



Human Dimensions Quarterly Newsletter Culture, Learning and Risk

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The Magic of Motivation



In the last newsletter the discussion commenced with the importance of imagination in the management of risk. In this newsletter I would like to discuss the importance of self-motivation and inspiration in understanding and imagining risk.

The delightful little book by Edward L. Deci *Why We Do What We Do*, is a splendid introduction into the nature of motivation. For a more in-depth view try Vohs and Baumeister, *Handbook for Self Regulation*.

Understanding motivation is 'bread and butter' for educators and teachers. Yet, for those in industries that demand safety, risk or security ownership, an understanding of motivation rarely gets any attention in training. Instead, the focus is so much on the **content** of risk, safety and security, rather than the **process** of

communicating, inspiring and motivating people to self regulate their approach to safety and risk. What a different world safety would be if Novak's book *Learning How to Learn* was made a priority rather than an endless preoccupation with punitive and consequence-focused approaches.

In the March/April issue of *Scientific American Mind* Amishi Jha writes about mindfulness, attention and developing focus. How often are people deemed to be unmotivated when in fact they are caught in either a trance or autopilot through repetition, fatigue or systems overload. Jha reports on experiments that show that attention and focus can be cultivated and attention increased.

Motivation requires that people see and feel a relationship between their thinking and behaviour and a desired outcome. The idea that consequence in and of itself is motivational is not supported by the evidence. Indeed, punishment may deliver control but rarely a sense of inspiration and ownership. Punishment is something that is *done to* another, motivation is something that is created and generated within us. Intrinsic (internal) motivation is far more powerful than extrinsic (external) control. Even rewards with controlling intent lose their effectiveness because they reduce the autonomy of the person who is being controlled.

Recent research by **Dr Susanne Bahn of Edith Cowan University**, demonstrated that approximately 50% of new employees in organisations fail to properly identify hazards and understand associated risks. This was tested following the presentation of 60 specific hazards in an induction.

So often inductions are non-motivating because they are not focused on learning, but rather the quickest and easiest data dump. Or, some inductions are so extensive that participants are 'flooded' and suffer cognitive overload. Organisations that prioritise learning, give greater attention to instructional design and methodology for learning. Unfortunately, the online approach is also severely flawed and overrated from a learning perspective. Again, the priority of content over process rules the selection of method, as if relationships are secondary to learning.

From 1994-2006 I was involved in teacher education in one form or another. So many beginning teachers used to be some bright eyed and enthusiastic to learn the right techniques for teaching. Many used to leave disappointed after the first lecture when I used to make it clear that effective teaching was about creating a learning environment built on relationships, not the presentation of content. Those fixed on content rarely motivated and inspired enthusiasm, those

IN OTHER NEWS

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who developed inspiring relationships found that motivation and learning were like magic with ownership for learning and self regulation the by-product. The safety and security industry have a lot to learn from teacher education.

The most inspiring educators I know are Guy Claxton, Ken Robinson, Howard Gardner, Palker J Palmer and Bernie Neville. If you want to learn about motivating others to learn, start reading their works.

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Post Graduate Studies in Leadership and Learning in Risk

Registrations are filling up for the first cohort of students for the Winter School 17-21 June 2013. There are only 5 places left.

The Winter School will be run on the Signadou campus of the Australian Catholic University, where Dr Long is an Honorary Fellow. The Australian Catholic University joins in this exciting new academic program in Leadership and Learning in the Social Psychology of Risk. The program will be delivered by Dr Long and some of the Human Dymensions team. For example, Craig Ashhurst, currently a PhD candidate at ANU, will be deliveing studies on his work in wicked problems, risk and visual literacies.



The Winter School comprises the first Unit in a Grad Certificate (4 Units) with ongoing plans for Grad Diploma (8 Units) and Master's extension (12 Units).

It is planned to hold a Summer School in January and two online units in order to complete the Grad Certificate.

The First Winter School Unit is entitled 'An Introduction to the Social Psychology of Risk'.

An overview of the program can be [viewed on the website](#). A full description of following Units will be posted on the website soon. Several newsletters and information has already gone out to current registered students. If you would like to receive the post grad studies newsletter or want more information please contact admin@humandymensions.com.

Facebook Safety Leadership Group



Join a keen group of currently 83 safety people sharing and reflecting on research and practice in managing risk. If you want to think more about the social psychology of risk and leadership, then join us on <http://www.facebook.com/groups/152071534818549/>

Articles and Blogs by Dr Long



Dr Long writes at: <http://www.safetyrisk.com.au/category/robert-long/>

Since Last Time, on the Media

A number of reports in the media with Rob may be of interest.

Editorial for Canberra Times last week: <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/comment/building-on-the-positives-20130306-2flru.html>

ABC TV 7.30 Report 22 Feb: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-02-22/safework/4535192>

Report on Safety Leadership Forum 2012: <http://issuu.com/masterbuildersact/docs/cbn3-2012?mode=window&viewMode=doublePage>

If you flip through to pages 32-39 you will see a report on the Safety Leadership Forum and the Human Dymensions MiProfile tool.

Test Your Perception with Brain Games

Try this delightful video and test your perception and brain. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w986vI6uZpU>

Once you have seen the video have a look at the last perception puzzle in this newsletter.

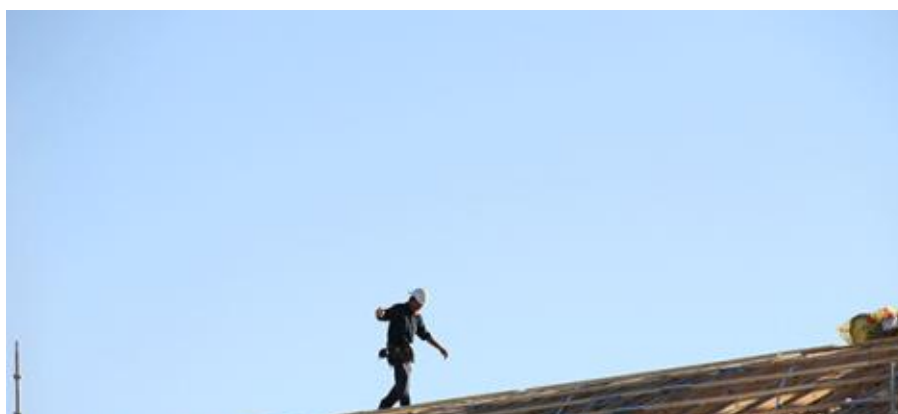
Competition and Book Prize



There is a hidden image in the stereogram above. If you blur your vision and move your eyes to the right position, you will be able to see through the picture and see the 3D hidden image inside the stereogram.

The first 3 to email admin@humandymensions with the correct image will receive a free copy of Dr Long's second book *For the Love of Zero, Human Fallibility and Risk*. Make sure in your email you include your correct email address and you will be contacted for your postal address if your answer is correct.

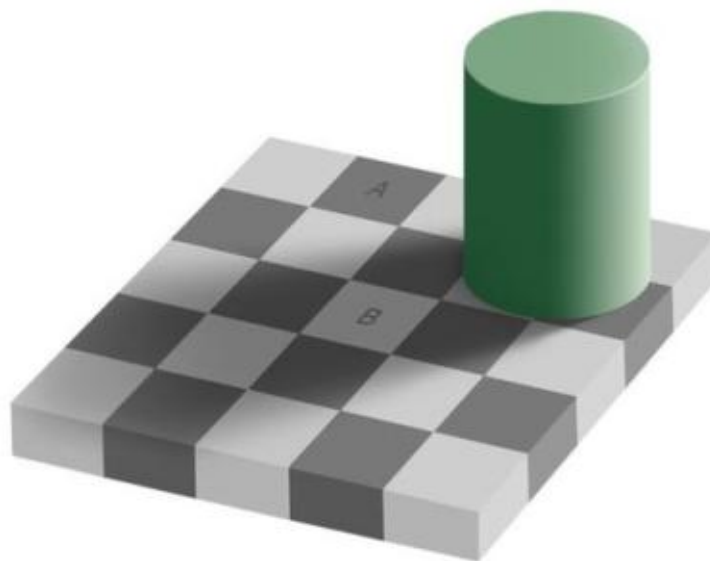
Shocker of the Month





In February and March Rob and Gabrielle have been delivering the PROACT Program to building and construction companies in Canberra. PROACT is sponsored by the MBA and is structured in 3 half day classroom sessions and two on site coaching sessions. PROACT focuses on perception, advanced hazard id and effective communications on site about risk. This picture was taken last week from the road in Belconnen as we travelled about building sites. Fortunately, not from one of the sites where we were coaching.

Perception Puzzle



This checkerboard is the creation of Edward H. Adelson, Professor of Vision Science at MIT.

Look at squares A and B. believe it or not, they are the same shade of grey. Test it out. Print out the image and cut out the squares and superimpose them on the picture.

So how does it work? A lot of it has to do with the shadows cast by the big green cylinder. As Adelson explains, the brain has to assess how much light is coming off the surface of each square on the board. This is known as the luminance of each square, and the brain also has to figure out how much of the luminance (or lack thereof) is caused by the colour of the square and how much is created by the shadows.

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