

# An Occasional Update...

from Rob Muller and Practical Strategy LLC

## NEW WEBSITE:

[www.practicalstrategy.org](http://www.practicalstrategy.org)

## FOR INFO:

[info@practicalstrategy.org](mailto:info@practicalstrategy.org)

### *The "we couldn't have said it better" department*

"When a leadership team realizes that strategy is really the most important opportunity for learning in a company, it is free to drop some of the more cumbersome trappings of traditional strategic planning." Keith McFarland, author of *The Breakthrough Company: How Everyday Companies Become Extraordinary Performers*

### *Attention late bloomers - It's not too late*

In *Old Masters and Young Geniuses: The Two Lifecycles of Artistic Creativity* David Galenson uses economic data to look at how not all genius is the domain of youthful brilliance. While we might associate creative genius with youth, Cezanne, Twain, Yeats, Hitchcock, Berlin and others created their best work after the age of 50. So we're not off the hook yet.

### *More overhead in 8<sup>th</sup> grade carpool*

*Setting:* same school, same curriculum, same test, same standards, two (honors) classes

*Student 1:* (indignant) I have SO much English homework. Like essays every day. It so so unfair. We have to read so much.

*Student 2:* (gloating) We hardly ever have any homework. When we do, it's just a paragraph so I do it during class.

*Prying parent:* Gee, I hear learning to write well is pretty important and takes a lot of practice.

*Student 1:* (proudly) Yeah, my teacher says writing a lot is the best thing we can do to prepare for the future in anything.

*Student 2:* (indignant) How come we don't get to write a lot?

It's been far too long since our last update, so with apologies for the lack of a more personal note, here's some of the latest. **With best wishes for a very happy, peaceful and fulfilling 2008.**

## Tackling global environment, development and humanitarian problems....

We are privileged to work with Jane Goodall and the staff and Board of [the Jane Goodall Institute](#) to develop and implement their strategy for continued growth and impact. The Institute's global vision spans chimpanzee and endangered species protection, community conservation and sustainable development, and youth leadership and environmental awareness. Working with Board, leadership team and staff, we're helping address the opportunities and challenges that accompany big ideas, compelling mission and rapid expansion.

This intersection of strategy and management with environment and education issues is an area of expertise we hope to continue to expand in the future.

*Got a strategy or implementation challenge? Let us know.*

## Recent work on the education front includes...

We recently started a project with the [National Institute for Literacy](#), a government agency charged with helping address the nation's most pressing literacy challenges.

For [Achieve, Inc.](#) and the Education Trust we assessed the role of career readiness and industry certification in the context of a broader high school reform agenda.

With the [Fordham Institute](#), we're working on a volume of essays about education data - what policy makers and practitioners need, when they need it, and why they don't get it, culminating in some ideas about the ideal education data system.

For the [Association of Proprietary Colleges](#) (APC) in New York State, we developed a draft data book presenting the case for member institutions education programs.

*Got ideas about what education data you need, when you need it, and how to get it better? Email us.*

## In Other News

We're assisting a start-up venture called [Every Village a Computer](#), trying to bring high quality used computers and software to rural villages in Ghana, and providing the education and technical support to see that donations are used and useful. *Want to help? Email us.*

### Improving grants management

has been the focus of our multiyear work with the Corporation for National Service - [click here for our white paper](#) with Plexus Scientific Corporation. *Want to talk about improving how your grants are managed? Email us.*

Muller continues as affiliated faculty at [Georgetown University](#) teaching graduate public policy students about higher education policy and high school reform.

**Join Us.** We're always scouting for new ideas, projects, potential partners and consultants to work with us. Email [info@practicalstrategy.org](mailto:info@practicalstrategy.org) for more.