

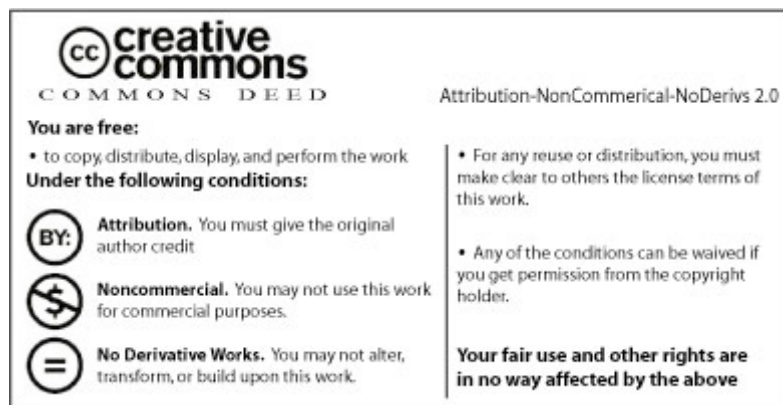
Elliott Masie's
LEARNING2009

Doug Lynch
University of Pennsylvania Wharton School of Business

Learning 2009 Keynote – Excerpt on Uncertain Times

November 8, 2009

Transcription of Video Segment Available at:
<http://learningwiki.editme.com/douglynch>



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Learning 2010 will be held from October 24-27 in Orlando, Florida.

Elliott Masie: Doug, what do you think is going on right now in our field? I mean, you talk to lots of learning leaders, lots of organizations that want to have learning leaders, but what are you feeling and what are you sensing out there in our field right now?

Doug Lynch: Well, it seems to me several things. There seems to be both a lot of fear...the folks who are responsible for talent might well say, "Well, with so much talent out there given the unemployment, who cares about learning? I will just sort of buy talent; I won't need to sort of invest in learning."

There is certainly a move back towards more accountability and looking to cut costs, and, of course, a lot of folks are thinking about cutting the costs for learning first. But at the same time, there are some folks who are thinking about it in countervailing ways, and seeing the, if you will, the relationship between K-12, Higher Ed and corporate, as well as relationships between training, talent and productivity (so the sort of countervailing things). It's striking to me. We actually - we are just reviewing applications for the program, and we had the biggest class apply ever. So some companies must be saying, "It makes sense to invest right now", and that this is going to be a game changer for us: being able to sort of differentiate ourselves based on how we treat people.

Elliott Masie: You have had the first batch of PhD level students. What have you seen from that first batch of Doctorates?

Doug Lynch: So some of this will be self-evident to you all, but it was a revelation for us in the academy. One is that finding the right people and bringing them together is the "sweet sauce". So it's much more important in some ways than the faculty. We really had a spectacular group of folks come together.

[One of] the other two things is that they sort of model you. I mean, Elliott is quite involved in the program, and I don't think anybody went through the pain of this program and the amount of work for themselves. So they did it very much [thinking] about being a thought leader in the profession. They are all very interested and active in public policy, in K-12 education, and so it has sort of given me a lot of hope that the game is being raised.

Secondly, their erudition: listening to these folks talk about what it is that they do and their fluency with both research methods and the literature out there, but at the same time not being like us in the academy, who are sort of isolated. They are really sort of out there in the field as researchers. So it's sort of this new breed of folks who are - their work is their lab and they are testing theories and evaluating them empirically every day. So it's quite heartening.

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