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ONE AFTERNOON IN THE EARLY 1990s, I found myself at a meeting in my boss’s office when a computer-support guy showed up to demonstrate a new-fangled technology called instant messaging. I’d never seen IM before, but I was intrigued—so I volunteered for the demo.

My boss sat down in front of his computer. I stationed myself at another computer just outside the office. And away we went—typing and tapping a silent conversation in real time.

“Wow,” I shouted to the others back in the room. “Very cool.” And when I returned to the meeting, I offered—unsolicited, of course—my thoughts on what we’d just witnessed.

“This could be big,” I said. “Instant messaging is going to be incredibly useful for the hearing impaired, who can’t just pick up the phone and talk to someone. It’s not something most people will use much, but for that slice of the population it’s amazing.”

Today, more than two decades after instant messaging has become a part of everyday communication around the world—when literally tens of millions of people with perfectly good hearing are IM-ing right now—there’s a moral to this tale: Sometimes we miss the point.

That’s especially true of social technology. In business terms, most people—myself included—think of Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and other social media as tools for marketing. But now that I’ve read this smart and incisive book and its update, I realize that I was as wrong about that as I was about IM technology back in the early 1990s.
As authors Tony Bingham and Marcia Conner show, social media have already had an enduring impact on learning.

There’s a certain intuitive, forehead-slapping logic to that insight. Of course! In so many ways, learning is a fundamentally social act. From circle time in kindergarten, to study groups in college, to team projects in the workforce, sociability has always greased the gears of learning.

As this book shows, smart devices and software applications brought social technology into the workplace much faster than most people expected and made continual, far-reaching interactions part of everyday work. Employees now routinely use social tools to work and learn in tandem, to innovate, and to measure the impact of their work on customers.

*The New Social Learning* is a terrific guide to that emerging ecosystem. It will give you a set of core principles to help you navigate it. And with examples that range from firms such as LAZ Parking to Boston Children’s Hospital, National Australian Bank to pharmaceutical giant Sanofi Pasteur, and CENTURY 21 to Cigna, it will show you how social media can improve the way you recruit talent, engage employees, and build workforce capability.

Social learning isn’t a replacement for training and other forms of talent development. But it can accomplish what traditional approaches often cannot. For instance, it can supplement instruction with collaboration and co-creation and, in so doing, blur the boundary between the instructor and the instructed and enhance the experience of all. It can leave a “digital audit trail” that reveals the path of a learning journey and allows others to retrace it. It can re-energize your conferences and classes by providing a backchannel of feedback and questions.

It’s exciting when two of the most respected names in this arena come together again to update *The New Social Learning*. When you read this book and the impressive examples of organizations all over the world that have embraced social tools for better and more meaningful collaboration, you’ll understand
how social learning has begun to transform the pursuit of knowledge and how it promises even greater things in the future.

But what you might realize most of all is that Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and their newer social media kin that have come on to the scene in recent years aren’t all about marketing. They’re equally, if not more so, about how to get work done through better connection and collaboration with each other. This book helped me understand that and avoid missing the point of a new social tool once again. It can do the same for you.

Daniel H. Pink
Washington, D.C.
April 2015
WE WROTE THIS BOOK TO ENCOURAGE senior leaders to embrace the power of mobile social media to augment the timeless power of learning. While developing this content, we took our own counsel by using various social tools to connect with several hundred people teeming with stories of adventure and “aha” moments.

By describing their challenges and successes, the people introduced in this book demonstrate the tremendous impact social tools can have in companies, on communities, and for those who engage with them. We hope their examples inspire you as much as they have inspired us.

We deeply appreciate the extra time given by Traci Wolbrink, Jeffrey Burns, Geoff Fowler, Rob Cross, Dan Pontefract, Simon Terry, Andi Campbell, and Kevin Jones, who shared their organizations’ progress.

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Together these extraordinary educators made quick work of a daunting task, and we will be appreciative forever.
Introduction

SIX YEARS AGO, WHEN WE WROTE the first edition of this book, mobile and social technologies were still new. Many senior leaders didn’t see their value to the enterprise. At best they were considered a broadcast marketing channel— at worst, annoying interruptions in the workplace. In corporate settings and schools alike, educators viewed these social tools as a distraction and a threat to how students learned.

Times have changed. Worldwide, people have more access to mobile phones than they do to running water. Across the globe, people rely on mobile and social technologies to connect and collaborate, share information, and often create change. You need only look at organizations like Kiva or change.org to see how people are using social media to make a difference. People unite around ideas and experiences without regard for geographic boundaries. They connect us with colleagues and friends across the planet. As we connect and build relationships, what captures our attention is more highly valued and relevant because it has been pre-screened by people we trust.

Popular opinion about the value of mobile and social technologies has shifted dramatically. Many of us would feel lost without the swift connections these tools afford. Thousands of organizations and the millions of people within them have made this shift, strengthening and widening a global culture of learning. People ask important questions, observe subtle patterns, and connect previously disconnected groups. We, collectively, are stronger for it.
New Approaches for a Complex World

After the first edition of this book was published, people told us that we brought light to a largely missed opportunity—to learn more, to teach more, and to be more with the aid of new tools. Hundreds of organizational leaders we’ve met with have discovered that technology that was once considered a distraction is in reality a vital means to engage people in very human ways. Social learning moves organizational practices from rote and mechanical to agile and interpersonal. Social learning becomes learning for a connected social age.

Now it’s time to take the next step. It’s time we as leaders, educators, entrepreneurs, and intrepeneurs become catalysts—elevating social learning as a key means of achieving more impact. We must shift our perspectives from considering learning across social media as a supplement to our organizations’ existing learning initiatives, to one where social learning plays an integral part of how people work together effectively, building upon their individual and collective potential.

It’s time to adopt a healthy, inclusive, and resilient perspective of learning where a collective of leaders, workers, customers, and interested onlookers—the people who make up every organization’s ecology—generates great ideas and introduces innovative practices. This doesn’t take away from the achievements of individuals or small groups of peers. It doesn’t take away from the value of face-to-face interactions or formal professional development. It acknowledges that good work isn’t created in a vacuum, and that creativity is always in some sense collaborative, the result of unique minds connecting together.

The value we contribute comes not from how smart or talented we are, but rather from the ideas that we share, the quality connections that we make, the emotions we touch, and the conversations we start. Each of us can become an expert curator of interesting stories and facilitator of important ideas.
Beyond Organizational Boundaries

Learning is a never-ending process. It always has been and always will be. The Internet and new social tools provide nearly unlimited access to knowledge and people around the clock, across the world.

To truly create a better world each one of us needs to bring our skills, our talents, and our questions to the conversation. Harvard University professor Howard Stevenson once defined entrepreneurship as “the pursuit of opportunity without regard to resources currently controlled.” In the social age, learning is no longer resource constrained. We can be—we must be—learning from everything and everyone possible in order to see the world in new ways and face challenges never before seen.

The best way to get started on the path to social learning is to think about what we want to learn, make a commitment to learning it in front of others, and to share what we learn. This becomes a generative cycle that will keep us informed and curious for the rest of our lives.

It’s up to every one of us to model for others how learning can be—how learning should be—and how learning will be far into the future. In the end, the opportunity isn’t even about learning, rather it’s about what we experience from working with each other, helping one another, and becoming more effective together.

Our hope is that to face today’s increasingly complex challenges, society embraces an approach to learning that elevates diverse voices, pursues wide perspectives, encourages collaboration, and values real-time experience. When we grow and improve what we know, organically we create a collective wisdom that can lead to real progress.

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“A new perspective is changing how we think about society, politics, interpersonal relationships, science, government, and business. New approaches are emerging. Learning and self-expression are exploding. Values are changing. Leadership is changing. The economy is changing. Change itself is changing—it is accelerating and becoming the norm.”

—Deb Lavoy, Social business leader and former director at OpenText

PEDIATRICIAN TRACI WOLBRINK, MD, MPH, was in Malawi working with a patient when she realized the approaches she uses at Boston Children’s Hospital weren’t available, and the practices at the remote hospital she was in weren’t working. Having recently been in Cambodia, where she saw a local doctor use a noninvasive ventilation strategy (bubble CPAP) for a child with breathing difficulties, she wanted to try that same approach. She searched the hospital for component pieces that had been discarded from other equipment and created her own bubble CPAP that saved the little girl’s life.

When Wolbrink returned to Boston, where she works in critical care, she talked with colleagues about the experience and shared this simple and effective approach with them. She wondered, what if it wasn’t necessary to travel
the globe to connect knowledge. What if there was another way? She recalled an African proverb that had always resonated with her: *If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.*

Wolbrink and Dr. Jeffrey Burns, chief of Critical Care Medicine at Boston Children’s Hospital, were working on an initiative to do just that: bring innovative practices out of local toolboxes and into the hands of people searching for solutions. They had begun the project when Burns received a phone call from a pediatrician over 2,300 miles away in Guatemala. His colleague needed advice while caring for a girl with a serious infection.

Burns knew well the cutting edge tools in medicine. When he watched how his son was able to easily connect, build skills, and play seamlessly with others through his Xbox, he wondered why that same level of progress didn’t exist in collaboration or learning for medicine. There were too many technical challenges with sharing and exchanging knowledge across the miles.

Wolbrink and Burns created what became OPENPediatrics, a global social learning platform focused on saving lives. Every year close to 7 million children die after being stricken with diseases that are mostly treatable. The challenge is not that more research is needed for new treatments, or even access to drugs and hardware. Instead, it’s getting the information needed to treat those diseases in the right hands before it’s too late. It was time for sharing medical knowledge at scale.

While watching the Masters Golf Tournament one April, Burns was impressed by the power of digital instruction he’d witnessed on the event’s website—where players were coached through weaknesses to find a stronger, more consistent swing, or to deal with specific issues, such as putting or chipsing. He aimed to find similar technology for clinicians to receive coaching to improve their practice. Not just video or games, though.

Why not use the power of the Internet to distribute information across the globe with collaborative and social tools? Then clinicians anywhere could be
coached through their medical paces, learning from anyone with expertise. Why not use modern capabilities to take a giant leap forward by helping people help their fellow human beings?

OPENPediatrics, founded in 2008, is a free social learning platform for doctors, nurses, and other specialists focused on pediatrics. Over 4,000 clinicians used this private space during its first year, says Steve Carson, director of operations, who joined the team after directing communications for MIT’s OpenCourseWare initiative. These clinicians come together around the clock to learn, share, and ultimately improve the lives of children across the globe.

At the core of the system is a library of videos, animations, illustrations, and articles produced by the OPENPediatrics team and medical personnel on the ground who have found a better way to do things than the ways they were taught in medical school.¹

In the online community, clinicians can structure what they need to learn and share what they’re learning each day, unencumbered by space, time, or political boundaries. Over the years, content has grown into a catalyst for conversation. As you watch a video, you can comment or even ask questions of others viewing it. A team of experts is assigned to each video and when questions are posed, they can both answer and create ancillary content to share or to use for updating materials.

This is where it gets really exciting. As clinicians become comfortable with the approach, they begin to post their own checklists, protocols, diagrams, and write-ups that can also be shared across the globe. In addition to starting and joining groups around topics of interest, they can receive notification when new content or conversations are forming around topics that matter to them. Through the interaction that follows these connections, they learn from others who are also interested in those topics.

¹ Sharing something has more value than anything unshared.
–Chris Crummey
Wolbrink points out that all of the benefits couldn’t be known at the outset. For instance, she didn’t expect OPENPediatrics would be widely used in Israel, Libya, Iran, and other parts of the Middle East, places where, as it turns out, despite vast cultural disagreements and long-standing animosities, childhood health takes precedence. “The platform has really been able to break down barriers that we never even thought could be broken,” adds Burns. “The problem in the medical field is not ready access to information,” he adds. “It’s how do we manage our knowledge in an era of data overload?”

Clay Shirky, who teaches new media at New York University and is the author of *Cognitive Surplus,* has written about this very disconnect. “It’s not information overload. It’s filter failure,” he says.

Rather than use cumbersome traditional routes to publish, OPENPediatrics makes it possible for doctors to rapidly share information every time there is a new type of medical emergency afflicting a child. Solving this problem across the miles has long been difficult because it hasn’t been possible to “load the boat,” a phrase used at teaching hospitals to remind medical students they weren’t alone. If you had a problem, if you needed help, if you needed to learn something new, there were always people in your immediate area you could call on at any time. OPENPediatrics now makes it possible to load the boat across vast distances.

With OPENPediatrics, Burns says, “our goal was to create a community of practice where, instead of learning together being broad and thin like a MOOC, we would be narrow and much more deep.”

OPENPediatrics provides structure to a vast network that has existed for centuries: the medical community of clinicians caring specifically for children. Although online social networks and online communities feel new, they codify and extend a practice used by people through the ages.

This is social learning at its best. Colleagues turned into collaborators. A modern and brilliant way to work.

The Workplace Has Changed

At this moment, your people are already learning through social media. They’re reaching out and connecting in powerful ways. The question is, can you recognize, appreciate, and take advantage of the power inherent in this new level of communication? Do you want to facilitate or debilitate? Do you want to play a part in what and how people learn? Or do you want to try to stop them? Will you restrict them? Or will you free them to do the work they were hired to do—and will you do it with them?

The 20th century was about leading with technology and tools. The 21st century is about leading into a connected world.

Facebook, LinkedIn, Quora, and their inside-the-enterprise counterparts have enabled an unprecedented number of truly amazing conversations, many of which have led to greater awareness, new businesses, and social change.

We are seeing a new kind of hero who wants to solve some of the world’s biggest problems. The new model for capitalism in the world of startups is, “Be helpful. Do something great. Serve.”

Gamification is at work in the modern day. The Longitude Prize, the X-Prize Foundation, and the TED Prize offer huge cash infusions to anyone who can solve some of the world’s greatest challenges. Our altruism is no longer reserved for after work. It is moving into its proper place, center stage, in boardrooms around the world.

There is an unprecedented desire in people, particularly in younger generations, to make a difference, to make one’s life worth something. There is a need to do work that matters.

Between one-third and two-thirds of your employees are meeting their needs by working around you.

—Bill Jensen

Between one-third and two-thirds of your employees are meeting their needs by working around you.

—Bill Jensen
That need is the tinder of a fire that is now being sparked by the emerging tools and holistic ideals of social learning. Working socially is no longer about just saying “hi.” It’s now about using modern tools to coalesce into self-organizing groups that are ready and waiting for the call to make things right.

Working socially is not just about rallying around an idea. Social learning is about getting on the same page in a constructivist approach, where every voice is heard and everyone contributes to the solution, where buy-in is endemic to its creation. It’s about co-creating the world we want to see, a world we need to see.

Our challenge, at every level of the organization, is no longer just how to beat the competition. We now also have to look at issues of sustainability and restoration from a global perspective. We need to attend to planetary survival as well as the vitality of entire industries and financial markets. We need to accept that learning is produced by society, by us, and that we each play a role in that production.

Social learning resonates with all of us who realize that we can no longer act alone and hope to come up with grand solutions that will work seamlessly across all sectors, across all generations, and across all innovations.

Our world has simultaneously become too complex and too small to do that. We need to come together.

People want to learn fast, as they move through their multidimensional jobs, not just on the rare occasion they attend a class. Senior leaders need to provide their people with vibrant, effective, and cutting-edge tools to support their nonstop learning, which will ensure they can adapt to market forces at the speed of change. Social tools are changing the way people work, often bypassing formal training altogether.

Fundamentally, this book is about how people learn socially, often (but not always) with technology—and how they can do more, learn more, and be more as a result. This book is not a plea to reorganize or dismantle the
training department. It’s not a pitch to turn off your email, at least not unless or until your company is ready. No one will suggest you move all your work to mobile devices or change your organization’s priorities.

What this book will show is that learning’s value can be recognized across departments and locations, with employees, partners, customers, and suppliers, when social media seamlessly connects people and ideas every day. When people work together, they learn together, in the flow of work.

We won’t focus on the tools here. They change fast. We ask you to visit the accompanying website for this book at www.thenewsociallearning.com for details about technologies and where to learn more. There you can also contribute to the conversation and locate fresh information.

Use this book to discover how to extend and expand your interactions with colleagues, and how to use social tools to create something new, powerful, and vibrant—something that could change the organization, and the world.

Amazing things are happening with collaborations that only a few years ago would have been impossible. In this book we make suggestions for how you can become a part of them.

Social learning can facilitate a culture where we get better at getting better. Our work is no longer just about competing. It’s now about being stronger contributors and savvier learners, with leaders co-creating the future.

We walk a fine line in this book between being concerned for the future and expressing our excitement about the radical changes in our midst. We provide countless action steps you can take. But it is never our intention to overwhelm. The great thing about the new social learning is that you can start small. There is no need for mass adoption, for total buy-in, or for group consensus.
Social learning is a fundamental shift in how people work—leveraging how we have always worked, now with new, more humanizing tools, accelerating individual and collective reach, giving us the resources to create the organization, and the world, we want to live in.

What Is the New Social Learning?
The new social learning is not just the technology of social media, although it makes use of it. It is not merely the ability to express ourselves in a group of opt-in friends. The new social learning combines social media tools with a shift in organizational culture, a shift that encourages ongoing knowledge transfer and connects people in ways that make learning enjoyable.

“Social learning thrives in a culture of service and wonder. It is inspired by leaders, enabled by technology, and ignited by opportunities that have only recently unfolded.” Social learning is the natural complement to social business, connecting people to people, information, and insights within an organization.

Social learning can be defined as joining with others to make sense of and create new ideas. It has been around for a long time and naturally occurs in groups at conferences and among old friends in a café as easily as it does among students online in a distance-learning program who have never met in person.

We experience social learning when we go down the hall to ask a question of a colleague and when we post that same question on Twitter anticipating someone will respond. It can be self-organizing or orchestrated by facilitators interested in encouraging others to learn.

Social learning is augmented with social media tools that bridge distance and time, enabling people to easily interact across workplace, passion, curiosity, skill, or need. Most often social learning is intrinsically motivated and happens as naturally as breathing. It benefits from a diversity in types of intelligence and in the experiences of those learning.
Social learning is accelerated when we give our attention to individuals, groups, and projects that interest and energize us. We self-select the themes we want to follow and filter out those that feel burdensome, all with impunity. No one gets offended when we don’t follow a project outside our domain. No one notices when we temporarily filter out the rants of people beating their own drum.

It’s because we have independent thought and inevitably spend some time alone that we benefit from the creative abrasion of groups, and it’s in pairs and teams in which we can harmonize our insights with others. Both sides of the African proverb are true and important. *If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.* The new social learning assists us with both.

Social media is a set of technologies used to engage two, three, or more people; social business is connecting people to people, information, and insights within an organization; and social learning is working with others to make sense of new ideas. What’s new is how powerfully they work together. Social tools leave a digital audit trail, documenting our journey—often an unfolding story—and provide a path for others to learn from.

Tools are now available to facilitate social learning that is unconstrained by geographic differences (spatial boundaries) or time-zone differences (temporal boundaries) among team members.

The new social learning reframes social media from a mere marketing strategy to an approach that encourages and facilitates knowledge capture, transfer, and use, connecting people in a way consistent with how we naturally interact. It is not a delivery system analogous to classroom training, e-learning, or even mobile learning. Instead, it’s a powerful approach to sharing and discovering a whole array of options—some of which we may not even

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**A willingness to keep stretching and moving beyond our comfort zones determine success in this network era.**  
—Sahana Chattopadhyay
## WHAT THE NEW SOCIAL LEARNING IS NOT

Another way to think about the new social learning is to compare it with what it is not.

- The new social learning is not just for knowledge workers. It can empower people who work on shop floors, backstage, on the phone, behind retail counters, and on the battlefield.

- It is not your corporate intranet, although features of social learning may be included there. Document management, calendaring, blogs, and online directories may contribute to learning socially, but they are often task oriented rather than community oriented.

- It’s not at odds with formal education. Students often use Twitter as a back channel for communicating among themselves or with instructors. Teachers can also use social media before and after classes to capture and share everyone’s ideas.

- It’s not a replacement for training or employee development. Training is well suited for compliance, deep learning, and credentialing. Formal development programs are still needed to prepare employees to progress through the organization. Social learning can supplement training and development in the classroom or online. It complements training and covers knowledge that formal training is rarely able to provide, and fosters the creation of new knowledge and understanding.

- It’s not synonymous with *informal learning*, a term often used to describe anything that’s not learned in a formal program or class. The broad category of informal learning can include social learning, but some instances of informal learning are not social—for example, search and reading.

- It’s not the same as *e-learning*, the term used to describe any use of technology to teach something intentionally. That broad category can include social tools and, if it’s organized using an online learning community such as Moodle, can be quite communal.
know we need—leading to more informed decision making and an intimate, expansive, and dynamic understanding of the culture and context in which we work. “When working in the open, building distinction, and uncovering expertise, social learning makes knowledge relevant and actionable, building the kind of trust, transparency, and agility needed to deliver social business results,” says Ed Brill, author of *Opting-In: Lessons in Social Business from a Fortune 500 Product Manager*.

In many ways, the new social learning is far bigger and more transformative than any lens we’ve previously used to look at learning in organizations. “It is a socio-political, historical shift that is bigger, broader, and much more fascinating,” writes social business leader and former director at OpenText, Deb Lavoy. “A new perspective is changing how we think about...
CHAPTER 1

society, politics, interpersonal relationships, science, government, and business. New approaches are emerging. Learning and self-expression are exploding. Values are changing. Leadership is changing. The economy is changing. Change itself is changing—it is accelerating and becoming the norm.”  

The new social learning provides people at every level, in every nook of the organization, and every corner of the globe, a way to reclaim their natural capacity to learn nonstop. Social learning can help pilots fly more safely, salespeople be more genuinely persuasive, and doctors keep up to date on current techniques in their fields.

For a long time, many of us have known learning could transform the workplace. We longed for tools to catch up with that potential. Only recently have changes in corporate culture and technology allowed this eventuality to unfold.

Clay Shirky points out, “Prior to the Internet, the last technology that had any real effect on the way people sat down and talked together was the table.”

Social learning happens when we keep the conversation going by posting a photo on Instagram and tagging it in a way that elicits more comments from our friends, when we write about it on a blog, during coaching sessions with our mentees, or in a casual conversation with the person on the treadmill next to us at the gym.

Social software has been around for almost 50 years, dating back to the Plato bulletin board system. Network communities included CompuServe, AOL, and Usenet. The WELL (Whole Earth Lectronic Link), a dial-up discussion board, was launched when the founders of Facebook were toddlers. Back then, however, it was only technology enthusiasts who used those systems, primarily because their interfaces were difficult to navigate, not terribly intuitive, and didn’t readily surface or share the best ideas.

The new social learning moves services, assets, smarts, and guidance closer to people who are seeking answers, solving problems, overcoming
uncertainty, and exploring ways to improve how they work. They facilitate collaboration and inform choices on a wide stage, fostering learning from a vast, intellectually diverse set of people.

10 THINGS SAID ABOUT SOCIAL LEARNING . . . THAT YOU SHOULDN’T FALL FOR

1. Social learning is new.
2. Social learning requires digital tools.
3. Social learning needs social learning policies.
4. There’s no data to support social learning, and no way to show return on investment.
5. It’s always informal (or never informal).
6. A vendor can sell you social learning.
7. Social learning only works for white-collar workers.
8. The talent development department needs to initiate a social learning program before the organization learns socially.
9. For social learning to provide value you need a new LMS. Or an upgrade. Or an LMS.
10. Social learning doesn’t affect you.9

These new social tools don’t replace training, knowledge management, and communications practices used today. They augment them. They introduce approaches that fundamentally change getting up to speed, provide a way to share mockups as easily as finely polished documents, and elicit the participation of departments that previously hadn’t considered themselves responsible for employee development at all.
Most of what we learn at work and elsewhere comes from engaging in networks where people co-create, collaborate, and share knowledge, fully participating and actively engaging, driving, and guiding their learning through whatever topics will help them improve.

Training gives people solutions to problems already solved. Collaboration addresses challenges no one has overcome before.

The new social learning allows us, as Stowe Boyd (who first coined the term social tools and continues to observe their influence) puts it, “[to grow] bigger than my head. I want to create an idea space where I can think outside my mind, leveraging my connections with others.”

Moving Theory Into Practice

A “social learning theory” was first put forward in 1954, standing on the shoulders of John Dewey and drawing on the budding fields of sociology, behavior modification, and psychology applied to understanding and changing conduct. Ideas from social learning theory informed the thinking of later learning theorists, including Albert Bandura, who wrote in 1977, “Learning would be exceedingly laborious, not to mention hazardous, if people had to rely solely on the effects of their own actions to inform them what to do. Fortunately, most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling.”

The early focus of social learning theory was learning socially appropriate behavior by imitating others, which is only a small aspect of how social learning is used in practice today. It’s unfortunate what was called social learning had such a limited scope. Recognizing this, there will be times we shorten “the new social learning” to “social learning” here, and in our work elsewhere, to describe the broader issues and opportunities now available. Social learning is modeling, observing, sharing, participating, and so much more.

Social constructivism is the theory of knowledge that seems to best describe how people learn together, whether in person or online. When you engage
Chapter 1

1. Many of the OPENPediatrics videos are also available for the public on YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/user/OPENPediatrics/.


3. The British government first sponsored a Longitude Prize in 1714.


5. Jane Bozarth’s book Social Learning for Trainers offers specific approaches to facilitate social learning by educators. For self-organizing approaches, find a friend or colleague and talk about what you’re curious about right now.


10. S. Boyd, Interview with authors.

About the Authors

**Tony Bingham** is the president and CEO of the Association for Talent Development, formerly ASTD, the world’s largest professional association dedicated to those who develop talent in organizations. Tony works with a staff of 130, a Board of Directors, and a worldwide network of volunteers to empower professionals to develop talent in the workplace.

Tony believes in creating a culture of engaged, high-performing teams that deliver extraordinary results. Deeply passionate about change, technology, and the impact of talent development, he focuses on adding value to ATD members and the global community of talent development professionals. He believes that aligning talent development efforts to business strategy, while utilizing the power of social and mobile technology for learning, is a key differentiator in business today.

**Marcia Conner** is a former corporate executive who now dedicates her time to reinventing a vibrant and healthy global ecosystem. Described as a “blank page systems architect,” she works closely with risk-taking leaders, impact entrepreneurs, and unreasonable thinkers, ready to use their superpowers for good.
Marcia is a SupporTED Mentor, contributes to *Fast Company* and *Wired*, is an activist with Change Agents Worldwide, and a fellow at the Darden School of Business. She is advisor to the Way to Wellville and MMinddLabs. She is also the author of *Learn More Now*; coauthor of *Creating a Learning Culture: Strategy, Technology, and Practice*; contributor to *Changing The World of Work: One Human at a Time*, and speaks across the globe on outcompeting current structures through system innovation and ingenuity.