Times':

"It's almost like a mysterious black hole that this issue, which is enormous, is getting no attention from the offenders themselves." Comment: There's no mention of undisclosed interests in the meetings-industry's published texts, either. Both are intended to mis-direct the unwary reader/viewer.

Aaron Brown (host of CNN's "Newsnight," 2001-05: "How many [undisclosed lobbyists] can we put on the set at one time?". Brown was "amazed at how little they had to offer" (op. cit.). RC: Ditto, the meetings-industry's positions and events, too?

Brown's final quote: "We live in a time where there are no shortages of opinions and an incredible deficit of facts." RC: That's the meetings-industry's forty-year problem in a nutshell!

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No equally-good or better method has ever been invented, in our opinion--claims don't matter, and neither does the (unjustified) high price.

So pay attention to the message and its support needs, if any. Then reconsider all Five Findings. . .and take control of your own meetings. . .every time!

HOW DO THOSE FIVE DISCRETE FINDINGS FIT TOGETHER?

Communication, not entertainment! In large meetings, think about group-communication, not technological splendor! In small meetings, don't try to fake or otherwise betray your authority, or participants will tear the agenda apart.

It's now okay and possible (Thanks, Web) to talk about and work with non-salable, non-expensive needs. But do-it-yourself is unpopular with the advertising-dominated publications: they can't sell you your own message.

In the pre-web days, when unfavorable information could be blacked-out, there was rarely a mention of educationally-required elements or never a mention of failed meetings in the industry press. Now, meetings-failure can be admitted, discussed and blogged, and remedied by attention to the message.

But is your message being prepared by authorities on that topic?

For any program, preparation by non-authorities is wasteful of everyone's work and time. . .prone to failure through inadequacy and to the waste of opportunity, same inadequacy. Moreover, because few of the freebie magazines' 'writers' have ever planned a meeting or earned even a portion of the '10,000 Hour Rule' ("Outliers"; Doc Locator, Note #1) as credential in trade expertise, the zero-hours writers discuss "It looks good," not "It achieved stated objectives by or as measured by. . ."

When management fails to deliver messages that are clear, reasonable, and do-able; and when needed practice and tools are not provided, don't blame your employees for not learning. That's management's fault! Experts/ authorities know what they need in order to communicate their own know-how. Give them what they need--don't require them to use what you bought because the ads and freebies told you that the authorities need.

Pretty baubles, razzle-dazzle, and geometric seating patterns were never a substitute for proper delivery, understanding-proved, and practice--all are related to the key message when it's properly presented.

Our truism 'The message is the message' was published in RC's 1970s column and 1973 book; and repeated in his 1983 book: plus, "And don't you forget it!"

All advertisers would have been, and will be, better-served by attention to their specific successes. . .and even examined failures (with caveats listed). Such forthcoming behavior would create confidence in the ad claims for readers and prospects, thereby enhancing reader confidence in the editorial integrity of the magazines. Even the advertisers themselves can benefit from credible ad-carriers.

Many aspects of meeting planning for control were delivered in the early 1970s: Books by most authors discussed particular elements of meeting room needs but offered no overall system for use. Meetings are not a collection of independent tips and activities. Moreover, books of valid, but discrete, chapters by various experts still don't add up to a workable system, because readers must still cut-and-past into their own probably-deficient current methods.

Because of expert columns and 1973's "Achieving Objectives in Meetings" book, Richard Cavalier was acknowledged as an authority in the 1970-80s. (See Doc Locator, Note #10).

The 1970s? Old? In our 'latest-thing' business climate--yes. But irrelevant: the human brain hasn't changed much in 10,000 years, according to scientists. Research-based educational principles are still valid. Recent brain research has identified real estate wherein each action registers, but scientists still can't tell us how and why consciousness occurs.

We now understand why and where mental phenomena occur, but the basic research of the past has not been challenged. Our new understandings should help us to program more accurately.

In the meetings field, most 'latest-thing' hits have been limited-term fads; and the majority are gone. Even 60s' once-ubiquitous Programmed Learning has now been restricted to sequential tasks, not conceptual learning. Cavalier, 1973: "A hamburger is a programmed steak--chemically identical but changed forever."

More recently: Programmed Learning can still aid sequential tasks but can't help with conceptual learning. When learning to ride a bike, did you learn first how to balance, and then how to steer, and then how to peddle? Or all together? Any training-topic's authority can tell you which, each topic, each time.

The training and long-ignored educational principles are still valid and efficient. . .and still embraced by most corporate trainers and us during that '70s decade and since. 'Most,' above because many good salesmen are brought inside to teach others but don't know how. They're fodder for the big guns in the advertising-dominated meetings-industry.

Competent Trainers are simply not supportive of the meetings-industry's sacred-cow slogans or the meetings-associations' misdirected purposes. It don't 'gotta be' face-to-face for hotel/airline benefit; for your own benefit, only maybe. The message determines.

Remember that (decades ago) American Express identified central business meetings as using two-thirds of any corporation's average annual travel budget. Comment: That central monster feeds on its own size, requiring more and more-expensive adjunct equipment while it demands larger and more-expensive hotels and public meeting rooms in expensive cities.

Also decades ago, "Sales & Marketing Management" magazine (which printed RC's column for years) demonstrated that regional meetings are always less costly (more cost-effective) than either one-central or multiple-local meetings when needed equipment/technology must be rented; district meetings are cheaper when required equipment is already owned. These days, smaller cities are discovering new business demand. Why?

For a list of previously published but ignored 1060s-'70s contra-industry findings, see Doc Locator Note #12:

--"FirstTake" A/V magazine (May, 1985; photocopy, Note #6).

-- 'Recognition', "Business Week" button holds our consumerist articles for two of their special-ad-issues, which the travel industry declined to support (not signed: magazine-independence offended, not this writer).

--'Recognition': Citations for early third party research, pre-1970; found under the 'Granddaddy' button; Also "AOM" & Early mag columns' for both research and PERT Diagram.

--For thumbnail summaries of yr2000 challenges from "Training" magazine to the meeting- industry's sacred cows, slogans, and attitudes, stay with this 'Final Thoughts' section.

Those "Training" challenges appeared over several years, early in the yr2000s, while it was still an independent publication. Once "Training" became owned by a publisher of meetings-industry freebies and could make major changes, for some reason, it no longer printed such challenges to its new sister magazines. Once, that was sufficient for total blackouts on truth about meetings failures--now, there's a new climate: described in "Looking at Today's Realities" segment at the top of this section.

The meetings industry's various associations have been trying to create 'instant experts' via multiple opinion articles by a single individual or in-house certification courses. If most courses last a few dozen hours, then when viewed against the '10,000 (or other count) Hour Rule,' (Note #1) aren't such certificates, in fact, Certificates of Inadequacy?

Playing catch-up:

Moreover, the same associations that have for decades failed the related professions and trade(s) and are now trumpeting their belated 'discovery' of advanced levels of performance capability. . .and are still misdirecting. When they claim 'cutting edge' learning for old knowledge, they're

misleading their own members. Their shortcomings are demonstrated in the "FirstTake" and "Training" articles mentioned above. Why were the associations Missing In Action for decades while most best-methods-needed were already established, way back--by the 1970s?

Some associations and their magazines recommended that their members get involved in buying insurance for their 'events.' Why should neophytes be buying insurance? A company officer is already in charge. How great for preying insurance salespeople, ads, and ad-sales!

Mentioned earlier, on its cover, "Inc." magazine stated that "Fun...a core value." Who sez? Whose private agenda was "Inc." pursuing?

Accommodating 'events' is becoming an all-encompassing term--serving the purveyors. 'Events,' rather than 'meetings,' surely casts a wider advertiser net: balloons and clowns are conceivably valid at some 'events.' But at how many meetings, if any? That (intentional?) diffusion and confusion of legitimate trade purposes for meetings-needs does not aid any competent meetings professional.

Misinformation and disinformation in the business press is the signature of editors who defer to the viewpoints of private-agendas and meetings-industry freebies when determining which stories to include in their issues. . . unless it's P-f-P. . . .

Education is the sole remedy. . . and who better than the ASBPE can address their own findings via association-sponsored education programs?

Meanwhile: Upshot and remedies for you to use, whether you're a VP/Sales, Chief Learning Officer, Training Director, or just a helpful colleague:

Disregard the 'buy-something' blandishments of the meetings-industry freebie magazines and concentrate on the educational, training, and emotional elements and needs of your individual meeting messages. That's free. You just need to think!

Those meeting needs vary from issue-to-issue and meeting-to-meeting. Answers don't come in a box: management must apply identified learning principles and clear thought. Maxi-media (in excess of need) can split attention spans. So begin with human beings, not budget-blasters.

Then expect your organization's staff to handle the still-significant logistical requirement for hotels and airlines--if you need a central meeting.

But demand that those staff 'certificated meeting-planner experts' refuse to compromise with hotels regarding the legitimate lectern and staging needs of that message. . . if you really need hotels and airlines. Remember the American Express reference, above.

If the hotel won't bend before and IN written contract, you've been warned! Go elsewhere, because many independent facilities and most chains have an 'in writing only' policy and approach to disagreements.

Next, look through the 1970s-world's professional journals and how-to books in the meetings trade, including those of Richard Cavalier. Find out for yourself what help has been available for decades. . . without blasting your budget. Don't be led astray by the opinionated articles and books by no-experience 'writers' in the meetings-industry.

Books that collect articles by multiple authorities can present good and usable information, but they provide no system that combines the materials offered. That demands your/readers' own cut-and-paste operation into a possibly-faulty meetings maker technique.

We all know that The Other Guy conducts lousy meetings. Don't let yourself be The Other Guy for The Other Guy!

Finally, if your organization sells anything to the meetings trade, consider the greater conviction value that can be gained in advertising via respected trade journals and paid-circulation magazines.

When you are ready to switch your advertising to those publications whose editors and texts that you think you trust, check: Pay-for-Play could have infected even your favorite paid-subscription publications. So first, ask to see a copy of their Codes of Ethics. Then decide. . . and reward deserving publications with your subscription and ad business. That combination of actions will reflect your own know-how. It's free! And good ad-buyer technique.

Now, how much more attention can you pay to your message?"

Action notes:

Versions of the segment above were sent e-mail in Fall, '09 to dozens of e-list business meeting editors, to selected ad agencies, and also to key meetings-equipment manufacturers and other purveyors who advertise.

If they get the message, you should be seeing responsive articles in mid-2010. If not, ask why not. Editors should ultimately get your message: that responsible publications deserve support once they understand and honor educational- and fact-based meetings structure and needs.

Before you feel absolutely-in-control, understand that there's been no professional journal in the training or Meetings Management fields. . . partly because corporate managements have felt that 'anybody can do it'--and so have been unwilling to pay for such a publication. Think of all the problems already purchased with those savings! And be sure that your firm's ad agency understands where you're coming from. . . .

Brand new, but worth a glance: "Undercover Boss" (CBS-TV, Sundays) shows bosses doing an admirable job of checking real lives of selected employees/jobs. Assuming that the boss knew, when reporting for work, what the job *should* be and then selected it for review, then what's salient and almost alarming is that none of the bosses were prepared for the realities of those jobs.

"Undercover Boss" has its enthusiasts and detractors. Begun in February, '10, "UB" is down for the summer of '11 but apparently has been renewed for a third year, beginning in January, '12. Along the way, it has been called "faux populism." Another review, also in Blomberg's "Business Week" said, "the Episode ends with a Fortune 500 version of The Sermon on the Mount." I agree that "UB" is embarrassing for all top managements, because it indicates how thin are management-employee fabrics.

Let's get real. 'Reality TV' is hardly ever exactly reality. All are TV shows first. This writer believes that the delay between Summer, '11 end-season and Winter, '12 restart probably reflects difficulty in finding executives who are willing to show how little their Personnel Departments and top management know about actual jobs.

When were the last Job Descriptions written? Only the person(s) doing the job today know(s) what that job actually entails. Why should the CEO be surprised at what they find? They can't know in advance unless somebody at Home Office really cares! And how will you find those answers in somebody's off-the-shelf whatever? Watch that program. . . I recommend it!

Now, consider what will happen if valid, information, theories, and training are applied in meetings and training sessions to employees and jobs to which the new materials and discussions don't really apply. And if HR buys programs that relate to jobs that don't exist as described, how much wasted time, money, and opportunity must the company endure in order to repair what can and should be done properly in advance?

Never forget: the only person who knows what the job entails today (regardless of HR job description) is the persons who is doing that job now.

LOOKING BACK:

Unfortunately, both the meetings/conventions industry as a whole and its individual purveyors of programming elements haven't been willing to fund such studies as might disprove their own position: that anything-advertised is valuable. But that solid wall might be crumbling—see the "Training" magazine note for August, '06, in their backtracking section, below. Even the 'professional' meetings user-associations don't seem to want the facts and, so, skirt the issues.

Afraid of facts?

Source of the fears? Decades old findings from research by the US Military, much of it through the Human Resources and Research Organization (HumRRO), in Alexandria, VA. See nuggets of the Military's adverse findings in our article printed in "FirstTake" magazine in 1985. (See Note #6)

One Military finding, for instance, stated that an individual cannot maintain vigilance in two sensory channels simultaneously. RC applied that finding to media, which can (by entertaining) overpower the key message(s) of the meeting.

Today, decades later, such findings have been proved in contemporary terms: the accident rate by drivers who were on their cellphone at the time of the accident is about double the average rate for non-cellphone accident rates; and persons who consume multi-media are less likely to perform multi-tasking well.

Lately, multi-tasking itself has been shown to be less efficient than concentrated, serial application to topics. Such counter-intuitive findings in psychology are essential knowledge for trainers and management others. . .so why should they be anathema to the meetings/conventions- industry's own trade publications? Industry interests vs field interests!

Another indicator? In the Los Angeles "Times" (Doc Locator, Note #13), Simon Ramos, co-founder of TRW, stated that during his 69 years in aerospace, he's attended more than 40,000 meetings. About 30,000 of those could have been shorter or not held at all, he laments, according to the "Times." He also laments the time as 'lost' hours.

Comment: An inadequately-prepared meeting does not have a purpose except in the meeting-caller's wildest dreams. Why else do so many people hate to attend The Other Guy's meetings? Most often missing? The practice session that belongs with the tools necessary to the achievement of the meeting-caller's directives. Don't be The Other Guy for The Other Guy!

To cancel a meeting that does not have a purpose was a recommendation originated by Cavalier, as published in "Achieving Objectives in Meetings" (Doc Locator, Note #11). However, Cavalier's recommendation had been 'borrowed' for an early study report (after "AOM" had been previously submitted to that publisher) and they reproduced quotes in a survey summary and ringbinder text some time earlier than "AOM" was published. Cavalier holds the copyright; the 'borrower' does not.

Nevertheless, when Marion Kershner, then Executive Secretary of MPI, wanted to adopt "AOM" as an official publication, an association purveyor-member objected because "Others of us have written books, too." That objector was a late buyer into the firm that had 'borrowed' Cavalier's material.

But the mis-credits that occurred permitted the meetings/conventions industry to claim that there were other sources and experts besides Cavalier at that time—and that those other "experts" had contrary opinions that were more in keeping with the ideas of the advertisers: buy, and anything goes!

If recent findings have discovered that real competence begins at about 10,000 hours of 'deliberate practice,' how would that practice be supervised by 'instant authorities,' as manufactured by the meetings-industry?

The industry and its trade publications (including some user-association news-letters and magazines) have themselves proved the falseness of the 'manufactured expert' opinions and claims. . .especially visible now that business in general has come to recognize the shortcomings of the meeting-planner model.

Business is beginning to demand more supervision from its Training Director, who likely hasn't the time or budget to oblige. More about that correctable situation after discussing "Why?".

When "AOM" appeared, there wasn't yet a thought for a corporate Chief Learning Officer, who now inherits decades of misinformation and disinformation provided by the meetings/conventions industry. The CLO needn't believe it, but many of his peers and top management do.

Additional problems from such credence-desperation were compounded when the world's first PERT Diagram for meeting management appeared in "AOM" (1973) and was subsequently 'covered' by paperwork flow charts that showed numerous labeled squares linked by intertwined lines. Flow charts appeared in at least one meetings/conventions freebie. . .falsely identified as a PERT Diagram.

PERT is not simply anything that's messy or complex. Both PERT and flow charts are valid for their individual purposes, but they're not interchangeable purposes. PERT is task/calendar-related. Flow charts are office-destination-related for paperwork; and any flow chart reflects the process for its own company only. Editors don't know it all, and they can be manipulated by persons who have ulterior motives. Who submitted those flow charts falsely labeled as PERT? Why? Were they advertisers or service providers? Both groups have something to gain from distortion of reality. . .who else uses overly-cooperative editors?

A true PERT diagram that you can use 'as is' is provided on the button 'Recognition'; then 'Early magazine Articles & "AOM."'

"Cavalier on Meetings" plus "How Meetings Help Sales" columns that appeared later than '73 in "Sales & Marketing Management" ("S&MM") are available on fiche.

The Meeting Manager term, which makes clear the differences between user-needs and supplier-wants, was never adopted (or even acknowledged later) by the meetings/ conventions industry at large. Despite the specialized PCMA, there was no general professional-planner user-association at the time Koach published. MPI had just formed ('72) by the time that "AOM" was published ('73). Having earlier managed a convention for the previous management association headed by Marion Kersher, later chief of MPI, Cavalier was invited to speak twice at the MPI organization, where Kershner was the first Executive Secretary.

We'll approach these two matters again, below, in a related connection.

Kershner understood the user-needs and argued for meetings management and ethics but was overruled by the supplier wing, which dominates even today.

Critics have estimated that the MPI organization is about two-thirds supplier dominated. One past president of MPI told RC, "Exhibits are key to a successful convention." He was simultaneously the CEO of a manufacturers' association and might have had a merchandising bias on the topic.

Turn-over of disappointed ex-members seems to keep the current membership of user-members relatively constant, despite purveyor loyalty. Today, when most convention-type brochures are available on the web, the convention becomes substantially less necessary to the meetings field. Exhibits are nice, but they're rarely purchaser-reality.

So an industry that was not prepared to be truly professional in the demanding Meetings Management function then attempted to act as if it were in actuality professional, while addressing itself to enhancing the merchandising prospects for suppliers to the trade.

Although 'profit' is not a dirty term, 'profiteering' surely is. Don't trade-publication editors owe their own ethical behavior to their readers? But ethics is in very short supply in the meetings/ conventions industry. Cavalier joined MPI twice at Kershner's urging but quit twice because the supplier wing would never approve a Code of Ethics.

For an indisputable insight into the Domination Derby affair, read the Business Week article and its Note (saga!) on this website (Home page's 'Recognition' button; then 'Industry'; then "Business Week"). Despite the fact that BW's mailing list is treasured by marketers, the travel industry (decades ago) refused to support the two special "Business Week" meetings/conferences inserts, whose consumerist content they couldn't control!

For a litany of perennial ills in the trade, see "Q&A" (Home Page.) These are the realities that few trade organizations are willing to discuss or acknowledge. "Lances the boils, . . ." said a full-page insurance industry magazine review of AOM (click on 'Recognition'; then 'Book Reviews' base-button).

Worse, the "official" version is seen everywhere. Editors of general business publications now defer to the understandings that are reported in the trade magazines because, "Don't those editors know best?" Obviously not. There is no recovery from this problem unless we address the root causes: untruth and unfairness for money.

Apparently those editors do not know best. Cancel-meetings, PERT, maxi-media awareness, planning-is-not-control, and a number of others of Cavalier's original and copyrighted contributions (including 'borrowed' or imitated sample Guides, Profiles, and sample Agendas) have been reprinted often and widely by the meetings-industry as 'aboriginal' knowledge that anyone could take at will.

Those look-alikes supposedly 'proved' that there were many other (manufactured) 'experts.' But until "AOM," all books in the trade were essentially discursive or one-topic narrow. That dumped the task of adapting into workable systems onto the readers. "AOM" and its later companion books were the very first comprehensive and systematic how-to texts ever to be published in the meetings/conventions world! And they still work because they were tested and proved as fundamentals, not acceptable opinions or blue-sky theory.

The key difference in values is that many writers can be said to "write about" meetings. Anyone can "write about" anything, whether or not convincingly. It takes no hands-on experience to digest previously-written materials and then simply to regurgitate (probably erroneous) ideas. Men can "write about" childbirth, too—but you know from the start that it's not from first-hand experience. That knowledge is itself a caution when reading. But the controlled-circulation editors don't tell you about their writers' lack of experience.

Yet the meetings trade press claims that it took 'positive' steps. When the discrepancies between Cavalier's direct criticisms and the trade's Pollyanna Press became obvious, half-way articles signed by a "Christopher Thorne" (pseudonym) were published in a competitive (to "S&MM") mag. However, the critiques couched most problems in terms of user-created problems that users should watch-out for.

The 'Thorne' pseudonym was acknowledged in print because (paraphrased) "the articles should not be allowed to compromise the writer's effectiveness in the trade." Why would the truth compromise any purveyor/writer's position in an honest trade? Could it be that deceit and deception are known to be SOP in the trade? More about blame-the-victim under the "Training" magazine for August, '06, paragraph, below.

The meetings/training continuum:

So far we've combined talk about both meetings and training in this web segment.

Lest we not recognize the relationship between meetings and training, know this: meetings/training is one instructional continuum, a matter of instructional degree plus amount of practice and delivery method, not of differences in principle. This simple fact has been known for decades but is ignored by the related industries.

That's especially true if a problem is spotted with a (published) Problem-Identification Agenda and/or explored with a Problem-Solving Agenda (both masters are Cavalier creations) and/or later remanded to the Training Department for action.

It's also true that meetings and conferences might at any time identify problems that can be handled early in valid, complete meetings and won't require panicky training assistance if the worst never happens. So, competent meetings can be pro-active, mini-substitutes for some later formal training. Yet, they must honor the same scientific laws and requirements of teaching/learning already established for training, even when contrary to industry blandishments re: 'buy something.'

Baseless opinions vs. science:

Medicine is not a science, either. However, the healing arts are based in science to the greatest degree possible. New findings are almost always welcomed and are usually incorporated into the standard 'indications' of medically-approved protocols. Ethics counts in medicine, but apparently not in the meetings/conventions trade.

Therein lies the difference in confidence with which people might or might not approach these issues and arts fields. The meetings/conventions-industry today is attempting to function with pronouncements and slogans while evading the obligation to observe valid research. Consequently, its readers are enduring incomplete and disappointing or failed meetings.

The Military's equivalent of medicine's research has been incorporated into its system of ISD, called by the Military, 'Instructional Systems Development.' Corporations tend to use the appellation 'Instructional Design' (or 'ID'.) All of it has the same root, in the mid-Twentieth Century civilian work by Dick & Carey, "Systematic Design of Instruction," now in its seventh printing.

The same findings apply to meetings, too, because management meetings and the sales meetings that follow are usually only a preamble to any training program, when the latter is required. The entire field (and industry) admits that "Telling is not training." The industry simply won't act on that admission.

But the Military has only a few major ISD versions, reflecting the contested choices and preferences of its major services and their own practitioners, who use that service's chosen version. Yes, the contest did have a winner-service, as mentioned below.

On the other hand, corporations tend to use any of a number of versions that have been created by any number of persons with any number of different backgrounds. So when you say, 'ID' or 'ISD' in business, exactly what do you mean? If you're uncertain, how can a single viewpoint be interpreted intelligently and consistently when various viewpoints are expressed in various publications? To survive, you need your own view.

You can buy business versions of ISD on disk for up to \$1,000 each, but each publisher's disk has different emphases. . . and a potential buyer needs to be somewhat skilled in the ISD discipline before he/she can choose disks and emphases wisely. You can also get those skills from the Military's common-man viewpoint, via Cavalier's book "Common Sense ISD." (Doc Locator, Note #19).

Being fewer, the Military versions tend to be much less hybridized. The Navy took the honors in a contest for the best Military ISD system, decades ago.

ISD permits trainers to create valid systems locally, from anywhere in the world, and end with useful training programs—although not identical in presentation format or wordage to any others. What matters is what works! The differences should reflect the facts of that particular military base at that particular time. Yes, facts change. So should the programs based on those facts. ISD will help you to identify change-times.

Cavalier's book "Common Sense ISD" uses that Navy award version, created after Cavalier spoke with the award-winning team, then assigned to Great Lakes Training Center outside Chicago. However, RC 'translated' much of the military's jargon/terminology into standard business language; it's easily understood. So his "9 ISD" text is easy to read and follow and USE! (Note #18).

Further, RC has eliminated extraneous material, such as extensive cataloging requirements, because few corporations (and no small or mid-size companies) need to find and control thousands or hundreds of thousands of programs. In addition, he added original diagrams and guides that reflect normal business needs. So Cavalier's ISD is probably more useful and user-friendly than most others. . . at a fraction of the cost!

Does ISD have all the answers? Certainly not.

On the other hand, ISD does have ALL of the essential questions to which you must find honest and valid answers if you hope to produce a valid program that will produce predictable results. If you fulfill ISD's dictates honestly, then you'll create all of the best answers for yourself and your company. The resulting program will deserve to achieve the program results that you have already built into it. Dependably!

Some people say, "Start with the needed results and then fulfill them."

Comment: Who starts with "Let's do a program of some kind for no good reason"? Genius such as this. . . you don't need working with or for you! ISD methodology requires: "Start with an analysis of the problem and then analyze the problem."

Artificially stipulating needed-results will invite teaching-the-test rather than long-term, worthwhile instruction. It can deliver a result that is not really a solution in the long run but could provoke future problems, of which short-term failure might be only the most visible consequence. Consider costs of re-do's and consequent delays in rolling out additional programs, as well as lost opportunity throughout.

Military ISD starts with an analysis of the facts regarding specific problems. Those two (problem/solution) alternatives sound like a chicken-and-egg situation. Even though you might think you have a direction when you start, you merely narrow your options when pre-selecting a target result.

That arbitrary target might be recognized as only a part of the overall problem when that problem is properly analyzed--and it might not even be the ultimate end. Arbitrary decisions are an ISD no-no. But an educated guess/choice is okay when absolutely needed. . . and sometimes it's unavoidable, if facts are thin or if a solution is not determined and dictated by the available facts.

So let's get down to the essential questions that affect every organization and so its meetings managers and trainers: "Does the Training Industry have all the answers?" and "Does anyone?"

In the opinion of Cavalier and others, the answers are NO and NO.

But ISD does have strict guidelines that, if observed, will prevent errors in analysis, design, and development. Delivery will be smoother; and the trainer can concentrate on how to improve future repeats, rather than on how to try to reach his charges the first time.

Real-Life Horror Stories:

In support of that negative (NO and NO, above) assessment of know-it-alls, note some of the strange stories that have appeared in "Training" magazine, since the late '90s. Possessed of at least two or three names and publishers over the years, was one of the many publications of Dutch publisher VNU when "Training" began the backtracking process. In the next decade, at US's Nielsen.

In the questionable-interests department, in the not-too-distant past, "Training" had often accepted the viewpoints of meetings/conventions-industry magazines (including one meetings/conventions publication at Bill Brothers Publishers; then, publisher of S&MM column, too).

At S&MM, that convention sister-magazine waged convention industry warfare, publishing views that were contrary to most of RC's published opinions but favorable to merchandising. Rather than compromise to suit advertisers, this author and dropped out of the distorted public discourse. Results: fakery flourished--and produced today's failures.

Significantly, since "Training" magazine was sold to Nielsen Publications, Nielsen has abandoned the backtracking challenges but also has indicated that it will not criticize the meeting industry's controlled-circulation publications. Could that be because Nielson owned two (now one) of those freebie magazines that advertisers might dominate?

If you qualify for a controlled-circulation freebie, remember, you haven't arrived--you've simply been targeted for advertising purposes. There's a big difference between any profession and its profit-oriented industry.

Apologia, of sorts:

However, there's more. When Cavalier's granddaddy article printed a bibliography and "SMTW" printed an even more extensive bibliography, it started a Biblio Derby.

Another writer in the trade even 'borrowed' Cavalier's "SMTW" biblio as his own. That was apparent when a note re: a book by Karl Buhler was described in Cavalier's original notation as "Accessible only in reference." That note was RC's invention; it could not have been found in anything that the borrowing writer had actually researched.

If any author will be dishonest about his bibliographical sources, what are the opinions in his book itself worth? If ever you see that Buhler note in any other biblio, you know that much of that biblio and book is 'borrowed,' too.

Moreover, Cavalier created the Guides and Profiles that have become common in the trade press. However, through a printer's error, one graphic version of a form was omitted from the book AOM. However, not to worry: another writer created the graphic version, imitating not only Cavalier's format for his Guides and Forms but 'borrowing' the virtually exact words with which Cavalier had described that essential form within Cavalier's text, in the book "AOM."

Not only has the honesty of the entire meetings-industry been at issue, but the trade press and associations were willing to accept the 'borrowing' as original. That desperate was the trade to 'manufacture' new and friendlier experts.

Gross pretense: A young woman named Cari Lynn taught meetings control to readers of a competitive (to "S&MM") mag . . . while using RC's "SMTW" as her source material. Her editor would not allow the RC name or book title to be named in that class, again because of the trade's need to 'manufacture' other 'authorities' who could speak for industry-backed concepts such as 'Teamwork.' (Doc Locator, Note #14).

Nevertheless, we autographed Cari Lynn's copy of "SMTW" at her request. In a trade and industry as needy of professional methods and standards as is the meetings trade, the user/readers needed those methods and standards from Cari far more than it needed credit to RC.

No, teamwork itself is not a meaningless term in business. But it cannot be demanded or commanded. But consider: great teams are built of individuals--each of whom does a small, assigned portion of the total task extremely well. How does one build a team from individuals who are still wondering after the meeting, "What did he/she say?"—unsure what their new job really is? The message, not the distracting purchased/ advertised visuals or décor, is salient!

To read Cavalier's assessment of the 'teamwork' issue, see 'Business Writing'; then 'Press Releases,' p1.

However uncredited for groundwork, RC will take credit today for firing the first cannon shot in the Revolution for Professionalism and Ethics in the meetings/training-industry--on behalf of its professions and trade(s). Please join. As noted below, the problem of questionable information is still alive and well.

None of the thieves of intellectual property was working in a vacuum. The MPI (and perhaps the whole of their trade) told the thieves that borrowing from an 'open platform' (their non-legal invention) was quite all right. . .because of industry policy. Sorry--there's no legal basis for theft by any process-name, not even 'open platform.'

In the process of exposing the root of the problem, we hope to end abuses and theft of intellectual property from any/all developers, as encouraged by MPI's 'open platform.' Since 'open platform' is not a legally valid phrase, it disguises an industry/trade attitude that invites theft from any source by any user without payment, despite copyright. But an organization that could form while 'borrowing' the attendance list of the true organizer of the World Meeting Planner Conference does not surprise us, however unethical the behavior that follows. WMPC was the world's first in the meetings/conventions field, originated by a one-time co-worker, Jay Lurye, 1970-71 season).

LOOKING CRITICALLY, with "Training's" help:

But let's stick here to common training failures seen in past "Training" magazines. Most of today's problems with superficial or inadequate program design can be traced to the misinformation and disinformation featured by the meetings/conventions industry, which has tried to separate purpose from purchase: pretending that anything advertised is good for your program. For instance:

In February, 1999: "Is There a Learning Curve in This Business?"

Comment: Why the question? Doesn't any skill have a learning curve? But if trainers are dealing with other persons' job performance and career and therefore with family security, should trainers ethically have special abilities and valid training themselves before unleashing the latest fad onto their unsuspecting charges?

RC asked this question at MPI's Tenth Anniversary Convention (in '82) and won the Tony Award for the convention's best presentation. Pyrrhic victory; abuses continued. (Read that address on this website, under 'Recognition'; then 'MPI' base-button.)

This comment reflects the truism that the training position at too many corporations often falls to a star salesman who begins his inside climb on the backs of his unlucky colleagues. Unfortunately, few successful salesmen know exactly why they're successful, and fewer still can explain it to others.

Also, as job transfers prove, a person can be highly successful with one group of people but a flop with others. Neophyte trainers are among the very people who are ripest for any sales pitch for virtually any program element or fad that might be in the industry's trade news currently, because they have no grounding in meetings and/or training historical literature. Ergo: programming failures follow guesswork and misdirection by the meetings-industry press.

Currently there's an effort to promote 'collaboration' software. It's been said that an infinite number of monkeys at typewriters will eventually write Shakespeare. Should corporations merely wait? Or, rather, should they recognize facts?

--Fact #1: Few corporations have multiple experts (re: proprietary topics/facts/problems) who are desperate to collaborate. Easy collaboration does not create expertise in subject matter for training or meetings; it can collect and collate opinions and corrections quickly and efficiently.

--Fact #2: Expertise can't be invented at will by collaboration, which in essence is a round-table meeting with scattered chairs; but good for simple editing and genuine discussion; and

--Fact #3: The fact that collaboration is possible will sell related software, whether or not valuable for the intended purpose! More possibly-false hopes for sale?

Yes, science has proved that in hypothetical situations (later proved by comparison to actual events), multiple viewpoints can better provide for eventualities.

But training doesn't treat hypotheticals, per se, other than possibly, by exercise, to encourage advance thinking about them. Besides, most of that hypothetical topic is committee work--and committee work is the sole justification for collaboration software. It can make editing more communally effective. It can eliminate some travel, thereby saving time. It cannot invent expert knowledge!

As for seminars and exhibits with presentations by suppliers, those will undoubtedly provide exposure to 'What sells?' rather than to 'What works?!'

Example? In the world's first Incentive Travel conference (sponsored by New York University and chaired by Cavalier). One supplier who was assigned to discuss small-movements switched on the platform to address the large-movement topic already addressed by his competitors--not staying with the well-rounded discussions that were programmed. (For the mailer see 'Industry Recognition' and related NYU base-button.

Was education for attendees or direct sales his main objective in participating? What does that say about your chances for getting unbiased information from a purveyor-sponsored conference?

In April, 2000: "The Attack on ISD: Have We Got ISD All Wrong?"

Comment: Six "experts" were quoted in less-than-glowing terms about ISD, including one consultant who lamented that there were no shortcuts.

Lack-of-shortcuts is the precise value of ISD! ISD demands accuracy and honesty in each step. Shortcuts introduce unmeasured variables into the final syllabus for programming. That negates the ISD guarantee of a valid, usable program and also makes it impossible for you (or anyone other participant) to track the source of any problem that will surely show in the final outcome.

Profit-practical aspect: Introduced errors extend consultant billing hours and tend to pad billings via needed, paid corrections. Who wins? Who loses? Especially if the failure is considered to be the buyer's fault!

Fortunately, the magazine's readers rebelled in a fire-storm! So "Training" tried to save face re: its original article by later calling it an "Opening Salvo." But many users feel that the original article was really a (premature) funeral oration for a corpse that sat up. That latter interpretation is supported by the fact that the magazine subsequently created a new reader-committee to vet its future ventures into complex issues. Editors can't know it all.

In February, 2002, "A Hard Look at ISD."

"Training" magazine further back-tracked re: the ISD article, with another article. In short, successful user/readers of ISD blamed the designer and/or developer for any program shortcomings--not the ISD system, which (in Cavalier's opinion, too) is not to blame for programming failures.

Guesswork, soothing-but-useless euphemisms, soft statistics, and/or shortcuts are always at fault when ISD supposedly fails. So follow the system as it was designed, and deal honestly with the sense of each and every step as set out.

As was stated, editors can't know it all, and they can be manipulated; although the new (2006) editor seems to have a better handle on reality. No reality-handle at any publication? Then abundant manipulation can occur under any magazine's aegis among its trusting readers. For shame!

In September, 2000: "Videoconferencing's Changing Picture"

included the line "But until bandwidth problems are solved, it's not clear who it is for."

Comment: Bandwidth problems have now been solved. Next excuse? Damning with faint praise (or praising with a faint damn) is the common method by which the entire meetings/conventions industry also backhands Video Conferencing (VC). VC just happens to offer corporations the opportunity to save a good chunk of change, which hotels/airlines (and advertising venues!) will lose.

American Express has estimated (decades ago) that annual central business meeting costs total about two-thirds (yes, 2/3!) of the typical corporate annual travel budget. Now, for whom do you think VC is intended? And VC can be there daily, not annually, allowing programmatic chunking, as needed. If any chunk can't be presented well via electronics, then essential, prepared text can and should be supervised/augmented in local training sessions with regional/district managers.

Perhaps the nation's first major national-text/local-facts Roman outline as lectern-master presentation document was prepared by Cavalier for Motorola, back in the late-1960s. It's do-able! And it helps to enhance the local manager's authority and status. District Managers added local info to master outlines. They then applauded the decentralized program, because they documented that new hires so trained sold sooner and sold more than did their counterparts in prior years.

Years later, a new Training Director at Motorola decided to re-think the programs that he had inherited and developed one that virtually duplicated RC's work. In a subsequent debriefing (when RC consulted for findings for a component program), the new TD told us (after we'd discussed 'mine,') "Did you ever have the feeling that you'd just re-invented the wheel?" Facts are facts, and any conscientious investigator will discover them and can build valid, workable programs around them.

In September, 2003: "The State of the E-Learning Market."

Three terrific acknowledgments in a summary sidebar and two excerpted banners:

- 1) "less fixation on technology," p24;
- 2) "away from learning as an end in itself and toward its contribution to business performance," p26; and
- 3) "more about content and less about technology. Did we effectively teach people? That has nothing to do with technology." p28.

Comment: All three of these issues--and more--were addressed in Cavalier's first article in Crain's "A&SP," back in 1970, and subsequently in his columns and books. This website: click on on 'Recognition/Industry' and 'Granddaddy' base-button.) The questions are not new now--only currently unavoidable because of program failures via computer-based learning. Why 35 years of delay regarding instructional components? Because any advanced knowledge will question the slogan, "If it's advertised, it's good for your program." Technology is an enabler--a fancy blackboard, not a training element--and its entertainment value can overpower the message: our term, 'maxi-media.'

Key arguments: Kodak's hemispheric film-projection screen at the NYC World's Fair and Marshall McLuhan's dictum, "The medium is the message". . . both in 1964. McLuhan was already under a funding-contract to the TV industry at the time. Suspect a hidden message there? Kodak's message was, "Ain't film grand?" And it was. But that's not your message.

Cavalier's often-published comment: "The message is the message." And don't you forget it!

See the "AOM" & Early Mag Columns' button, with selected columns and PERT Diagram, as reprinted in "Achieving Objectives in Meetings," 1973. Find later years' columns, on microfiche.

That original phrase was created as the "AOM" book's title (1973), and is now a standard caution in the meetings field, although the meetings-industry still tries to pass off such then-new awareness as "aboriginal" knowledge.

"AOM's" subtitle, when first announced by Crain's A&SP, was "Theory and Practice for Solving Business Meeting Problems." Before "AOM" hit the streets, a magazine-sponsored columnist used our subtitle as the main title for his book. You've really got to watch your back in this business.

However, his book itself was much more about theory than practice because that author's background was gained as a business association's service-provider for internal/member meetings--also known as step-and-fetch-it experience. He, himself, never created or contributed to the content of the meetings held in his facility.

In his regular freebie-magazine column, that same writer once described meeting variations (seminar, clinic, conference, etc) as indications of duration, not function. Such was the level of 'expertise' that the trade adopted in its drive to eliminate facts and purpose from the meetings management process. (To locate selected articles on related topics as published in other publications, click on 'Recognition' and 'Industry' base-button.

In February, 2005: "The Great (Sales) Train Robbery."

Comment: Enough said!

In December 2005: (Industry Report): "The Classroom ain't dead yet."

Comment: Numerous charts and graphs make clear that the classroom still reigns in 60-70% of all training sessions, regardless of company size.) The January, '07, issue still says "over 60%." "Avoiding the one-dimensional mistake" de-thrones the "holy grail" of e-learning.

That author further states, "Technology-based learning is one of the media choices you can make when deciding how to deliver training intervention, and you need to select the media based on the characteristics of the learner and the content, the environment, lots of things."

At the end of 2007, the same, but updated, survey showed that the meeting format is alive and well as the majority format at a majority of surveyed companies; in '08, the report was phrased, "more than a half [of respondents] conducted more than half" of their training programs in meetings. For small companies, can "more than half" actually mean "100%"?

The decades-old ISD process already says that technology is not essential, and the military ISD process further provides a dozen delivery-system algorithms to preclude inappropriate choices (no computers, prior; and wars since--so no updating). Fortunately, those algorithms are quoted in full in Cavalier's "Common Sense ISD". . . with the exception of the e-learning-related equipment, which didn't exist in 1973--but functions today just like other and earlier A/V equipment: to deliver the content.

These problems as discussed re: the magazine headlines above are not the invention of "Training" magazine. They do present felt-problems that exist in the general field.

Rather, until '07, "Training" was picking up the shards of corporate learning that resulted from the decades of the meetings-industry's having ignored unhappy information. Such dissembling was told in the early (1970s) Cavalier columns and books: a) you can do it yourself; b) learners must be engrossed, not entertained; c) maxi-media can distort and diminish the underlying message; d) cancel a message-less meeting; etc.

These opinions did not encourage arbitrary choices or lavender widgets and glorious gadgets, as were widely advertised as “solutions” to your problems. So, advertisers helped to put (and preferably keep) such caveats out of print. . .in the days when print could be controlled. But: Web! Now embarrassing truths can be discussed widely, in truthful statements about experiences good and bad.

Today’s distressing situations are simply the chickens that have come home to roost after long decades of superficial magazine stories and ersatz “expert opinions” voiced by some writers who themselves have no (or very limited) practical experience in meeting management. Remember the 10,000 Hour Rule, as stated above. Moreover, men can write about even childbirth, but you’ll know in advance that it’s not from first-hand experience! That knowledge alone will deliver perspective on that given article (message).

In short, these “Training” headlines and RC’s articles in other business publications demonstrate the degree, depth, and breadth of the blackout on essential knowledge that was (and is) favorable to the advertisers’ own best interests in the meetings/conventions trade press.

The U.S. military (with HumRRO) spent time and money on solving such guesswork problems . . .and could manage to do so because the military had virtually unlimited access to virtually unlimited numbers of human guinea pigs for long periods of time, during which time iterative development could be practiced, tested, and codified. . .into ISD!

In January, 2006: “Who has time to design?”

This article recognizes the common complaint that the Instructional Design (ID) process is slow; yet states that “[ID] takes a long time. . . .But because that complaint is justified, a lot of people want to skip over it entirely—and that’s where they get into trouble.”

Dr Merrill again: “People confuse the value of instruction design with instructional designers. . . .There’s value in ID. Where there is little value is in people who have no expertise other than instructional design.” (Doc Locator, Note #14).

Comment: Unless the ID folks guide the experts! Double-yoking really works wonders, combining the expert’s technical know-how with the ID’s speed in making syllabi. Neither person needs to learn the other’s discipline, while producing a program that works as intended, from the very first syllabus. (Motorola, revisited.) Try it--it works!

Also in that same issue, “Trainers have become order-takers, simply developing training when they’re asked to.” Comment. Trainers cannot become such experts as to know every need in every department—that’s the role of department heads and top management—and still do the work of training. Enter the concept of tandem pairing of authority and instructional designer. More on this topic, below.

If you want to have any hope of controlling both the input and the outcome of y new program, the very best option available to you is Instructional Systems Development. Even if you choose to hire a consultant for the design and development functions, you will be far better prepared to supervise that consultant if you are already conversant with the key steps which he/she should be taking—and which you can check off as you approve his/her on-paper fulfillment of each task and step in each of five Phases (see the Phase I diagram under “Common Sense ISD”). Keep in mind that if you know enough about the problem in order to supervise a consultant, then you are well on the way to being able to create the entire program yourself: that’s what ISD is for!

In February, 2006, article “E-learning’s Dirty Little Secret”

Supporting comments of Roland Van Liew continue: “The one thing e-learning boosters don’t want to talk about is the simple fact that very few people ever actually finish an e-learning course when it involves a technically complex or lengthy subject such as software training or programming”; and “People perform the complex process of assimilating information best in socially interactive environments.” Comment: Meetings are socially interactive environments! They’re often held as training in classrooms! Go back and re-read the relative heads here and then the entire key articles in “Training.”

August, ’06, “Making the buy so they can sell.”

Training magazine had taken a stunning turn: For probably the first time in 40 years (ever since Cavalier was writing columns), a magazine in the meeting/training/conventions trade, another voice, has spoken the Unspeakable! “Training” had criticized some suppliers of third-party training service because some persons and services can themselves be deficient.

Previously, it was anathema in the meetings/training/convention trade to suggest that anything other than buyer-error was involved in any program failure. This is not to absolve users of their portion of responsibility for their choices. Purveyors are not 100% responsible for any given program failure, but neither are users. Buyers need meeting-message and -management skill sets, too, in order to understand the programming implications of their purchases.

But extrapolate: if the authorities in the training trade might be deficient, what of the non-authoritative, non-expert purveyors of good and services that might have little or nothing to offer y program? And what of the gewgaws and glorious gadgets that are offered by purveyors who know but don’t care that their goods can contribute nothing significant or worth while. . .but allows them to sell?

In the same article from “Training” in August, ’06, outside consultants say that the results of training programs last only 90-120 days, after which there’s fall-off. True? No true study has been done, to knowledge. But when RC first entered the training consulting trade in the mid-1960s, that fall-off was considered a truism—EXCEPT that the fall-off was said to be to a new plateau that was always higher than the old plateau.

Solution: a continual augmentation training program. Moreover, given the Motorola experience that the new hires trained by the new, decentralized program (described above, under September, ’00) sold sooner and sold more, it’s tough to figure what the new trainees would fall-back to, if, in fact, they might fall up.

This issue seems to shout for a study by an association in the meetings and/or training field. When will it happen, if the meetings contingent seems to be avoiding facts? Trainers, step up to the plate—team style!

And still in that August, ’06, article: Of about \$4-Billion (yes, “B”) spent on training in the then-recent study year, about two-thirds was spent on third-party training firms. Caution: any of those third-party folks could be deficient--so get recommendations. However, \$12-Billion was spent on gambling recently. . .so what do we really value?

Both training and worthwhile meetings are matters of instruction—only the degree of needed instruction really differs. Since caveman days, “Follow me and imitate me” has been the key mode of instruction. Time, employee numbers, and distance complicate the corporation’s follow- me aspect; but imitate-me is still valid. And it still functions in Mom & Pop stores all over the world!

Because of that embarrassing truth, small and mid-size companies can enjoy all of the benefits of training theory that the giant corporations can hope, and spend, to obtain—even if the lesser-sized firms can't afford fancy. Probably that might even work to the smaller companies' advantage, because they're forced to depend on education and training theory, not specious purchases.

All the needed theory for any discrete job is contained in Cavalier's three meetings titles. "SMTW" is designed for control in Meetings Management; for the training neophyte, "Managing Through Training" ("MTT") is a primer to understanding formal training; and the book "Common Sense ISD" is a how-to, intended exclusively for those who are committed to developing (or closely supervising) creation of their own training programs. "Practical Word Power," ("PWP"), supports Human Resource Directors and (in-house!) volunteer tutors, where foreign language is a barrier to proper or optimum job performance). Certificated teachers are not required.

December, 2006: "Practice, Practice, Practice"

In a column by a previous editor, "Training" emphasized the importance of training and quoted from a novel from 1813 to prove the point. Comment: True. Valid. But that simple viewpoint was not championed historically by either that magazine or the related industries. All had bought into the advertisers' viewpoint: "If it's advertised, it's good for y program." Will even the professions' several magazine editors buy into that one?

Where does one practice? Either on the job ("follow me and imitate me," ever since the caveman); or in workshops during a training session. Workshops are a standard part of ISD methodology. 'Latest' and 'pretty' are factors in cost, not in effectiveness. ISD was previously bad-mouthed by 'consultants' in "Training" (see April, 2000, above). Why? Who knows? Possibly because ISD is a do-it-yourself methodology?

Workshops were also stressed in Cavalier's "Achieving Objectives in Meetings": To paraphrase, rather than search text: "H₂O is the educational concept, but water as vapor, steam, and ice is the workshop experience." A training magazine of that time (early 70s) criticized AOM's training viewpoint (included in review clips on this website) while approving the book as a whole. We stick with the original. . . .

January/February, 2007: "Assessment Acumen,"

Variouly: ". . . What you need is an assessment plan. . . . you need a way to measure the skills mastery of your learners." True—and assessment is a built-in factor of ISD, not a current 'discovery' by current 'authorities.'

Also in that issue, by Roger Chevalier: "I think all trainers need to define learning as not just the acquisition of knowledge but as the ability to demonstrate a desired behavior." Comment: Of course. With that statement, Chevalier has fingered the key difference between education (acquisition of general knowledge) and training (demonstration of a desired behavior). Or achievement. But Job Performance Measures have been an integral part of ISD methodology for decades, and they establish the criteria that must be measured to assure success of the program.

Moreover, the need for the "Measurement of results against objectives" was also a part of the PERT Diagram that Cavalier developed for his book "Achieving Objectives in Meetings" (Note #11). To see that PERT Diagram, (Note #*** PERT is complete there in reprint, and it's the single most effective big-picture control tool in Cavalier's original how-to tool kit from all his books! Use it!

If the meetings-industry press can misconstrue in exchange for ad-money, it already has and probably will continue. In addition to quotes below, see my "FirstTake" article (May, '85) for ignored research that you can use: see my website; under 'Business Writing'; 'Recognition'; 'Industry' base button; p13. Also, see MPI's "Newsdata" article ('Recognition'; then 'MPI.' Also book "SMTW".

Who has 'rights' to do what?

"During the 1960s, Yale psychologist Stanley Milgram conducted a landmark study to determine the extent to which ordinary individuals would obey the clearly immoral orders of an authority figure." ("Writing and Reading across the Curriculum"; L. Berens & L. Rosen, eds; NYC, Little Brown; 1985).

Comments: Results were surprising and sad. That project was both praised and criticized, although the experimenter defended it on then-current scientific grounds and criteria. One challenger (D. Baumrind) quoted from the (undated) Section 4b in "Ethical Standards of Psychologists (American Psychological Association):

"Only when a problem is significant and can be investigated in no other way, is the psychologist unjustified in exposing human subjects to emotional stress or other possible harm. . . ."

Potentially damaging pseudo-science had also surfaced in the meetings-industry as encounter programs, sensitivity training, and/or T-groups. One of our previous associates (who was a professional corporate trainer) described his experience as a participant in such a program as "brutal."

Such misconceived programs as these were criticized in Cavalier's ("SMTW"; 1983), as well as earlier, in business-magazine columns. 'Encounter groups' were the 'newest' fad in the 1960s and '70s but died, as most fads do, when their deficiencies became obvious. But fads drive the uncertain meeting programmer to buy something, don't they?

Significant: These criticisms are NOT being presented here for the first time. To see them in earlier ('83) outline, read my Tony-Award-winning address to the 10th Anniversary Convention of MPI (Meetings Planners International, now termed 'Professionals'--without a Standard of Ethics): see "Business Writing"; 'Recognition'; 'MPI.' The entire verbatim text of the address in transcript follows several pages of related items.

Then put your brain in gear before you buy anything. Caveat emptor!

Summing up:

Meetings-industry publishers might be simply venal or terrified by the advertisers. But they could also give more help to readers without loss.

Threats by advertisers?

"Newsweek" once faced such threats in 1961 and refused to knuckle under to political pressures. In the '70s, the then-new problem of political censorship by advertising-threat was recalled by a staff member who was involved also in '61. Washington Post publisher Katherine Graham wrote: ". . . without a good editorial product there was nothing to sell." Comment: Haven't the advertisers and publishers learned, yet? According to "Ad Age" (as above), maybe not. (KG was then-owner of both publications; Doc Locator, Note #18).

It should be clear to you by now that by introducing slight changes in terminology or equipment such as substituting the word 'computer' for 'slide,' 'film,' or 'video tape' (all place images on a screen; the eye doesn't distinguish), the meetings-industry has attempted to make decades-old, established findings and materials seem like their new discoveries. Get 10 essential, bulleted research findings re: learning and research that are still being ignored today.

At one time, the military conducted a contest among its various branches to determine which variation of the basic ISD method was best. The US Navy won the contest. As stated, when creating his "Common Sense ISD" book in corporate-translation, Cavalier was guided by the winning team at the Great Lakes Training Command, outside Chicago. (Doc Locator, Note #19).

Can you really do-it-yourself? Yes. One sure bet: Cavalier's "Common Sense ISD." That book is presented step-by-step, with all essentials of the military version included, and with additional, original methodology created to guide you through any marginal units (that are caused largely by the military's needs to catalog millions of programs on countless military bases).

See the Phase I control diagram (of five Phases) beside that book's picture, at the "Titles" location. Located under the "Contents" page, that Phase I diagram is indicative of how logically you will proceed from the bottom step to the top step of each of five Phases. The entire book is keyed to the military's hybrid Roman/Arabic numeric ID/control system--exactly. So ex-military trainers and developers can feel familiar enough with our version to require their associates to read, provably understand, and provide better foundations for all programs that they work together to create. ISD might not be easier than the methods you've already used, but it is better.

Like all complete ISD systems, Cavalier's close variation (with his original materials added) will guarantee that y program achieves the goals set out for it if only you answer all ISD's questions thoroughly and honestly. Do-it-yourself or become a more-skilled buyer. Your choice—but use ISD!

Back to the caveman: 'Follow me and imitate me' has been valid for perhaps millions of years. Business size often makes 'follow me' impossible, but 'imitate me' still imparts knowledge up to the adequate level, at which the desired skill can be performed acceptably. Less training is destructive because it compromises the program and performance. Additional training might be wasted because the over-learning is probably never used and not necessarily retained as permanent learning, although conceivably applicable elsewhere.

This is where lens media separate the caveman style from the first-on-my-block-to-use style. In life, eye and ear cooperate to filter the needed from the extraneous signals that reach them. But A/V presents them two as equally important and therefore can split attention spans. Don't entertain --help the other half to understand the text's concept by interpreting (not repeating) it visually.

EXAMINING OPTIONS:

Determining what should be imitated (or initiated, if new) is a key task:

Finally, be hyper-critical of any strange material or scenarios, including public relations releases, which once depended on merit. There's little likelihood that you can be sure of any materials or ideas that originate outside your own sphere.

Even Tom Peters ("In Search of Excellence") apparently confided to "Fast Company" magazine that he had faked data. Surely, you should be able to trust an old McKinsey & Company consultant, shouldn't you? Ditto, Gail Sheehy, who faked some "personal histories" in her tome "Passages," re: mid-life crisis. Both 'factual' books used fiction in order to achieve the authors' ends. But corporations (other than possibly the publisher) would not have been punished if that fiction had failed to convince. Yet, if you use fiction in your ISD justification and fulfillment materials, you can doom them, your company, and yourself. Guard your perspective. . .always and jealously. It's the only one that you can count out to serve you first.

Some user-company functionaries do not wish to acknowledge that they have been misled. But the lack of confidence that this author has in the articles and public relations text that's been published by the meetings /conventions industry apparently extends to magazine publications in general. . .so there's a new caveat from sces other than Cavalier:

Simply check "Advertising Age" magazine for August 4, 2008. On p4 you'll see a public relations executive's criticism of the placement of an ad man's public relations material in exchange for an ad—possibly even in mainstream publications today (deductive: are freebies 19% of all publications?). On p18 of the same issue, you'll find a complaint (regarding a Los Angeles newspaper company) that is potentially extendable to all publications generally. Charge: that some public relations material can be placed because that's profitable. What does that knowledge contribute to your confidence in magazine text?

If you think that you're being given the honest truth in the stuff that you see in the controlled circulation (freebie) press, think again. The next check that you do needs to be a reality check on yourself. . .before you get your last salary check!

But the topic was business meetings and training. So let's return to it:

What should training look like?

Training programs don't need to look like training program. F examples of unusual instructional formats by Cavalier are mentioned here. A dozen more of such unusual formats are encapsulated in "Managing Through Training." (See the book on 'Titles' button.) Instruction needn't look like INSTRUCTION! As stated in "AOM", "Training don't gotta be nuthin. . .training gotta do!" Examples:

1)" Practical Word Power" trains the volunteer ESL (English as a Second Language) tutor while that tutor works with multiple learners, presenting from verbatim, prescriptive materials. That's double-duty in anyone's lexicon. "PWP" uses an unusual book format (left page, Do This; right page, Say This) that's like no other book ever before—but typical in A/V scripts, as dual columns on each page of script. Proved quick, inexpensive, and effective because it deals with 45 dictionary codes, Although "PWP" was developed in 1981; its efficacy was proved by a university study in Milan in 2001. How much longer before the nation's schools apply those findings?

(For " Science" our Journal's citation: click on the PWP "Titles" button and its" Psychology" Journal' base-button.

2) World's first how-to travelers' t-evaluation guide for magazine readers, "A Compleat (sic) Planning Guide for Travel Abroad. . .including copious charts to help you cost y course," in Meredith's "Apartment Ideas," Fall, 1970. Exactly what the title says, "How-to-do-it-yourself" at a time when it was virtually impossible to compare individual, competitive travel brochures. original formula is still valid, but the costs quoted are now times-10+. The evaluation concept was deal-purchased by one airline and used by another to build related fare charts. Meredith launched its own readers' travel program largely on the back of TWA's purchase of a double-truck ad (cum ad-deal for re-print rights to that Cavalier article). The ad had appeared in a subsequent issue of "Apartment Ideas"" sister publication," BH&G." "BH&G" then became a target venue for travel ads, and you know the rest.

3) Iberia Airlines of Spain's destination-descriptor booklet was prepared and printed as a double-duty item: sales training plus consumer-help booklet. After Iberia's salespersons had learned specifics re: the booklet travel helps (isn't that 'training,' too?) the booklet was sold (then required by law) to travel agents, who gave it to their customers.

Newspapers also reprinted some entries, adding to Iberia's exposure. Agent requests for additional booklet copies for tourists tracked direct response to the training program, among all sales normally generated. (Doc Locator, Note #20).

As stated three-plus decades ago, "Training don't gotta be nuthin'. . . Training gotta do." That dichotomy, first identified and published by Cavalier, was challenged in print by at least one training industry trade magazine in the '70s, but that dichotomy still works! Dependably! Would you rather deal with baseless theory or workability?

4) Public-instruction-oriented, although not a "training program," per se, were two 1960s articles by Cavalier for BH&G magazine.

--"Should you get a second mortgage?" was a real estate how-to article that was so simple and comprehensive that at least one bank requested reprint rights and distributed it.

--A follow-up article was "Should you sell your home yourself?" That cover ear then "tested" highest of any year to-date. Those two articles by Cavalier helped "BH&G's" parent corporation, Meredith, to get into real estate activity in a big way.

Training doesn't need to be anything that's recognizable as such. It just needs to teach people needed things. Somehow. Including 'follow me and imitate me,' or expensive programs, or distance learning. The phrase "learning at a distance" appeared in a book decades ago; it's only twisted a little to be sold as 'new' now. You pay more for what's 'new.'

Don't let anyone sell ISD short--and don't you buy from anyone who tries. After all, the only fault that Cavalier thinks that suppliers might find with ISD is that you can do it yourself-- no outsiders are absolutely needed! Only the insecure suppliers and con men will resent being challenged on legitimate points of ISD's tasks, steps, and phases. (See Phase I under the Common Sense ISD button.) Beyond assuring the needed basics, you can want virtually anything that you can afford, whether or not it will help. That's a Big Difference. Take advantage of it. Now.

Drawing conclusions:

If basic questions such as Learning Curves and attacks on ISD and the Five Findings could occur as early as 1999, consider how thin is the veneer of professionalism in the training industry, too. Given that about one million units employ 20 or more; and that working-member memberships in the companies and training associations number one (or a few tens of) thousands each; and that major organizations employ hundreds or multiple thousands of trainers each, among the nation's total; and the previously-stated fact that dynamite (but clueless) salesmen are too often brought inside to become trainers; then the depth of knowledge and professionalism of companies in both the training and meetings industries is sad. Or, to trade on an old but fair witticism: Way down deep, it's shallow.

Members have been shafted in the dumbing-down process many have become low-level step-and-fetch-its in their own companies. . . because they became fodder for the marketing arms of their "professional" associations. Their major contribution to the company's bottom line is noticed only if they can show cost-savings.

But cheaper is not always better. . . or even equally good. Yet, cheaper invariable buys less in the service industry, even if that fact is disguised. So how should the companies (as buyers) choose in that trade-off? Duh!

With competitive information available so quickly via the web these days, no organization needs to pay for a full-time person to work on nothing more than the hotel and airline requirements and hotel-related needs of the next meeting! Given video conferencing, you might not need such travel often for perennial and ordinary occasions.

The "professionalism" of certificated meeting planners today consists of same-job similarity and dealing with the hotels as those hotels prefer to be dealt with. Such skills are more janitorial than professional, in this writer's opinion, not that they're not needed to some degree.

We term those skills and persons 'SAFI's' (that is, Step-and-Fetch-Its). Those meeting planning skills are mostly aspects of directed service, not authoritative conclusions. The Training Director (or, now, the Chief Learning Officer) needs to be even more aware of, suspicious of, and responsible for the communications that must flow from or despite the blandishments of the meetings/conventions industry.

But a few cost-quotes from advance visits to selected facilities already "viewed" on line will serve anyone at anytime when stuck with the task of booking facilities. Few major corporations and no smaller companies can afford a full-time staff person whose entire function consists of buying for an annual, but brief, extra-mural meeting. What else can the association's convention offer? Exhibits are nice, but you can't buy from photos and promises alone!

In this author's opinion, as stated, meeting planners have been shafted in the dumbing-down process. But they will need to rehabilitate themselves quickly, because their "professional" associations are not helping them at this writing.

Competent Meeting Managers can tell any meeting-caller (who will be holding an extra-mural meeting) that the meeting plans are or are not complete and valid (see "AOM" and "Sales Meetings That Work" (Cavalier, 1973; and 1983/2002, respectively). The Meeting Manager can refer to the Corporate Trainer all meeting-callers whose meeting plans and agendas don't measure up for validity and for completeness (including tools and necessary practice). . . and so can contribute thereby to the effectiveness of those meetings and to those companies. . . and so to the bottom line. Buy only what you need! That advice is worth paying for at any company--both re: goods and personnel!

It unlikely that meeting planners will be able to function as Managers until they have a professional organization that has substantially different directions and goals from those that exist today. But this appraisal is a good time and reason to deal with independence in the meeting planning and meeting management function according to well-established how-to principles, plans, and systems. . . the first (and still best of which) can be found (workable!) in RC's three meetings/training-related books, as identified on this web site.

But such limited skills as derive from the minimal approaches are more janitorial than professional, in this writer's opinion, not that they're useless.

The "professionalism" of certificated s today consists essentially of same-job similarity that deals with the hotels as those hotels prefer to be dealt with. In that same-job sense, shoe-shine boys can be considered to be "professionals," and so planners are fish-in-a-barrel for any merchandising ploys.

Both comments above were stated in this author's 1982 Tony Award-winning address to MPI's convention attendees. Angry suppliers stalked out during that address, but fascinated MPI user-members moved forward into the vacated seats. Well, the meetings-management concept won the battle but lost the war. For decades. . . until the resulting problems now seen with web-based learning can no longer be ignored. Get ready for a fresh win for the authoritative Meeting Managers.

To compensate for such narrow, inadequate training, the meetings/ conventions industry's trade publications generally offer myriads of tips on how to do this or that (often irrelevant) thing for your next meeting. Sounds good. Tips are probably valid if those individual tips come from a skilled authority, but no collection of tips ever adds up to a workable system.

Ditto, those industry-sponsored books that offer numerous chapters by numerous authors. Looks wonderful on the cover, doesn't it? Each of those chapters might be very worthwhile. A few are valid as isolated topics. But meeting management consists of integrating many topics and pieces. But none of the multi-writer books ever adds up to a single workable system. If there's no system, there's no true programming help! The integration job is still yours.

Moreover, some meeting/training associations and magazine commentaries on training programs often offer ersatz skills as program filler, such as insurance counseling. Every corporation, large or small, already has a person in charge of insurance and risk calculation. That person AND NO OTHER must make the decisions and insurance purchase.

So, even after years of “professional” membership and superficial training, many meeting planners must still put meetings together as best they can—which is exactly where the neophyte enters the industry: discover for yourself! Or discover via Cavalier’s three how-to books and systems. How-to is their intended purpose and system!

It’s reaction time:

Some organizations have chosen to address the obvious discrepancies and problems with an obvious solution: a new level of authority, termed Chief Learning Officer. This new position might or might not solve individual problems, as seen by the individual corporations. Titles can be conferred easily, but the description of company interests in gaining advance warning suggests the need for an in-house consulting person as CLO. Consulting ability cannot be conferred. Consulting ability needs to be learned—and that costs effort and practice, too! As mentioned, about 10,000 Hours of directed practice.

The new Chief Learning Officer needs the technical ability to supervise the Training Director and trainers, of course. But, in addition, he/she needs the ability to discern minor glitches in any/all departments that could signal problems that might be addressed immediately in a Problem-Solving meeting (and possibly addressed later with specific training) plus the ability to discern which and when. Only that talent will address the corporation’s need to be pro-active re: instructional response to incipient problems and opportunities.

That could create a new problem for Human Resources, because if a new management level is introduced, then the current Training Director and Meeting Manger could resent the new boss and sabotage his efforts. That further suggests the need to assemble a new team, who will begin with the given pecking order already established.

As for consulting ability itself, the A-B-C’s are:

- 1) Authority to evaluate individual agendas by all persons (who fit the stipulations re: interior/exterior) and to impose corrective needs re: validity and completeness.
- 2) Budget to accomplish the point above without constant hat-in-hand approaches to top management.
- 3) Conceptualization/creative capability, so as to correlate seemingly unrelated facts and phenomena.

As stated, unless the CLO offer the consulting capability, then the new layer of supervision might accomplish nothing at all. There’s no easy answer. It depends on the individual abilities and skills of each of the involved parties as individuals and team, as well as how compatible those individual and collective skills might relate to and serve the perceived needs of the individual organization.

A word from our sponsor:

"Achieving Objectives in Meetings" (1973) was the industry’s (and world’s) first comprehensive meetings system and how-to book written by a professional. It was unique then and still valid now, living on as Dow Jones-Irwin’s “Sales Meetings That Work,” (1983; updated 2002). Demanding and uncompromising and intended for professional meetings planners (of whom there turned out to be few), it spawned a backlash from the industry’s advertisers and exhibitors: the dumbing-down process began.

"AOM" is long out-of-print, but its successor book, "Sales Meetings That Work" (Dow Jones-Irwin, 1983, updated 2002), contains all the same Guides, forms, diagrams, and caveats as did "AOM." And much more that was new. Those were proved methods and don’t need changes. Even video conferencing was recommended in the Dow Jones-Irwin 1983 edition.

Example: The web (which is newer than "AOM") will quickly get you rack-rates and sales materials from any facility in the world. Information received that way re: facilities is identical to (or fresher than) the folders that you can collect personally at a convention. But access to multiple buyers by exhibitors is a key purpose and necessary evil of convention exhibits.

A few specific, written cost-quotes that result from your own advance visits to several (among all facilities queried via the web) will serve anyone at anytime, when stuck with the task of booking facilities. That task no longer justifies a full-time buyer. You can still compare those five best facility quotes by using Cavalier’s “Facility Comparison Guide” (click on the SMTW button’s, “Chapter 18,” on this website.)

Incidentally, after seeking permission in 1985 to “photocopy” and re-use that Chapter 18, MPI in fact censored all of the chapter’s written text, eliminated the needed “Protective Contract Provisions,” and separated two other short forms, placing them behind entries by other writers, as if Cavalier agreed with the others.

MPI did not have permission to delete or edit. Why should a 'professional' organization resort to such dissembling if not to support the advertisers and exhibitors? Evidently, authoritative opinions have become dangerous, even if previously recognized by the MPI organization’s own Tony Award (address on this website). Do such industry awards actually qualify anything?

Specifics: The web speeds the process and reduces the cost of choosing, because you will ultimately travel to fewer locations in search. Ergo: budget savings to start.

Airlines, hotels (and the general travel industry) are not necessarily pleased with customer-savings information, because web-savvy buyers will also discover that Video Conferencing can SAVE BIG by eliminating travel costs, travel times, and incident headaches altogether. Web-conferencing is less expensive, if less glamorous. But travel is no longer the joy of the past. So everyone in the company who’s involved— and the company itself— benefits.

Final irony:

Given the Pay-for Play scandal, the salient point is the increasing likelihood that publicity and public relations material that you read in any offending freebie magazine will be given space because of a bargain with the advertiser, not necessarily because of product/service merit. Add the fact of published-but-ignored research that’s crucial to effective meetings. If these circumstances don’t scream, “Caveat Emptor!” to you, then you don’t understand enough Latin!

LOOKING NOW: SAME HANDWRITING. . .OTHER WALLS:

Unless the publishers' own associations forbid the practice, Pay-for-Play is probably here to stay. And it could infect all industry-related press--so, who do you trust?

The readers’ self-protective distrust is an overall problem (for both readers and legitimate publishers) that occurs in addition to the misinformation and disinformation that were regularly practiced in the meeting/conventions industry press. It’s a no-win situation, also for all.

The problem is that you can either trust any editor (who might be playing you for a fool); or you can distrust all editors (just in case). Neither attitude is good for either the readers and their corporations--or the publishers. Publisher groups should take concerted action.

When pecuniary interests, not reader interests, become paramount in editorial/publisher considerations, both the readers' beliefs and the integrity of the offending publications are in question. But the distrust of any one publication really extends to any/all publications, because the publishing industry is not yet naming the offenders.

What's at stake? P-f-P is being treated now in the publishing industry as a new phenomenon, even though it's been around in various forms in various industries for about 100 years. With any currently-offending paid-circulation magazines, it might be new.

Serious considerations:

Problems more serious than false claims followed in the industry as well as in the magazines, because of the pernicious influence of superficiality and misinformation in any location. For instance:

a) One columnist stated in a freebie article that meetings, conferences, workshops, etc. were aspects of the duration of the given event. . .rather than as specific formats that represented specific objectives, limits, and benefits. How better to remove meeting content from the buy-something atmosphere of the freebies? Should that gaffe be considered be misinformation or disinformation?

b) Despite evidence in association records (American Gas Assn) from 1960 re: its multi-media final session, a freebie magazine later reported an opinion that multi-media programming had probably originated ("as near as anyone can tell") when hippies wandered into each other on a beach somewhere. Was the writer there? Was the beach-event recorded? In an age before wireless, did those (forget-about-possessions) hippies carry generators and sound equipment, etc? And why can't that opinionated writer tell--for sure? Pure invention in order to obviate facts and records?

c) Shallowness arrived, too: In the name of the freebies' attitudes of don't-challenge-advertising-claims, meetings industry publishers allowed silly advertising to be prepared for use also by the legitimate meetings trade (not for the meetings industry alone). For instance:

"Arrive fresh as a daisy" as an airline ad for travel to Europe. Overnight flights arrive in their morning, at 3 am on the travelers' eyelids. Most arriving daisies are quite wilted on arrival--no airline has a lock on the freshness market because fresh-arrival doesn't exist--unless you book a sleeper.

d) "Meet Ms Blank" [of the smiling face]. She's already planned six meetings this morning." Because professionals know that the meeting planning process requires (on average) one week's work to plan one hour's program, that ad was obviously the work of an ad agency that didn't understand the meetings profession and trade any better than does its client, the meetings industry, and its sycophantic magazines.

e) "Be sure to buy insurance for your event." Even the industry's largest user-association tried this one. Any organization already buys insurance, if wanted, and already has an officer in charge. Most such officers tend to know about major company events and exposures in advance.

The associations were probably attempting to 'contribute' something original to meetings know-how. It's doubtful whether they ever have. The magazines? What better way to expand their potential advertiser roster than to romance the insurance companies by delivering neophyte readers? Insurers can then sit with rank amateurs and sell, sell, sell!

f) Although travel is essential to the meetings/conventions industry, the professions and trades can benefit from the non-travel distance-learning and video-conferencing developments. Technologies will be renewed probably forever, but the human brain hasn't changed much in 10,000 years. Already-proved methods still work! Just separate the concept of learning from that of technology, and you can choose more wisely.

More than a decade ago, remember, American Express estimated that about two-thirds of the typical corporate travel budget is given to the annual sales meeting. Therefore, video conferencing was an enemy. Money: get the idea? Travel and spend. . .or stay home and save?

But different technologies have different strengths and weaknesses in different situations (as indicated by military ISD algorithms for equipment selection; see RC's "ISD" book). Nothing is perfect for every occasion and need. Why has the meetings industry press never investigated issues and reported unbiased results?

For instance, headline: "Video-Conferencing's Changing Picture; (subhead) "It's not just for business anymore. But until bandwidth problems are solved, it's not clear just who it is for." Brutal? School and home office uses of the low-cost originals were the "not just for business" alternatives mentioned. But wider bandwidth was never reported.

Although RC doesn't agree with that writer's assessment of the importance of some of the mentioned drawbacks, including small screen (larger than today's cell phone screens), marginal cameras, jerky pictures, and grainy picture, etc), nevertheless, the challenged drawbacks were valid criticisms at that time, cogently argued. We have never seen a follow-up article in any magazine that states that the once-objectionable items have now been corrected. Might anyone not want you to save?

Despite the entertainment-quality drawbacks, video-conferencing equipment at that time (early '80s) could have connected six offices simultaneously with adequate picture/sound. Equate that capability to home office plus five regional offices. . .at about \$6,000 total, for owned equipment plus phone line rental costs!

Believing the meetings industry's badmouthing at the time, most corporations dwaddled until the inexpensive-equipment folks went out of business. Okay--a corporate right to dwaddle? But now "professional" video-conferencing costs much more, having grabbed part of the original savings, as projected vs travel.

However, web-conferencing is the current low-cost alternative. It ain't fabulous! It is adequate for many internal needs. In training terms, "adequate" isn't a dirty word; it means "sufficient to do the task." That's good. Excess capability is usually wasted expense.

Conclusions:

On the other hand, if military research has shown that you don't "need" color and don't "need" motion, then you do have choices. Do you prefer to compete with Hollywood for "pretty," or do you prefer major cost savings? That's your cost/effective choice. Consider:

"Sales & Marketing Management" magazine had already demonstrated (in the early 80s) that regional meetings were always the least expensive, re: the central and/or district meetings alternatives. Major cost savings for you is not what the service industry intends. Six national downlinks was an adequate count for most sales applications--many years ago!

Today, numerous providers of video conferencing are making offers. But they have already calculated y cost-savings (re: two-thirds of y annual travel budget) and taken a huge chunk of y cost-savings for themselves. Video-conferencing today is overly-expensive, according to a true cost of technological service and equipment. So bargain hard. Don't compete with Hollywood. A/V perfection isn't required for training or meetings adequacy! It's only claimed to be. . .in order to generate high-cost sales.

Key thought regarding advertiser-dominance:

Truly concerned editors would have told the silly-ad advertisers that they were about to goof. . .and why. But that would require knowledge of the communications field, not merely (unqualified) opinion and groundless mantras. Intelligent ads should be directed to decision-makers in professional or general business jnals, not to the low-level, step-and-fetch-it s, in this authority's opinion. This recommendation can't guarantee that any editor/publisher is beyond corruption. . .the meetings industry's most useful, unadopted slogan is "caveat emptor"; apply it everywhere.

So the placement of ads-with-provable-claims in professional journals and trade and business publications is the better decision, by far.

Final indignity:

Association members who have previously “bought” the associations’ claims of value for their step-and-fetch-it, hotel-dominated logistical services and certificates are now being told that there’s an “advanced” step that deals with the meeting message as an important “new” consideration. Wrong!

Concern for the needs of the message has always been a part of the ’s responsibility. . .the s’ so-called “certificated expertise” just doesn’t cut it! Most of the meetings industry’s early associations traded freebie print PR space for ready acceptance of the industry’s claims and mantras. The entire trade was misinformed as a consequence of the publications’ biases.

ARMING YOURSELF WITH COGENT FACTS:

For major association awareness of the difference between Meeting Management and meeting planning (since 1960), check:

--The Profession Convention Management Association’s title--1956-7. (Doc Locator, Note #21). An exhaustively-detailed tome was published by the Professional Meetings Management Association in 1985. Its entire Chapter 5 was dedicated to Program Planning, with special emphasis on requiring abstracts of the intended speeches, which just happen to deal with message. Why should the freebies and other user-associations have remained stuck for decades longer on hotel-logistical methods and petty details?

--the Linen Supply Assn of America’s article (1960) for a freebie industry magazine. (LSAA has subsequently been re-named as ‘fabric rental’; Note #7).

The Meetings Manager appellation was also used in RC’s “Achieving Objectives in Meetings,” (1973; Note #11). Koach/LSAA had been our client in the season on which the article was based (and years before and beyond).

“AOM” was the granddaddy how-to system of the profession/trade/industry throughout the world; expanded into the Dow Jones-Irwin’s book, “Sales Meetings That Work,” (Note #11)). Identical forms, and Thought Guides from “AOM” were often imitated--but without integrating any into systems!

The information was out there--simply not in the meetings-industry’s freebie press!

Companies that serve, or manufacture for, the meetings/conventions trade should re-examine their own past decisions about where their best interests lie re: claims and advertising.

LOOKING AHEAD:

Remedial actions: Any available?

Sure: First, the publishing industry can approach the known offenders and let them know that the offenders must cease the hidden bias or be publicly identified. Anyone can run advertising rags if they choose; but then that category of prostitution should be tagged with the obligation never to publish opinions of other than recognized experts/authorities without including backup statistics and/or other pertinent facts. No, a “quoted-often-in--magazine” blurb does not qualify for an expert or authoritative appellation.

Some Meetings Managers (most of whom are aware of the sad history of the meeting industry) feel that several advertising-dominated associations have so discredited themselves by superficiality and misinformation that they can serve the related meetings professions and trade best by disbanding. RC does not disagree with that assessment.

The ultimate irony is that the essentials of message and human response are finally coming into focus again. . .but only because of the high cost of the misrepresented or otherwise over-claimed technology and the meeting failures that result, not because of the never-acknowledged meeting failures, per se.

Meeting failures have resulted from the Pay-for-Play phenomenon in all its previous guises. . .but the failures are being acknowledged now. So much for the lip service that’s been paid for decades to quality programming and the importance of employees as individuals!

All industry, take note! Meetings trade, change!

Grand Opportunity:

Something is new on the horizon in 2010: a chance for reform in the meetings-industry press. . .and it’s based on multiple ownership changes within the offending meetings-industry press itself.

As we noted in the 70s, the original offenders--the sole magazines in the field--were three, all with the term ‘meetings’ in their title, whether or not in their editors’ economic visions. Originally, the three titles represented different publishers. At the millennium, at least two of the titles were purchased and published by Nielsen, which still holds “SM.” It also purchased “Training” magazine.

As also noted, “Training” then ceased to criticize the meetings-industry and its questionable magazine stories. Nielsen apparently did not eschew the industry’s traditions and, we believe, did not maximize its potential.

Enter Coastal Communication Corporation, of Boca Raton, Florida. For a couple of years, already the owner of a once-Nielsen’s title, Coastal is proudly birthing other titles in the meetings, travel, and conventions trades. Coastal now has the opportunity to present worthwhile information to its user/readers, even if it remains advertising-supported.

Stay tuned. The ‘travel and conventions’ pair is closely related in mutual need, but ‘travel and meetings’ is not. . .and that’s been the scenario for much misplaced emphasis in the overall meetings trade--and on the low-level, non-specifying .

Now, let’s take action.

Joining forces:

So far, we’ve addressed Meeting Managers and meeting planners as separate people. They are not, in so far as the “professional” associations act: RC is not aware of any associations for Meetings Managers other than the originating PCMA. In reality, meeting planning is only the first step toward the authoritative knowledge that separates Managers from planners.

Competent Meeting Managers can tell any meeting-caller (who will be holding an off-premises/extra-mural) meeting whether the meetings plans are or are not valid and complete according to the outcome desired by the individual meeting-caller and specified by agenda. The CLO or TD can then outline the deficiencies prior to the meeting and help the meeting-caller, the participants, and the company to achieve the targeted objectives in the meeting.

Or, if needs go beyond correcting a few deficiencies, the Meeting Manager can refer the meeting-caller to the Training Director for preparation of needed training/practice sequences that can be delivered at or immediately following the meeting, as necessary.

It's highly unlikely that planners in general will be able to function as Managers unless and until they have a professional organization with a training wing that has substantially different goals and directions from current goals in those organizations that exist for meeting planners today. Today's group of planners is probably headed for obsolescence.

Nevertheless, planners as individuals can upgrade their own skills independently of those regressive organizations and become Managers who can make real and valuable contributions to their own companies. Any savvy employer will gladly pay for that.

How to upgrade? Read and apply honestly the sense behind each and every Thought Guide or form or recommendation in Cavalier's three business books—they were written for the purpose of helping to upgrade the skills of all meetings practitioners. Those original materials are still used—just not attributed!

When to start upgrading? Now! Business and third party publications have already recognized the need, witness the quotes from "Training" magazine. So this appraisal and challenge mean that today is a good time with good reasons to deal with personal independence re: the meeting planning and meeting management functions. Remember (as stated in AOM), you can plan for sun at a picnic without affecting the weather. The corporation needs control of message and outcomes; and Cavalier's books deliver that control.

And a final thought among "Final Thoughts":

The topics of meetings and conventions need to be separated just as quickly as possible. The only thing that meetings, training, and conventions have in common is that the initial session usually occurs with all participants seated in the same room! The size of the room varies. From then on, there's no similarity!

Meetings must concentrate on delivering and receiving or discussing information; training must deliver specific information and incident skills. Otherwise, cancel the meeting—there are other methods for talking!

On the other hand, conventions are legally-mandated corporate elections--gatherings in which virtually anything that takes up enough time to satisfy the IRS can legally be considered "business" that's being done. In this person's opinion, conventions thrive on one-size-fits-all speeches by government officials and "motivational" speakers, because those speakers provide marquee names for advance publicity.

Fashion shows for wives have become a cliché. Women aren't stupid and want to know something about the company that their husbands refuse to talk about at home.

Of course the associations discuss matters that are related to their own organization and industry. . .but those "discussions" are largely prepared speeches. No one who attends is ever required to demonstrate that he has learned anything. . .and few, if any, associations prepare a basic training outline that the attendees can take back home and give to the corporate TD in order to update all affected persons re: the association's (and presumably the industry's) new/changed materials.

As stated, for all of the reasons above, convention usage coordinates with meeting/training usage only insofar as both might purchase travel elements. And that's why travel interests (largely airlines and hotels) dominate the text materials and interpretations in the industry's advertising-driven magazines.

Meetings and training die on fakery!

If the present website reader has an assignment other than 'buy,' you can help to improve the company's group communications quotient by bringing this website and its materials to the attention of your company's own CLO, Training Director, individual trainers, Sales VP, Product Sales Manager(s), and/or Human Resources Director. They'll thank you.

And so does Cavalier--for sticking with a tough topic for so long.

So if you (or they) and a few hundreds or thousands of your closest friends would like to create a special, truly professional association especially for Meeting Managers, Cavalier would be pleased to help. Just ask: write on your organization's letterhead: Meetings/Cavalier; 3699 Wilshire Blvd, #850; Los Angeles, CA, 90010.

PS: No relation whatsoever to the photography, actor-oriented, or teleconferencing groups that turns up on search engines. Actual persons? Or just hitchhiking on an established name and reputation? Or? In doubt? Check 'Books& Author' button.

Good meetings to you!

Document Locator:

Note #1: Gladwell, Malcolm, "Outliers"; New York, Little-Brown, 1988).

Note #2: "Training" magazine (for March/April '09; p15)

Note #3: "New York Times" (March 18/10; p18).

Note #4: the University of California/Santa Cruz (Silicon Valley): svprojectmanagement.com.

Busy home page. At mid-page, far left column, see names of staff and bloggers, with current blogger's name on top. Cavalier's blog-week was March 1, '10, dropping one space for each week since then. But free to read and use. Best read in weekday order; Monday's blog is at the bottom of all sets.

Note #5: For free useful comparison form, also see "Chapter 18" under the "SMTW" book on 'Titles' button, of this website. Reality has been a long time in coming to general know-how.

Note #6: "FirstTake," A/V magazine, May, 1985. Photo reprint on this website. "Business Writing"; 'Recognition'; 'Industry,' p14.

Note #7: Koach, Joseph L.: industry freebie; re-key and original photocopy on this website: 'Business Writing'; 'Recognition'; 'Industry,' p *****

Note #8: "Inc." magazine; cover, August, '07.

Note #9: "The Nation," March 1, 2010.

Note #11: "Achieving Objectives in Meetings," New York, Corporate Movement, 1973. Out-of-print. Expanded into Dow Jones-Irwin book "Sales Meetings That Work," 1983. Updated, P-O-D, 2002. See 'Business Writing'; 'Titles.' Also 'Recognition'; 'Industry.' Also 'Recognition'; 'AOM & Early mag articles. Also 'Granddaddy's article for biblio. For interim research findings (1970-'90) plus superior biblio, see Damasio, Antonio R., "Descartes' Error," (NYC: Grosset/Putnam; '94). Also 'Business Writing'; 'Clips,' for contemporary notice in business publications.

Note #12: For a list of important (previously published but ignored) 1060s-'70s contra-industry findings, see
--"FirstTake" A/V magazine (May, 1985), under "Recognition"; then 'Industry' base-button, on p14 of 48pp.
--'Recognition'; "Business Week" button holds our consumerist articles for two of their special-ad-issues, which the travel industry declined to support (not signed: magazine-independence offended, not this writer).
--Same location: Citations for early third party research, pre-1970; found under the 'Granddaddy' button.
--PERT Diagram under 'Recognition'; 'AOM & Early mag columns; plus additional research findings, to 1970.
-- For thumbnail summaries of yr2000 challenges from "Training" magazine to the meetings industry's sacred cows, slogans, and attitudes, stay with this 'Final Thoughts' section.

Note #13: Ramos, Simon: "Los Angeles Times" (11/06/05).

Note #14: See Cari's letter on 'Recognition'; then 'Industry,' p18.

Note #15: Dr. Merrill's magazine lead-page and citation on 'Business Writing'; 'Idea Support.' Button.

Note #16: PERT: 'Recognition'; 'AOM & Early Magazine Columns.'

Note # 17: L. Berens & L. Rosen, eds; (New York, Little-Brown; 1985).

Note #18: Graham, Katherine, "Personal History" (NYC; Knopf, 1979 ; p283).

Note #19: Cavalier, Richard "Common Sense ISD," 2002; P-O-D, this website: 'Business Writing'; 'Titles.'

Note #20: Iberia Airlines of Spain (now merged). Selected booklet pages under 'Recognition'; 'Client Recognition' button, scrolled, about p 9.

Note #21: PCMA, "Professional Convention Management"; (Self; then Birmingham, AL, now Chicago, IL; 1985).

END