

## NEXT LIVES HERE

*by Neville Pinto, President, University of Cincinnati*

Have you noticed that change itself is changing?

It's as if reality is being hyper-realized.

Life is faster.

The globe is smaller.

Technology is smarter.

Inequality is greater.

Expectations are higher.

At every turn, these uber-changes demand more of us and from us.

The choice is subtle but significant: **Lead by design or follow by default.**

At the University of Cincinnati, we're pursuing **a new strategic direction to lead urban public universities into a new era of innovation and impact.**

We call it **Next Lives Here.**

Leading by design means bending the future in one's direction.

But boundaries don't break themselves.

New ways of thinking and doing flow from a "next" mindset. Some examples?

Next is heard in the curious question: How so? Why not? What if?

Next is seen in the creative departure.

Next is felt in the breakthrough cure.

Next is unlocked by the disruptive theory.

Next is unleashed by the rapid prototype.

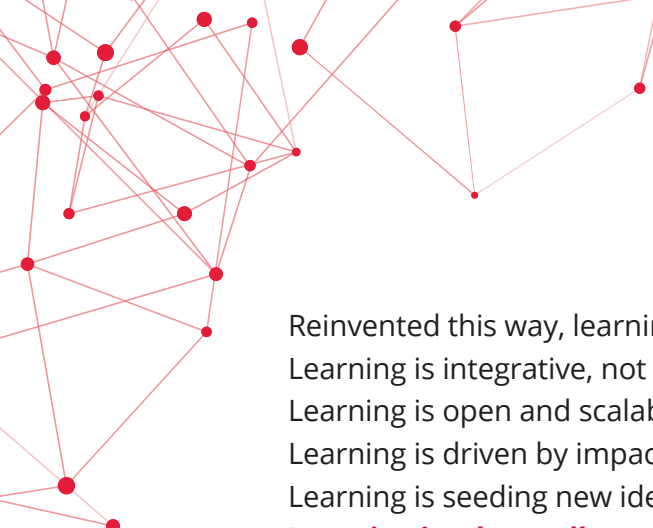
**In other words, next is about bringing there and beyond to the here and now.**

Universities that grow the next will be the pacesetters.

But doing so demands disrupting academia's conventional aims and ways.

In short, next-minded universities will push to redefine learning itself—from a product we putatively own to a platform we purposefully share and scale.

Or, as Jamie Merisotis makes plain in *America Needs Talent*, higher education must graduate from an insular system consumed by credentialing to an open ecosystem liberated by learning.



Reinvented this way, learning is a mindset, not a major.  
Learning is integrative, not isolated.  
Learning is open and scalable, not fixed and final.  
Learning is driven by impact, not activities.  
Learning is seeding new ideas, not simply stacking existing knowledge.  
**Learning is, above all, a calling that demands lifelong devotion and renewal.**

Learning how to learn, adeptly and consistently, is more than a hobby. Increasingly, it will be the coin of the realm in our 21st century knowledge economy.

Skeptical?

The massive online course “Learning How to Learn” has reportedly engaged nearly 2 million students from more than 200 countries.

Meanwhile, a *Forbes* contributor deemed learning how to learn “today’s superpower.”

And perhaps the savviest case for ushering in a new era of learning originates from the thought leaders at Deloitte’s Center for the Edge, who consider scalable learning to be *the* major driver of performance improvement for organizations seeking to thrive in a faster, ever-changing world.

Amazon, unsurprisingly, is leading the way, by design. Recently, they appointed Candace Thille, a Stanford professor and pioneer in the field of learning science, to “scale and innovate workplace learning at Amazon.”

Next-minded universities also offer, in my view, a welcomed opportunity to broaden the role of president from chief cheerleader to chief learner.

Don’t get me wrong.

Trumpeting the work and wins of a great institution is a privilege.

But my true pleasure comes in constantly learning from and with a diverse community of creative artists, original thinkers, inspiring teachers and innovative doers who bravely push the limits of what’s possible.

**That’s next.**

**And it lives here at the University of Cincinnati.**

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