

TRUE / SLANT

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How Did Everything about the World Change in 6 Years?

Many of you probably have seen some version of the “Did You Know?” videos that have been uploaded to YouTube over the past few years. They deal with trends in education, globalization, and technology—where we’ve been and what the future is going to look like—and include interesting (and sometimes unsettling) tidbits, like these:

- half of all U.S. workers have been with their employer for fewer than 5 years
- 1 of 8 couples married in the U.S. last year met online
- of the 240 million TVs in the U.S., 2 million are in bathrooms

The following two videos are the most recent. They each last about 5 minutes and in my opinion they definitely are worth the time:

[DID YOU KNOW? 3.0](#)

[DID YOU KNOW? 4.0](#)

This is the type of information that parents and teachers need to know, because the world their kids are entering into is vastly different than it was even a few years ago. The other day, my brother expressed some surprise at how much attention the Tiger Woods scandal has received when compared to the Kobe Bryant scandal back in summer 2003. I was surprised, too, until I did some quick research on what technology and communication were like 6.5 years ago. Here’s what I wrote my brother afterward:

Back in summer 2003, there was no YouTube, no Twitter, no TMZ, no Facebook, no MySpace, no Skype, no HuffingtonPost, and no True/Slant; no episodes of The Daily Show, SNL, or any other TV show were available online; there was no 3G network in the U.S. and no iPhone, and cell phone use was about half of what it is today.

The introduction of new technology, new modes of communication, and new ways of conceptualizing and doing work will require our current K-12 students to be flexible, creative, problem-solvers who can work with and lead diverse groups of people in tackling challenging projects. And, as I have learned from personal experience, they will need to be multi-skilled and have the ability to self-promote in a competitive, decentralized marketplace. Since finishing my bachelor’s degree in 2001, I’ve had 12 jobs—many of which involved short-term contract or consulting work and 3 of which involved telecommuting (i.e., I worked from home and communicated with my colleagues and bosses via phone, e-mail, and video conferences). But before we can start preparing students to face this changing world, it’s important to get a sense of the landscape. I therefore encourage you to watch the videos above and alert friends and colleagues to their existence. (You might even consider sending them here to see the videos and read my insightful commentary. See, the self-promotion never stops!)