

## *Haiku of Good Practice for Writing and Teaching*

<p><i>If you do not know who you send your message to, not one will listen.</i></p>	<p>Nothing is more important than defining your audience. Unless you know what obstacles they face to learning, you cannot move them toward the goals you share.</p>
<p><i>Will any arrive if you never clearly say where you are leading?</i></p>	<p>Any communication or activity that does not support a stated learning objective begs the question “Why am I investing time and energy on this?”</p>
<p><i>Too much “WhizBang”: Bad! Google, plain as toast, but still I use it daily.</i></p>	<p>Bad instructional design gets carried away with what can be done to the exclusion of what should be done. Too many fonts, colors, or animations detract from the message.</p>
<p><i>Offer all you have: Some sip, some drain the full cup, All get what they need.</i></p>	<p>Students in or approaching adulthood want to control of their own learning. Never be disappointed if they don’t “clean their plates” by accepting and using all you have for them. Only they know the “size of their stomachs.”</p>
<p><i>Earn their attention! They were fully booked before They ever met you!</i></p> <hr/> <p><i>They have every right to judge your words unworthy of their precious time.</i></p>	<p>Sometimes we assume that it is the most natural thing in the world for students to take many hours each week out of their lives to listen to us. Actually, every moment costs them time they might otherwise spend earning money, enjoying their families and friends, or taking needed rest. All the more so when they are paying the bills! We should be humble in understanding this and dedicate ourselves to making the time spent with us really worth it.</p>

<p><i>Resist temptation! You are not bound to tell them everything you know.</i></p>	<p>Everything we say in the classroom or place in a training manual must first pass this test; “Does the student need to know this? Why?” Nice-to-know information for the sake of arousing interest can be justified, but a little goes a long way.</p>
<p><i>“Tech” is the finger pointing toward the lovely Moon, not the Moon itself.</i></p>	<p>This is my take on a very old Buddhist illustration. It means simply that when teaching through the vehicle of technology, we should stay focused on what we are teaching and not get caught up in the technology itself.</p>
<p><i>The Known, The Unknown; Tie them with bands of reason, then say, “I have taught.”</i></p>	<p>If there is a Magic Bullet in teaching and learning, this is it. When by analogy, demonstration, or example, you can show the relationship between the new thing you are trying to get across and familiar things with which your students are already comfortable, you are home free.</p>
<p><i>Thin as Workhouse Soup! such should be the time between Learning and Using!</i></p>	<p>It is pointless, but unfortunately common in the business world, to give employees training and then deny them the means or the time to practice what they have learned. I have been continually amazed how quickly knowledge is lost if it is not used.</p>
<p><i>Where to find Knowledge, at the moment when needed, Is Knowledge itself.</i></p>	<p>“Just-in-time” training is the only way to manage the firehose of information we will all need in this new century. The best place for the distance-learning terminal is on the “shop floor” where the knowledge will be used.</p>
<p><i>Dagger, scythe and spear, will win many battles that three spears would have lost.</i></p>	<p>There is much benefit in presenting the same concepts in multiple ways, but I have never been convinced that humans can be legitimately typed as visual, auditory, or kinesthetic learners. I believe the benefit of multiple learning modalities is simply that they capture the learners’ attention in ways that The Same Old Thing does not.</p>

<p><i>“This is where you are!” says the map in Disney World; We are then not lost.</i></p>	<p>New material is best absorbed and retained if it is presented in a clear linear sequential manner where every understanding is the logical consequent of what has come before and the logical antecedent of what is to follow. Frequent “signposting” of where we are in the sequence is both a comfort and an aid to student retention.</p>
<p><i>Your words teach little; Let them watch you sweat! you’ll find It teaches much more.</i></p>	<p>I don’t believe there is any tremendous secret to either teaching or instructional design. Excellence is about going the extra mile and making that third or fourth or fifth testing pass through the lab work to make sure the instructions really work as written.</p>
<p><i>Many flowers bloom; Half will perish in the snow. None can say which ones!</i></p>	<p>Yesterday was a beautiful Sunday afternoon, August 29. As I left my office after a few hours working on a project, I saw at a distance the new Freshman Class having their Orientation Party on the green. I was struck by the reality that many would never reach their goal of a college degree. The statistics clearly show this.</p> <p>Still, each has a chance and individual success or failure of none is pre-ordained. As the sports guys say, “That is why we play the games.”</p> <p>Throughout my teaching career, I have been consistently surprised by the gap between my expectations for students when I first meet them and what they eventually achieve or fail to achieve. All deserve my best effort.</p>