



The Evolving Marketing for Lifelong Learning

Leading Learning Podcast Transcript for Episode 413

Celisa Steele: [00:00:00] For learning businesses that want to thrive in the evolving lifelong learning market, identifying metatrends and what they might mean in terms of risks and opportunities is crucial. That's why we offer these ten points for your consideration.

Celisa Steele: [00:00:20] I'm Celisa Steele.

Jeff Cobb: [00:00:21] I'm Jeff Cobb, and this is the Leading Learning Podcast.

Celisa Steele: [00:00:29] The pace of change in learning markets remains brisk, and the pursuit of learning is not just a goal—it's really a necessity in today's world.

Jeff Cobb: [00:00:39] Keeping that context of fast-paced change and learning as a necessity in mind, we want to look at the evolving market for lifelong learning in this episode, number 413. And we have ten points we think are critical for learning businesses that want to prepare well for the future.

Celisa Steele: [00:00:58] So let's dig in. Number one is the turmoil in higher education will create opportunities.

Jeff Cobb: [00:01:06] There is indeed a lot of turmoil these days in higher education. A lot of questions about the short- and the long-term value of traditional college degrees—those are increasingly being called into question. The number of people looking for alternatives is growing.

Celisa Steele: [00:01:26] I think that not just the value of those degrees, but will the schools even be around? I feel like, in the news, I'm seeing report after report of campuses closing.

Jeff Cobb: [00:01:36] I saw today that they're closing at a rate of one campus per week right now.

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Celisa Steele: [00:01:40] Wow.

Jeff Cobb: [00:01:41] I can't remember what the source was on that. It could be one of those apocryphal Internet things, but it feels like that probably could be true based on what we've seen out there.

Celisa Steele: [00:01:50] Schools, colleges, universities are dealing with very existential questions themselves, on top of the consumer questioning of the value of the degrees that are coming out of those institutions.

Jeff Cobb: [00:02:04] As a result of that, we said this is going to create opportunities. That means certification programs, assessment-based certificate programs, standards-based digital badges, competency-based education—those are all likely to be areas of significant growth. In fact, we're already seeing significant growth in those areas for learning businesses providing continuing education and professional development.

Celisa Steele: [00:02:30] Essentially, learning businesses can offer a compelling alternative to those traditional college degrees that tend to cost a lot of money, tend to take a long time to earn, and maybe don't actually provide that return on the investment. You have this really attractive array of alternatives to those traditional degrees that learning businesses can double down on and place a good bet on those being really attractive to learners in the marketplace.

Jeff Cobb: [00:03:00] We've even posed the question before. The way we framed it was, "Could associations replace college?" Could any sort of learning business—anybody who's providing these sorts of continuing education, professional development, alternative learning experiences—replace college? We asked this rhetorically several years ago but ended up revisiting it not all that long ago because it isn't seeming all that rhetorical anymore. I don't think degree programs are going to disappear. I don't think colleges and universities are going to disappear. There is a lot of value that they still provide. At least for the time being, the data still says that a college degree is worth something like \$1 million more in lifetime income for the people who earn them. But a lot of that's based on old data. We're seeing a lot of things shift, and, yes, we're going to see some new paradigms. And, as we said, that turmoil is going to create opportunities.

Celisa Steele: [00:03:53] The second point we have to offer is every learning business is potentially an international organization.

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Jeff Cobb: [00:04:02] Which is largely a result of what technology has made possible and then the way that the economies and trade have evolved over recent decades. In spite of all of its flaws and the critiques of the United States right now, people globally still consider it as the gold standard in most instances for educational credentials. So, if you are a U.S.-based organization—we realize not all of our listeners are, but a large percentage of them are—you're in a position now because you're able to reach the world to take your education out globally—and, if you do it right, to really be respected as a potentially international provider of education, even if you've typically been state-, regionally, or nationally based before this.

Celisa Steele: [00:04:50] Again, things like certification programs, assessment-based certificate programs, standards-based digital badges, all of those things, along with the related educational experiences that support them, have significant value in those global markets. Again, compared to someone who's outside of the U.S. coming to the U.S. to pursue a bachelor's degree or even a master's degree, if they can remain in their country and complete a certification or get a standards-based digital badge, that can be very attractive. As you said, Jeff, tech is making this international play much easier. Self-paced e-learning—that's incredibly friendly to all time zones. This idea of if the learner can engage in her own time and space. I think that artificial intelligence is a type of technology that's going to make the move to international even easier because you'll have tools that can make translation and localization faster and cheaper, allowing you to potentially access markets that aren't even primarily English-speaking, if your materials are in English primarily.

Jeff Cobb: [00:06:06] Right. We focused a bit on U.S. providers, but all of this applies no matter where you are in the world, where you're sitting. You can leverage technology as your tool to help you reach that global audience. We've got that turmoil in higher education creating opportunities. We've got the opportunity for every learning business to potentially be an international business. Those are the first two.

Jeff Cobb: [00:06:28] And then the third one is that learners and—critically—employers increasingly seek continuous competency, or what we're labeling continuous competency.

Celisa Steele: [00:06:39] This global learning economy in which we now live requires that workers continually replenish their skills and knowledge. Jeff, you have this phrase “the other 50 years,” which is this idea of once people complete whatever college or higher education degree they might get, there's still a long period of time, on average around 50 years, from that point in time until when they might die. There are still all those years of work where they need to be upskilling and reskilling and trying to stay current in order to be able to do their job. That

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creates this need for continuous competency, as you said. This idea of let's not just have the one-offs, let's pay attention to learning as a process and not just those events, and let's figure out how to continuously retool and stay up-to-date.

Jeff Cobb: [00:07:36] Yes. This goes back to the...well, not even so much the turmoil in higher education but just that higher education model in general—this idea that you go to school, get a degree, and then you're set in terms of at least the formal learning you need to do for the rest of your life. And that's never really been true. We've had data for a long time saying the shelf life of the knowledge you get from degrees is low, plus we've always known, at least intuitively, that informal learning throughout a career is really critical, and that's starting to get more recognition now. It's definitely the case that, if you want to thrive, it's really no longer optional to keep learning during those other 50 years. It's why terms like “upskilling” and “reskilling” have become such buzzwords, why we have so much focus on that these days. That's just not going to go away. In fact, it's probably going to shift and change quite a bit as we start to figure out where does human capability and human learning fit in relationship to machine capability and machine learning? We're going to have to be continually figuring that out. And learning businesses exist to serve the people who are trying to navigate those other 50 years and help them with figuring this out.

Jeff Cobb: [00:08:51] At Tagoras, we partner with professional and trade associations, continuing education units, training firms, and other learning businesses to help them understand market realities and potential, to connect better with existing customers and find new ones, and to make smart investment decisions around product development and portfolio management. Drawing on our expertise in lifelong learning, market assessment, and strategy formulation, we can help you achieve greater reach, revenue, and impact. Learn more at tagoras.com/more.

Celisa Steele: [00:09:28] Number three that we just talked about, learners and employers increasingly seek continuous competency. Number four, relationships with subject matter experts are different. And this ties to the fact that SMEs have more opportunities than ever for producing and delivering content on their own. Again, this gets back to tech and what tech has enabled in so many ways, where there are many more tools that make it essentially a WYSIWYG approach to designing, developing, and creating learning experiences. Subject matter experts don't necessarily need learning businesses as a channel, as a way to get access to learners the way that they did in the past.

Jeff Cobb: [00:10:14] Yes, you can look at companies, sites like Udemy, for example, which are huge marketplaces for courses now. Any individual expert can go and create a course that's

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going to provide them with a channel directly to learners. It's also going to provide them with a business-to-business channel because Udemy's got a large corporate presence now as well. So subject matter experts have a lot more options. And then, at the same time, learners really are demanding more of subject matter experts, presenters, teachers than they ever have before. Most subject matter experts have never really been trained to be effective teachers. They're usually experts in whatever field, industry, topic area that they specialize in, but that's very different from knowing how to teach people effectively what you know.

Celisa Steele: [00:11:03] For us, this points to the need for learning businesses to invest in helping their subject matter experts improve, in helping them be excellent in how they deliver not only the content but how to deliver it effectively so that the learners are able to take it away and apply it to their lives and their work. There's a real focus on the relationship between learning businesses and subject matter experts needing to be more collaborative and recognizing that the subject matter experts are bringing certain resources and skill sets into the learning business, and then the learning business can help in other ways, often primarily around this idea of what do we know about learning science? What do we know about andragogy? How can we help make sure that the content that subject matter experts are presenting is delivered effectively?

Jeff Cobb: [00:11:59] And we do have an offering to help with that. Many listeners will be aware of our "Presenting for Impact" training for presenters to help them create more effective presentations for Webinars, online courses, those types of things. That's available for free. You can easily find it on the Leading Learning site. Just look in the navigation there for "Presenting for Impact," but we'll also be sure to link to it here in the show notes.

Jeff Cobb: [00:12:25] I'll throw in one other thing here, as it's occurring to me. Probably every one of these points, we can state the point, and then, as a wrap-up, say, "Just add AI, and see what happens when AI is added." AI is also going to change this because what a human subject matter expert is needed for is going to be different. It already is different, I think, than it was one to two years ago. And another one to three, three to five, or five to ten years, that's going to keep changing. What role do subject matter experts, human subject matter experts play in learning environments? What does that mean for the SME, the subject matter expert? What does it mean for the learning business? What does it mean for the learner? That's territory that learning businesses are going to have to lead the way through.

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Celisa Steele: [00:13:07] There's another aspect there. I thought what you were going to say at first, Jeff, around AI is also the fact that AI can be used to help your subject matter experts improve...

Jeff Cobb: [00:13:20] Correct.

Celisa Steele: [00:13:20] ...their delivery. We know of one learning business that is leveraging an AI coaching tool to try to help its presenters make better presentations. This is taking some of the burden off of the learning business in terms of having a human resource there to coach the presenter, but they're using an AI tool that can help the presenter become more aware of pauses or stumblings, as I am stumbling here now. That's another aspect of how AI could help in this relationship between learning businesses and subject matter experts.

Jeff Cobb: [00:13:55] Definitely. So that was number four, relationships with SMEs (subject matter experts) will be different. Number five is learning businesses need to understand how learning happens.

Celisa Steele: [00:14:09] They do need to understand how learning happens, and it can be easy, perhaps, to focus more on some of the logistics or operational sides of running a learning business—scheduling the courses, planning the conferences, making the e-learning. But learning businesses also need to cultivate a deep knowledge of effective learning principles. The market out there for lifelong learning, professional development, and continuing education really is much more sophisticated. For most learning businesses that we hear from, it's also much more competitive, and so there's a real need to be excellent, both in terms of the operational, logistical pieces but also in terms of how to be effective in terms of helping learners to learn.

Celisa Steele: [00:15:04] I will say, too, that, in our experience, most learning businesses need more education staff. They need more of those instructional designers, the programmers, or whoever's going to actually be building the things. And they also tend to need a higher caliber of education staff. So there's a quantity and a quality aspect to this. Part of that means that you need to invest in the education talent that you have on staff. One area that may need more attention, in at least some learning businesses, is investing in in-house subject matter expertise so that you aren't necessarily reliant—or wholly reliant—on outside subject matter experts to help you develop and deliver your content.

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Jeff Cobb: [00:15:52] Yes, and none of this, we should say, is to ding or to diss current education staff. A lot of people end up in those education roles, particularly in organizations like trade and professional associations, kind of accidentally. They may not have come out of an L&D background, an instructional design background, a learning science background. A lot of people end up coming over from marketing or membership or other roles. People fall into associations by accident in the first place, we know. So, yes, it's a matter of training the staff that are there, bringing them up to speed, but then also starting to consciously hire in some of those professionally trained instructional designers and other staff and, as you just said, Celisa, investing in that subject matter expertise.

Jeff Cobb: [00:16:35] An analogy that we use sometimes is what Netflix has done with original programming. Like Netflix, you used to get stuff from every place else and put it out there, much like an education staff might just be gathering presentations from subject matter experts and packaging them into a conference or packaging them into a series of Webinars. But then Netflix has moved from there into going into highly original award-winning programming in that home entertainment market, winning awards for it and everything else. It's redefined them as a provider of their particular type of media. I think a lot of learning businesses would benefit from a similar sort of transformation.

Celisa Steele: [00:17:19] You're right, Jeff, definitely don't want to diss anyone in terms of talking about.... Perhaps what I said may have made it sound like a current education staff might be lacking. That's not necessarily what I meant, but I think that this ties to the third point around learners and employers increasingly seek continuous competency. The learning businesses also need to live that out. As a learning business, if you're going to walk the walk, you want to be supporting your education staff in developing new skills, in coming to a deeper understanding of topics like instructional design or learning science, and so making sure that you're investing in that and helping them to continuously become more competent in their roles.

Jeff Cobb: [00:18:03] Yes, I think that point five is around pursuing excellence in both your understanding and your execution of learning and the facilitation, the creation of learning experiences. But that needs to be paired with our point number six.

Celisa Steele: [00:18:18] Which is learning businesses need sales and business development skills. We've already talked about increasing competition, and, in that increasingly competitive marketplace, it's difficult for learning businesses to thrive solely with business-to-consumer sales of their products. It's going to make sense for a lot of learning businesses to be able to sell

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in quantity to other organizations (into corporations, health systems, or governmental agencies). And then, as part of doing that, in many instances, learning businesses are going to benefit by being able to deliver customized solutions, taking content that they already have but modifying it a bit to fit that corporate buyer, for example. And then, as part of that customization, they'll be able to charge a premium price for that deliverable.

Jeff Cobb: [00:19:15] Right. I think whether you're going for this more business-to-business approach or even with a current business-to-consumer (maybe selling to individual members) approach, business development skills can really help you to create and grow partnerships that help you take those further—better enable you to get into organizations, better enable you to reach audiences beyond what might be in your current database. So having the skills to find and to develop meaningful partnerships, along with being able to sell both to those partners and to organizations, all of that is a level of skills in both selling and business development that most learning businesses don't possess right now. Most learning businesses, in our experience, have marketing skills because that's really what they've been using—marketing tools to get the word out and get people to click on e-commerce transactions and things like that. But that's different from really selling, really doing human-to-human-type business development.

Celisa Steele: [00:20:15] I do think that while business development roles have historically not been particularly prevalent in learning businesses, I do feel like there's a recent-ish focus on business development. There's a relatively new association—Professionals for Association Revenue—that is focused on business development and sales in large part. I do think that there's an understanding that these are important skill sets, and so, once you realize the importance, then it's a matter of figuring out how to either hire in those skill sets or cultivate those skills in the staff that you already have.

Jeff Cobb: [00:20:54] Yes, and we're partnered with PAR (the Professionals for Association Revenue) in a number of ways. But we're also seeing this in other parts of the learning business landscape that we're serving—commercial firms who are looking more for those larger sales into organizations to leverage their intellectual property. Or, in the academic continuing education world, much more emphasis now on working with employers—selling into employers, selling into states and government districts with the educational offerings, as much as or more than the historical focus on enrolling learner by learner, individual by individual.

Celisa Steele: [00:21:35] Our seventh point is demand for demonstrable impact will grow. I think this is probably a bit of a no-brainer, but there are some factors contributing to this demand for that ability to show that an educational experience is having impact. Part of one of those factors

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is our scarcity of time, or we just tend to feel time-poor. If we're time-poor, we want to make sure whatever time we're going to spend learning is going to provide some results. Another aspect is the fact that there're so many free or very low-cost learning experiences that, if you really want a learner to open up their wallet and pay you for an experience, particularly if it's, perhaps, a premium-priced offering, you really need to make that case about why learning this way is going to benefit them. They want that evidence that there's some real value in that time and money that they're going to spend with you.

Jeff Cobb: [00:22:40] Yes, and our past research and ongoing work with clients suggests that most learning businesses aren't measuring educational impact to any significant degree with consistency. Not doing follow-on assessments of any type to determine whether the learning has been retained, whether it is being applied, or, even outside of that hard data, just consistently collecting testimonials, statements from learners saying that they got the educational value out of it, that it has made a difference in their job or their career, or those sorts of things. There are many ways to get the evidence of impact out there, and it really needs to be built into the standard practices of every learning business to do that.

Celisa Steele: [00:23:24] Yes, it can be numbers-based. It can be more of the softer approach around the testimonials that you mentioned, Jeff. You can also somewhat combine the two with something like the Brinkerhoff Success Case Method, where you take a little bit more of a buttoned-up approach around, in some ways, blowing up and going deep on a testimonial from someone who really did experience impact. You're really looking at why was it impactful. There are ways to do that, as you said, and ways all along, from hard to easy, from numbers-driven to much more story-based. I think that the medical field may be offering some examples that could potentially be leveraged in other areas. They've been focused in the medical field on things like quality improvement and performance improvement for a long time, and so looking at what they're doing there might give you ideas, even if your learning business isn't in the medical field.

Jeff Cobb: [00:24:23] Yes. It seems to be a lot more data in general in medical and health more broadly, but particularly medical. I think it's worth following, paying attention to the work of someone like Dr. Brian McGowan, who's been on the podcast many times, who's very focused on getting that good analytical data out of learning experiences and certainly being able to show that the impact has been achieved.

Celisa Steele: [00:24:45] Yes, Brian is a great resource. We'll make sure to link to at least the most recent podcast conversation that we had with him in these show notes.

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Jeff Cobb: [00:24:54] That was number seven around needing to address that demand for demonstrable impact. It is out there. Again., our survey data, our discussions with employers and learners show that it is indeed out there. Number eight is that knowledge management and learning are merging.

Celisa Steele: [00:25:14] Yes, I think that we've seen evidence of this merging repeatedly in consulting engagements. And I think that, as part of a deeper understanding of learning that we have now and how learning happens and how we can support it, organizations want to empower individuals not just to participate in formal education experiences but also to be able to do some of those just-in-time, point-of-need kinds of things. Even being able to find documents, discussions, or videos that are going to help them answer a targeted question and doing that at the point that they really need it, that's huge. That's on the knowledge management side. It's whatever resources the organization has, being able to tap into those efficiently at the point of need, and that can also then go along with the more formal education. But I think folks are recognizing that formal education, those courses, those contained courses, for example, that's not sufficient.

Jeff Cobb: [00:26:17] Yes. We make this point because, traditionally, particularly in larger organizations, knowledge management has been seen as a silo of its own. Basically, all of that management of different content—objects, documents, videos, all of that sort of thing—different software to deal with that (you have things like SharePoint), which are related to knowledge management. What we're saying is it's an artificial separation. Both the learning and the design of learning and the management of knowledge and the design of knowledge experiences, those need to become of a piece as we go forward.

Celisa Steele: [00:26:53] And, again, this is the place where we add AI to this point.

Jeff Cobb: [00:26:57] Yes, just add AI.

Celisa Steele: [00:26:59] You can imagine with custom GPTs that are built off of an organization's internal resources, that being able to support learners at that point of need is going to probably become easier and easier. And it's a role then that something like a ChatGPT, but built custom for an organization, may be able to play a significant role going forward.

Jeff Cobb: [00:27:22] Definitely. So that's number eight, knowledge management and learning merging. And this really is related, I think, number nine, blurring and blending will define the user experience.

Celisa Steele: [00:27:37] Right. With that knowledge management and learning we were just talking about, you already are tying together different types of platforms than what you might think of as a "learning platform."

Jeff Cobb: [00:27:50] And different mindsets, really.

Celisa Steele: [00:27:51] And different mindsets as well. You can layer on top of that the ubiquity of cell phones. We have social media where we can learn things. We have chatbots and these custom GPTs now. All of that is really leading to "always on" learning, that you can learn at any point in time and anywhere. All of this is blurring those lines. We have things like flipped learning that we talked a lot about in the past decades, and I don't necessarily hear that term so much anymore. But flipped learning is about blurring the lines between the classroom and what you might do through technology prior to ever showing up in the classroom. What all this points to is that a learning business needs to have a plan for connecting with learners where they are—and where they are is many places. You've got to be aware of all those places where learners might be needing help learning from you and try to figure out how can you be there.

Jeff Cobb: [00:28:55] Yes, I think about my own activities as a learner in how I do things, and I'm always flowing between. I've got things I'm typing into Evernote, which I'll do on the laptop, but then I'll also do on the phone. And then I'm accessing Feedly for my RSS feeds, and, of course, then there's whatever's going on in e-mail. And I may watch this video and learn something and then go back to Evernote and put something in Evernote about it or bookmark something in Feedly as a result of it. It's a flow, really, and I think helping learners to navigate that flow is important. I think, increasingly, curation is very important because there is just so much out there, and anybody who can help me get to that next resource much more efficiently, effectively and then use it in a meaningful way is going to be very valuable to me as I am going through this blended and blurry learning experience.

Celisa Steele: [00:29:48] We did say "blended," and that points to this idea of online and offline. I think a lot of that changed or shifted with COVID, and it became much more common to have those blended approaches. And now, as we're post-pandemic, there's still a little bit of a shaking out to happen in terms of the right balance. But I think there's a new-found appreciation for what can be done in person and what can be done online. If you're going to

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gather in person, make sure to make it meaningful and valuable, that it was worth the time for people to come together, and then make use of technology to help people prepare for or follow up after those meetings. We're in this state of still trying to shake out what that right balance is, what it looks like. But all of that, again, points to this blurring and blending, and I think things are going to only get blurrier and blendier as we move forward.

Jeff Cobb: [00:30:48] Yes, I think, at this point, if you're designing a face-to-face experience of any sort and you're not building into that process as a standard practice now "Let's think about which parts of this could actually be done online, on a phone, whatever, without having to show up at this event. What would support it before? What would support it after? What would help to improve the actual face-to-face experience?" You have to be thinking of that now when you design. And I think the flip side is probably true too. As you focus more and more on designing online experiences, asking yourself, "At what point would it make sense for whoever we have engaged online to come together face to face in some meaningful way?" Because you're probably going to find some great new face-to-face opportunities in thinking that way about the learning experiences.

Celisa Steele: [00:31:44] We are now at number ten.

Jeff Cobb: [00:31:46] Number ten.

Celisa Steele: [00:31:47] The last of the points that we brought to the table today. And this is RISC is more essential than ever.

Jeff Cobb: [00:31:54] We needed to throw an acronym in here at the end just for good measure. So the RISC we're talking about is not your typical R- I- S- K risk; it is R- I- S- C, and that stands for Rapid Intelligence with Strategic Confidence. We think that's going to become increasingly critical. Let's talk a little bit about what we mean by that.

Celisa Steele: [00:32:19] Yes. What we've seen is that the folks who really knock it out of the park are learning businesses who are able to detect market trends and see those early and then respond in strategic ways. If you can see what's coming or what's right around the horizon and then position yourself to have the resource that's going to help someone as that trend crests, then you're going to set yourself up for success. You're going to be providing those learners with important content and resources, and it's going to then bring in that important revenue for your learning business.

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Jeff Cobb: [00:32:58] This is really the idea of foresight that we've talked with Jeff De Cagna about. Is that going to come out before or after this episode?

Celisa Steele: [00:33:06] It's going to come out after this episode.

Jeff Cobb: [00:33:07] It's going to come out after this episode, so you'll have to look to the future to have some foresight into finding out what Jeff De Cagna is saying about foresight. You can easily find that by just typing in "Jeff De Cagna" and "foresight"—but, really, this idea of learning with the future. You're doing the work to track what's going on out there in the market, and you're using that to inform you and give you some confidence around making some strategic decisions, some things that you're going to pilot, some things that you're going to try. When we're talking about monitoring the market, we're not talking about rocket science here. It's things like your analytics from social media and from e-mail. It's getting feedback from running surveys with SurveyMonkey or whatever it is. It's tuning into those member and customer conversations that you're seeing in discussion forums or in social media and other places. Taking advantage of all these agile market research methods that are now available to us as businesses of any type.

Celisa Steele: [00:34:08] Right. And the RISC (that rapid intelligence with strategic confidence) has to do with...yes, you need to be listening, and you need to be understanding what are the trends, what's being talked about, what are the opportunities? But, then, of course, you have to translate that into action. As you said, figure out what is it you want to pilot or try out, put out into the market, and see how it responds. I will say that, essentially, what we're doing with these ten points that we brought to the table, that's part of this detecting market trends. These are ten things that we think are shaping the market of lifelong learning. It's tuning into these and then thinking about, "What does this mean for my learning business? What does this mean for what's in our portfolio? What does it mean for what we might need to add to our portfolio?"

Jeff Cobb: [00:34:50] Yes, we're trying really to practice what we preach because this is the kind of approach that's represented in our Market Insight Matrix, for example, which is a tool that we regularly recommend organizations to use as a way to put a framework around that rapid intelligence gathering and testing that goes with it. It's a good companion to this whole idea of RISC.

Celisa Steele: [00:35:14] Now, a little bit of a reveal here at the end, Jeff. We actually first wrote about these ten points some time ago. I'm not sure how long ago, but it was on the Tagoras

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blog—back when Tagoras had a blog, before Leading Learning even existed. I do know it was at least pre-2016 because we revised these points a little bit in 2016.

Jeff Cobb: [00:35:36] Yes, it's been quite a while, and these same points remain relevant, basically, which you could take as maybe we're not making much progress against them, but I think, probably, what's more likely is that these are persistent and perennial right now. They characterize the age that we're living and working through. At some point we'll have to sunset some of them, but it feels like they've all been highlighted by the changes that we've seen in technology and that we continue to see with things like AI coming along, the changes we've seen in our understanding of learning science and what works there. The shift in the nature of work, employment, and the global economy. In general, those are all things that were building coming into the 21st century and are continuing right now, and we're still trying to work our way through them as learning businesses.

Celisa Steele: [00:36:30] So these are our ten points. As a reflection question, we encourage you to think about what would you add, or what might you change in that list? This is a great question for you to consider on your own or with your team, if you have one. Or pick up the phone and call a colleague, or meet for a coffee to discuss.

Jeff Cobb: [00:36:49] Maybe we should tick off the list real quick so that people can think about it. One was the turmoil in higher education will create opportunities. Two, every learning business is potentially an international organization. Three, learners and employers increasingly seek continuous competency. Four, relationships with SMEs will be different. Five, learning businesses need to understand how learning happens.

Celisa Steele: [00:37:18] Six, learning businesses need sales and business development skills. Seven, demand for demonstrable impact will grow. Eight, knowledge management and learning are merging. Nine, blurring and blending define the user experience. And ten, RISC (R-I-S-C) is more essential than ever.

Celisa Steele: [00:37:49] For learning businesses that want to thrive in the evolving lifelong learning market, identifying metatrends and what they might mean in terms of risks and opportunities is crucial. That's why we offer these ten points for your consideration.

Jeff Cobb: [00:38:03] At leadinglearning.com/episode413, you'll find show notes, a transcript, and options for subscribing to the podcast. If you haven't yet, please do take a minute to subscribe.

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Celisa Steele: [00:38:15] We'd be grateful if you would take a moment to rate us on Apple Podcasts or wherever you listen, especially if you enjoy the show. Jeff and I personally appreciate those reviews and ratings, and they help the podcast show up when others search for content on leading a learning business.

Jeff Cobb: [00:38:31] And please spread the word about Leading Learning. You can do that in a one-on-one exchange with a colleague, or you can do it through social media. In the show notes at leadinglearning.com/episode413, you'll find a link to connect with us on LinkedIn.

Celisa Steele: [00:38:45] Thanks again, and see you next time on the Leading Learning Podcast.

[music for this episode by DanoSongs, www.danosongs.com]

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