

## Where Went the "H" in HRD?

"Work and Its Discontents," your August editorial, didn't go far enough when it criticized HRD professionals as too narrowly focused on work and the bottom line. Concerned almost exclusively with work, productivity and profits, we nearly have forgotten our ultimate client—the individual adult worker. Conditioned to worry about survival within our organizations, we've lost sight of the purpose of our profession.

ASTD's letterhead used to emphasize the "development of human potential." Now, HRD professionals pursue the productivity of the human resource. This is not a semantic problem. As members of an erstwhile "helping" profession, we should be concerned primarily with the personal and professional growth of people—not human "factors."

Organizations exposed to Peters' and Waterman's *In Search of Excellence* seem to be waking up to the idea that worker satisfaction leads to productivity and profits, something many of us used to preach. Instead of being in the vanguard of this movement, however, HRD professionals are cowering in the Dark Ages worrying about the bottom line.

Our profession encompasses more than a body of knowledge, a list of competencies and a degree program. It takes professionals, committed to the development of human potential. Productivity flows from human development and growth—not vice versa. Educating management away from profits and toward people obviously requires caring and courageous professionals.

Our role, however, doesn't stop there. We also should be concerned with the roles we play in our communities and associations: Do we contribute to the solutions of the social issues facing all of us today? How well do we serve our civic and social service organizations? Are we educating

our fellow workers on these common responsibilities? Sadly, the answer to each no longer rings in the affirmative.

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## A Star for November

Cover to cover, your November issue is one of the best ever. Give yourselves a gold star.

The ongoing discussion of the pluses and minuses of behavior modeling particularly pleased me. (See "Back to Behavior Modeling," by Bernard L. Rosenbaum.) The issues have persisted throughout the life of the theory, but they still need to be aired from time to time to see how things have developed. And developed they have, if we can judge by the level of debate in your pages.

Please send me author's guidelines. I'd like to add my voice to the *Journal* chorus.

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## The Education-Industry Gap

Student cooperative education programs have been bridging the classroom-job gap since they first appeared at the University of Cincinnati in 1906. But galloping technological advances are widening another classroom-job gap, one affecting vocational-technical faculty.

CAD, programmable controllers, robotics, automated manufacturing processes and the bewildering maze of computer hardware, software and integrated systems are overwhelming

the vocational-technical classroom/lab setting and the faculty responsible for "actualizing" that setting. Hard-pressed faculty, even with their rigorous professional development activities, can't keep pace with the changes.

The time is right to look at the other side of the cooperative education coin—faculty-industry co-op. Industry and education must form a cooperative alliance whereby vocational-technical faculty receive meaningful on-loan assignments in automated work settings that update and upgrade their knowledge and skills. To adequately prepare their students for successful transitions from the classroom to the job, faculty must understand the conditions and requirements of those jobs.

Vocational-technical education has long profited from the advice and counsel of program advisory committees and part-time faculty drawn from the ranks of business and industry. They remain invaluable resources to vocational-technical education. But full-time faculty carry the burden of providing program leadership and delivering relevant, up-to-date instruction. They are the ones who need to reenter the automated work setting. An industry-education co-op can ensure that faculty will continue to prepare vocational-technical students for successful classroom-job transitions.

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