

# Foreword

I love this book and recommend it highly! You might wonder why the president of the American Distance Education Association would associate herself with a book that focuses on distance education delivery systems. The answer is threefold: permanence, integration, and perspective.

## *Permanence*

As a seasoned professional in the distance education field, I have seen a lot of books come and go since I finished my PhD in adult and continuing education in the early 1970s. And while I may be getting grouchy as I approach the big 60 mark, I am astounded by the shallowness of so much of what I have seen written in the past 10 years about learning via technology. Perhaps never has so much been written about so little. In fact, it may be a good thing that much of this body of “knowledge” will disappear because it neither relates to the past nor the future.

This book is clearly an exception. It is rich in content, demonstrates deep knowledge of the field, and connects the tried and true from the past to the as-yet-unleashed promise of the future. It deserves a place of “permanence” in the field. It should appeal, as the title suggests, to educators, trainers, and learners everywhere, and whenever we need to remember and renew our understanding of learning methods and quality practice. This book should hold special appeal because the theories and practices described have proven useful in varied cultural settings and with diverse populations. Not many books can withstand the critical permanence test on these dimensions. *Advanced Methods in Distance Education* is both timely and timeless.

## *Integration*

This important “I word” is increasingly discussed as the missing piece in a world a bit mucked up in specialization. The fact that educators, administra-

tors, and learners are all allowed to appear in the title suggests that readers might discover in the text how programs can be “learner centered” as well as demonstrate “quality instructional design,” Dooley, Lindner, and Dooley’s gift for pulling together really useful material over a broad set of areas. It is particularly unusual to see such a successful integration of the best of the best from adult education and training.

Academics and trainers too often stake out opposing positions: When is training education? Can training ever be education? How can instructional objectives be of any use in self-directed learning? I could go on with the set of debating society issues, but suffice it to say, you will find a very thoughtful, even wise, convergence approach that many should find provoking and useful.

### *Perspective*

And finally, I think the really unique and creative aspect of this book relates to the notion of perspective. This book is BOTH science and art. My husband, an architect and engineer, has a treasured book titled *The Art of the Engineer*. The ease and flow of this book is artful and authentic as it moves between and among theories and from theories to practice to learners and around again.

*Webster’s Dictionary* defines “perspective” as “the interrelation in which a subject or its parts are mentally viewed” (i.e., places the issues in proper perspective). Just like beauty, quality is in the eye of the beholder. Because this volume integrates concepts so skillfully, it highlights some unique and uncommon views that should appeal to many regardless of place.

Distance is very much a matter of perspective. It amuses and frustrates me that people think that words such as “distributed education” or “blended learning” encompass and can replace distance education. Distance education has long meant that everybody everywhere should have access to quality learning opportunities. Distance education is not a campus or place-bound concept. But then, that is a matter of my perspective.

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