

struction. That having been said, you still have to find the appropriate media to deliver instruction to the individual student.”

He explains that this involves identifying the level of student, the complexity of the subject, the time the person has available to devote to that instruction, and the purpose for teaching the subject matter or skill. Technology, he believes, can assist in educating, but technology is not necessarily the answer to every question in education.

Smith notes that there are people at all ages who find technology difficult. When it comes to students, he prefers to measure “*brain* age, rather than *bone* age.” He believes we have to give credit to people who keep their minds alive.

One of the hopeful things about education, he says, is that “We can take a worker who has been in the workforce for a long time, who has developed some *bone* age, but has a lively mind and is willing to consider new ideas, and expose the mind to education. We don’t want to, in any way, disregard the wonderful life experiences this person had. We just want to add to that the flexibility of mind that education encourages.”

Never Stop Learning

If he has a learning philosophy, it could be captured in three simple words: “Never stop learning.” Smith believes it is vitally important for each individual to keep his or her mind engaged throughout their whole life.

“You just don’t stop learning when you complete your formal schooling. And although we can provide more schooling, more education, and more training experiences along the way of a career, it is really the willingness of the individual to entertain new ideas.

“We learn from everything,” he says. “From our formal education experiences, from our interaction with others on the job, and from the life experiences we encounter every day. We need to keep the process of formally entertaining new ideas all of the time.

“As I mentioned earlier, we need to keep an educational portfolio much like a financial portfolio. As individuals have to manage their investment portfolios, they likewise have to manage their educational portfolios. We ought to encourage people to do that, to have a sense of their educational net worth from accumulation of multiple experiences.

“If we in the Department can contribute to building individuals, the members of our workforce, through helping them with those investments, I think that is a valuable contribution we can make,” says Smith. “It benefits the individual, but I’m absolutely certain that it benefits the DoD in a very, very direct way.”

Meeting Challenges, Measuring Progress

Smith is excited about the new challenges he faces as Chancellor. “I left a job as head of an institution of education, a college where I truly enjoyed working, because I believe Secretary Cohen and Dr. Hamre [Deputy Secretary of Defense John Hamre] have a very good appreciation of the changes that Defense needs to make.

And part of that challenge, says Smith, will be measuring our progress. “As you’re taught at DSMC, the process is not manageable without measurements. We’ll be working cooperatively with all players to ensure we can breathe some new life or shed some new light on this rather under-organized process of civilian education, and *help it help us*,” he concludes, “to deliver a more effective DoD education.”

QUESTIONS ABOUT ACQUISITION?

If there is any information you need to know about Department of Defense acquisition, the place to look is the Defense Acquisition Deskbook located on the Web at <http://www.deskbook.osd.mil/>.

WHAT IS DESKBOOK?

The Defense Acquisition Deskbook is an electronic knowledge presentation system providing the most current acquisition policy for all DoD Services and agencies. Deskbook’s extensive reference material includes information on the various functions, disciplines, activities, and processes of the Department of Defense beginning with “User” requirements, flowing through concept development, program establishment, contracting, testing, production, sustainment, and ending with disposal.

Deskbook’s database includes over 1000 mandatory and discretionary policy documents, DoD and component discretionary practices, software tools and descriptions,

front-line wisdom, and advice, formats, and samples.

Deskbook is sponsored by the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition Reform), and the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition and Technology)/Acquisition Program Integration.

The Defense Acquisition Deskbook originated from an acquisition reform initiative to reduce directives while assisting managers to make informed decisions.

Its capabilities include: complete text of documents, full-word search, and structured information grouped by subject matter and level of authority.

DESKBOOK’S TWO MAIN FEATURES

1. A Deskbook reference set listing mandatory and discretionary documents such as laws, directives, policies, regulations, and guidance and handbooks. The reference set also includes forms and templates, front-

line wisdom and advice, and software-tool descriptions.

2. The Deskbook Web site is an entry point for acquisition information, a place to receive up-to-date policy and procedures, to receive answers to your acquisition questions, and a way to communicate with the acquisition community. Through the Web site you have the ability to:

- Ask A Professor – Accessible from Deskbook’s toolbar as well as the World Wide Web, submit your acquisition-related questions and receive a response from a professor. You can also search previously asked questions and answers.
- Learn about upcoming events and training opportunities.
- View new policies and guidance.
- Obtain access to pertinent Web sites through acquisition links.