

Helping you create competitive advantage and  
develop recreational learning experiences.

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1. COLLABORATION. Organizations increasingly see value in combining their limited resources to achieve common goals. But collaboration, termed an "unnatural act" by one wag, isn't easy. To help, the Leader to Leader Institute (formerly the Drucker Foundation) has written "Meeting the Collaboration Challenge" on partnerships between not-for-profits and businesses. In addition to downloading the book, you can also sign up for their monthly e-mail at <http://www.pfdf.org/collaboration/index.html> .

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2. CREATING CONNECTIONS. Collaboration can be essential in efforts to further public understanding of research, where museums, researchers, and media can fruitfully combine expertise and resources. AltaMira Press, <http://www.altamirapress.com/>, is publishing a book on this topic to which I contributed a chapter. You can preview it at [http://www.museumspusmore.com/museums\\_more\\_about\\_art.html](http://www.museumspusmore.com/museums_more_about_art.html) or see a summary presentation from ASTC 2003 at <http://MuseumsPlusMore.com>.

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3. VR & IMMERSIVE THEATERS. Virtual Reality has quietly been advancing beyond head-mounted displays that limited immersion to only one person at a time. Improvements in computer <http://www.sgi.com/industries/sciences/museums/> and projector <http://www.barco.com/VirtualReality/> technologies are making small group and theater experiences possible. Systems are now even available for less than \$50,000 <http://www.visbox.com/boxMain.html>. As always, the challenge is developing engaging software that goes beyond the gee-whiz, whether content comes from science, art, or the humanities. This and other issues are explored in Immersive Interactive Virtual Reality and Informal Education: <http://ui4all.ics.forth.gr/i3SD2000/Roussou.PDF>.

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4. ADULTS-ONLY MUSEUM. No, not the Sex Museum in NYC. It's the Dana Centre in London <http://www.danacentre.org.uk/>, opening as part of the Science Museum. Although children are not strictly barred, its target audience is 18 to 45 year-olds. The

Centre is designed to engage grown-ups in provocative debate on hot science topics "away from the 'safe' family environment" typical of museums. The focus is on a café-bar (described by an observer as Ikea on acid) and programming that includes stand-up comedy and events that stimulate dialogue. Led by Graham Farmelo, it's a fascinating venture that may change the way you think about your own institution.

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5. INQUIRY-BASED LEARNING. The University of Illinois has created a website and virtual community on inquiry-based learning: <http://www.inquiry.uiuc.edu/index.php>. Although most of the applications are designed for classroom use, Inquiry Page provides resources and information that you can transfer to museum education.

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6. NANO BOOK. If you'd like to find out why nanotechnology is getting so much attention (as well as hype), I'd recommend "Nano: The Emerging Science of Nanotechnology" by Ed Regis. Although not the most recent book on this topic, it's engaging and written for the nontechnical reader. You might even find it at your local library.

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7. PERSONAL NOTE. While continuing to assist NSF in the capacity of Program Officer for Informal Science Education, I am working with a wide range of clients, including the U.S. Department of Energy, National Health Museum, and others. I'd be glad to discuss ways I can assist you.

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