



P E R S P E C T I V E S

By Professor McKinley Burt

What Do You Mean, You Can't Remember?

It was not surprising that several readers said they could identify with last week's statement, "The Best Tests and Curriculum Are In Your Mind." Though consciously unaware of using this approach to the learning process, many people do employ it. Believe me when I tell you that "learning can be fun at any age." Let us see if that isn't so.

Being able to retrieve and deliver information "on call" is what it is all about -- the bottom line! that is what a computer is all about, supposedly. But think about it -- this machine has first to be told what to do. Data or information has to be inserted in a highly organized form before it can be retrieved in any useful manner. And the "mind" that is relying upon this device must therefore be equally well organized in order to effectively insert data (programming) and to retrieve it.

What's the answer in the era of

the "information explosion", when before, our poor mental circuits may already have been quite overloaded? Most of just routinely file new facts away somewhere in a cluttered "memory bank". A number of people who have seen my presentation on local television have asked, how can you stand there for an hour and a half straight and deliver all that information without halting, stuttering or a lot of "er-ahs"? You sure know your subject matter.

"Knowing" is not quite enough! You have to be at ease, with your mind free enough to allow you to 'deal with your audience' -- to be able to respond with your eyes and a glance to those nods of assent and murmurs evoked by Key points. You need an opportunity to address unforeseen audience responses to particular parts of your presentation, and you must have "Facts On File" to deal with that. Now, we know one thing for sure; a contractor does not go about building a house in some helter-skelter fashion. HE HAS THE ARCHITECT'S PLANS!

That is what it is all about, a "Plan." A book, any book, has a plan or commonly accepted format. You find a "Table of Contents" where the subject matter is organized in a classification scheme which proceeds in orderly fashion to carry you through a chapter by chapter presentation of the subject matter. There is an introduction and/or preface that gives an overview of the "journey" you are about to take. In the final

pages you are given perhaps a summary, an index, a glossary, and maybe a bibliography. Many books would be very difficult to use, almost useless, if they did not have this schema. YOUR MIND can be almost useless if it is not as well organized.

There are of course many gimmicks and devices on the market, all advertised to "improve your memory" -- high priced tapes 'guaranteed' to provide you with instant recall, and there are expensive seminars sworn to make you a better student or a more effective speaker, or even a much higher paid executive. But I can assure you, just as with the "computer programming" model I gave, that none of these things can be accomplished in a meaningful manner unless you first develop an organized mind; "Knowing is not quite enough."

An interesting example of how useful classification schemes can be proceeds from my "Black Inventors" presentation. I may have a day when I'm not up to par and have difficulty pulling up particular names or inventions. In such cases I'll fall back on a set of particular classification schemes which provide graphic images -- or economic modes, or educational backgrounds, whatever; All those with beards, or those who attended engineering schools, those who were dropouts or illiterate, those whose inventions sparked railroads or other transportation. There is no doubt about it; "The Best Tests And Curriculum Is In Your Mind."

Girls And Gangs

Gang problems are no longer boy problems. Local experts are alarmed at the marked increase in girls' involvement in gangs and violence. Girlfriends of gang members are having "gang babies" as statues symbols and girls who hang around with boys in gangs are often sexually abused. Girls are also starting their own gangs: selling drugs, fighting other girl gangs and carrying weapons.

Eight to ten percent of the teenagers on probation in Multnomah County's juvenile justice system gang department are girls; five years ago there were none. Why are girls getting involved in gangs? Counselors and probation officers see them facing the same self esteem and peer group issues as boys who join gangs. But young women face the added difficulties that teen pregnancy brings: inadequate prenatal care, single parenting and the long-term problems of raising children in a gang environment.

What kinds of girls join gangs: Are girls imitating the boys or are their gangs different? What do you think? Join Jack Faust and his guests for this important discussion on Sunday, September 30th from 6:00-7:00 p.m. For seat reservations please call Frank Mungeam, Alison Highburger or Liza McQuade at 231-4620. Guests should arrive at the KATU studios (21st & N.E. Sandy Blvd.) between 5:00-5:15 p.m. The public is welcome, but reservations are required.

BOGLE RELEASES FIGURES ON MINORITY/WOMEN APPLICANTS

Commissioner Dick Bogle has released figures which show a dramatic increase in minority and women applicants for jobs with the Portland Bureau of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services.

Bogle said 1,380 applications were received for the firefighter examination conducted Friday (Sept. 7) at Portland State University--an increase of 33.5 percent over the number applying for the last exam, given in September, 1987.

Of this year's applicants, 190, or 13.8 percent, are minorities, an increase of 58.3 percent. The number of female applicants rose 50.6 percent to 119, or 8.6 percent of the total.

Of the 190 minorities, 175 are men--67 African American, 48 Hispanic, 32 Native American, and 28 Asian. Of the 119 females, 104 are white, five are African American, five are Hispanic, three are Native American, and two are Asian.

(All minorities, male and female, and all females, white and minority, are listed in the two categories, as called for by federal Affirmative Action reporting guidelines; thus, minority women are counted twice in statistics furnished by the city's Bureau of Personnel.)

Bogle went on to say that he "expects to see improved minority and female representation in the very near future,"

adding, "I am in a position to make it happen."

As commissioner-in-charge, Bogle has directed the Fire Bureau to establish a dual hiring list. One list contains the names of all those who pass the exam. The second contains only the names of minorities and women who pass.

Bogle said he will employ the second list, if necessary, "to speed up the process of integrating what is perceived as an all-male, all-white public agency in a city with a sizeable minority population, and more women than men."

Of the bureau's current 750 sworn personnel, only 24 member of minority communities--10 African Americans, 10 Hispanics, and four Asians--and only three are female.

Bogle once was an opponent of dual hiring lists. He said he changed his thinking when he realized that integration of the Fire Bureau "would take too many years, without extra effort on my part."

Also, he said dual lists are consistent with the city's Affirmative Action policies. All other city bureaus, with the exception of Police, employ minority and female hiring lists.

At present, 120 women and minorities are enrolled in the Fire Bureau's on-going Affirmative Action Training Program.

Letter to the Editor

I am responding to a letter from Betty Garner about block parties that was published in your August 15th edition. There is a very clear process for closing a street for a community event. I have enclosed a copy of the brochure and application that is available from the Office of Transportation, Street Systems Management, and a sample of the required forms. Insurance is required for all events such as this. Neighborhood Associations that belong to a coalition are covered by the insurance the coalitions carry. Coalitions are independent non-profit entities. There are some associations like Ms. Garner's which do not belong to a coalition and therefore are responsible for making their own arrangements for insurance.

Ms. Garner was given this information along with the application forms. She chose not to complete and return them. The Sabin/Irvington Heights Association may be recognized and incorporated in the state of Oregon but there is different criteria for city neighborhood associations.

The Office of Neighborhood Associations and myself are always available to assist neighbors or neighborhood associations to access city services.

Sincerely,
Gail E. Washington
Mayor's Liaison to
Office of Neighborhood Associations

My Power of Faith as:

Internal Strength

A Mother's Secret Confessions
by an anonymous parent

For many, many years, my fondest wish was to adopt a child. Well, in September of 1983 I received my wish. This child impacted my life so greatly that even though my blood did not run through her veins, the first time that I looked upon her little face I said, "She looks just like my father." I, too, look just like my father. This fact can be validated by everyone who's come in contact with him.

Our first year together was grand. She was growing faster than most newborn babies. It made me feel very good. The second and third years were about the same. She developed normally. She was in good health and she was showing signs of being able to learn quickly; which was a genuine sign of a Moten sibling. She fit in very well.

Year four, on the other hand, was terrible. It was as though my child was always sick with colds, body aches and awful pains. Several trips to the doctors only gave us the same old answer, "She's suffering from leg cramps caused by her cold."

Week after week, there were more complaints of leg pains and added complaints of tiredness. This was followed by an inability to walk for any distance. Emergency room visits were becoming more and more frequent. Increased visits were being made to her personal physician to find out what was causing the trouble. Everybody was saying the same thing, "Her symptoms are attributed to latent flu side effects."

November rolled in and so did the increase in pain for my baby. This time they (the doctors) not only found leg cramps but spinal meningitis. She was placed in intensive care for seven days.

I stayed in the hospital day and night wondering what was going to happen. I was not familiar with this illness-at all. All that I knew was that it was very serious. This was my first experience with uncertain feelings about how strong I could be. Can I withstand this kind of pressure? For several months, I worried about her severe leg pains and the fact that on one was able to find anything conclusive.

Seven days had passed. I prayed that the doctors would make her well and her uneasiness would disappear. Then, she was released. At last, we were home-ward bound. I was thinking, "She's feeling good, looking good, so everything must be -OK."

December came around and so did the leg cramps. This time my child was not only unable to walk but she couldn't even stand up.

The doctors ran more tests and she was given medicine for pain. In a few days, she felt OK-again. My nerves were wrecked. I knew there had to be more to this because there was no cold present; but, the pain was still there.

In January, my dad died. I travelled to California and remained there for two weeks. I called home every day; checking on my child's condition. She was feeling fine.

The second week, I talked to my little girl. The pains had returned. I rushed home! I called her doctor and said, "You are going to have to find out what is wrong with my child or send me to someone who can!" We arrived at the clinic at 10 a.m., in the morning, and when we left the clinic it was 6 p.m. We went directly to the hospital.

SEE INTERNAL STRENGTH
ON PAGE 8

PARKING COMPLAINTS

Dick Bogle, Commissioner of Public Safety, David Sweet, Housing Services Supervisor, Bureau of Buildings, Barbara Peterson and Willie May, field representatives held a news conference to announce a program to handle the growing number of neighborhood parking complaints.

The Bureau of Buildings receives more than 100 complaints per day concerning violations of neighborhood parking regulations: On-street storage of vehicles...off-street storage of disabled or discarded vehicles...illegal parking of trucks, trailers and oversized vehicles. Neighborhood liveability is severely impacted.

The lag time between citizen complaint and on-site inspection is now 3-4 weeks. Before the severe budget cuts of the 1980s reduced Bureau staff, and annexations increased the volume of calls, the lag time was 3-4 days.

Currently, the Bureau of Buildings sends housing inspectors to investigate parking complaints...but only as time allows. Higher priority is given to housing and nuisance violations, which pose greater threats to health and safety.

The new program is intended to reduce the lag time between complaint and inspection by 75% or more. The goal is a turn-around time of one week or less by the end of October.

Letter to the Editor: The Portland Shuffle

by Nyewusi Askari

"Where you goin Mr. Spider, climbin up the wall?"
The Spider said, "I'm goin to get my ashes hauled."

After reading Ulysses Tucker's article, "Push needs to shove in another direction," September 5, 1990, Portland Observer, I was reminded of the Spider going to get his ashes hauled.

Haul his ashes? Tucker did more than that. Coming straight to the point, he severely tongue-lashed the African American community, for raising its voice in protest against The Nike Corporation, and by the time the article came to an end, it was very easy to speculate that Tucker's roar was in defense of NIKE.

"Listen," he wrote, "I am sick and tired of hearing folks in Black community complain about NIKE's underrepresentation (?) of minorities in management and on its board of directors. I am mad, but not at NIKE. According to a recent study released by UCLA, 95% of top level management jobs are held by white men. Even more deplorable, these figures have barely moved over the last ten years. If black folks want to boycott do it across the board and fairly. Don't just single out the NIKE corporation, go after Exxon, MGM and countless others."

Tucker spends the rest of his time trying to explain why he is slamming Operation PUSH, tongue-lashing the African American community and defending NIKE.

It was a poor performance. Tucker displayed a severe lack of awareness of how African Americans have viewed the NIKE/Operation PUSH happenings. The chain of events speak for themselves.

When the PUSH delegation asked for a meeting with NIKE officials, they had to contend with a security guard, who pleaded ignorant of knowing anything about anything.

When the PUSH delegation convened at a local African American church, to discuss the issue with local African American leaders, very few of our leaders showed up.

Since that time, various articles have been written about PUSH/NIKE, and some of our best known African American leaders have issued statements that attempt to explain why they are not

supporting the boycott.

The Tucker article implies that some of our local leaders aren't supporting the PUSH boycott because they aren't willing to "bite the hand that is feeding them."

What's happening here? The truth of the matter is, Portland's African American community has been pulled smack dab into the middle of a national issue, however, our local leadership has been handling the issue with kids gloves.

Local leaders have made little of the seriousness of this matter.

Local leaders have done little to inform or involve the broader community.

That the PUSH delegation left our community with a warped, negative picture is understandable. They were treated as strangers. They were treated as the bad guys. Mind you, the majority of the delegation were African American women.

There was no honor in our house. Who is to blame for this tragedy? All of us. We knew the PUSH delegation was coming. We knew why they were protesting. We knew that NIKE was the target, yet we didn't take the time to get our house in order, in order to create an environment from which some for real business could take place.

We missed a golden opportunity to become the centerpiece of hospitality, negotiations, goodwill, clear thinking and African American tourism.

It is ironic to hear our leaders talk about the need for economic development in North/Northeast Portland, yet have to watch them do things that drive away those who might be willing to invest, by bringing African American conventions, festivals, delegations etc., to the new Convention Center.

Operation PUSH brought a national issue to our community. The delegation, in no uncertain terms, let us know, that although NIKE is sitting in our backyard, its policies and practices are affecting African Americans throughout the country.

What shocks many, in this community, is the ways in which our leaders have chosen to show their support for NIKE. For example, Portland's Urban League President has said the Urban League is neutral, on the matter.

That sounds good, but it's poor representation. We heard it from the President, but did we hear it from the membership? Not only that, where are the leaders we so often depend on to guide and direct us through these types of matters and issues? When we hear leaders using words like neutral, it makes us wonder, "is that it?" Is that the only position you are recommending we take? Are you asking us to "Do as you do?" Or are you asking us to "do as you say?"

History is on the side of Operation PUSH. African American boycotts have a way of feeding on themselves. If history is right, we can expect more and more African American organizations to join the PUSH boycott against NIKE. For the duration of the boycott, Portland's African American community will be in the spotlight, and can expect to see a lot of national traffic trampling through its backyard.

If we are going to play host to a national boycott, our leaders had better get on the ball. So must our journalist. Now is not the time to act ill-responsible. Now is not the time to act confused or baffled. It's make-it-or-break-it time.

As for Ulysses Tucker, well, I suggest that he let NIKE speak for itself. Obviously, Tucker views himself as an intellectual and is proud of it, nonetheless he should examine the damage done by his September 5 article. More importantly, he owes the community an apology. After all, this is America, and all citizens have a right to complain and raise their voices in protest. Tucker's education was made possible by the struggle of African ancestors, slaves, common, everyday people, millions of others, including those of us who got our heads busted in the name of injustice.

We share this planet with others, and we have no right to keep others from coming into our community to solve problems, or address common issues.

Community sentiments toward Tucker's article? Listen to the words of one well-known community sister. "If Ulysses is that mad with people in the Black community, he should pack up his bags and move into NIKE headquarters. After what he said, I'm sure he can get a job there..."

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