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ISSUES

Andragogy covers it

I am responding to the article "What's Between Pedagogy and Andragogy?" (October 1983, *Training & Development Journal*). In suggesting that a new term like *adolegogy* is needed for the instruction of adolescents, the author has overlooked the broad scope of *andragogy*.

Malcolm Knowles' linking of andragogy and adulthood is based on the learner's level of maturity, not on his or her chronological age. Andragogy can be used with children and adults and can be combined with a pedagogic mode. The choice of which learning/teaching model to employ rests with a facilitator who understands the complexity of the learner.

George W. Gamerding
Nassau Technological Center
Westbury, N.Y.

Warning signs

In "Are All These Consultants Really Necessary?", the lead article of a recent *Forbes* issue, John A. Byrne argues that although management consultants have their place, they are overused, overpriced and under-expert. Consultants who are worth their pay, Byrne says, often make decisions that top management should be making. He implies that hiring consultants is shirking the responsibility for difficult decisions.

There is a lesson here for HRD professionals. We seek a greater voice in organizational decisions, yet even internal consultants (training and development directors, human resource development directors, personnel administrators) are perceived merely as staff managers.

To become more effective, to use all our skills and knowledge and protect our positions during downturns, we must learn to see ourselves so that others will see us as essential to the organizational mission. We must

become known as more than narrow-focused advisory technicians.

Perhaps we are too enamored with the change agent mystique. We must learn to temper our fervor for remaking organizations and revealing the HRD light to top management.

We all know that influence is based on understanding another's values, motivations and needs. If we want to be taken seriously, therefore, we must focus on identifying top management's needs and values and creating programs to agree with them.

We should heed the warning of the *Forbes* article. It is time for HRD professionals to develop into organizational managers.

Robert Pater
Holladay Park Hospital
Portland, Oreg.

Swinging at a star

I'm going to step out on a limb and take a swing at CBI. Lately I've been inundated with computers. TV tries to tell me that my children will be left behind if they don't have one at home. Newspapers sell me Adam, Apple and computer games. Journals sell me the latest technology for training. Friends even write me letters on their home computers. It all seems like a fun fad to me.

But we must not forget that the human element is vital to training. I still hold that teaching or training is part art, part science. Learning is influenced substantially by motivation, and this depends on the human element. All my significant formal learning has occurred because the instructor was able to motivate and teach. Computers and technology have been insignificant factors.

I found the December 1983 issue of the *Journal* to be guilty of advocating training through technology. I'm tired of it.

David M. Sander
Naval School of Health Sciences
Portsmouth, Va.

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**Performance appraisal
reviewed**

I became more and more upset as I read Charles M. Kelly's "Reasonable Performance Appraisals" in the January 1984 issue of the *Journal*. I almost hit the ceiling when I read one of his final statements: "Appraisal is an inherently negative part of the management process."

I agree that many (and perhaps most) managers and employees are unhappy with their appraisal programs. This is not because it's an inherently negative process, but because it's done poorly.

It is important to differentiate between performance appraisal for salary purposes and appraisal for improved performance. (Kelly didn't do this.) Table 1 illustrates the significant difference.

I'm concerned with improved performance. This is not only an essential part of management but is a win/win situation. Nearly all employees want to improve their performance, and managers want to help them. A performance appraisal program (including coaching) is a tool for helping managers do it. It can—and should—be a pleasant process for both parties if it includes the following steps:

- Clarification of and agreement on what's expected of the subordinate.

- Clarification of and agreement on how well the subordinate is meeting expectations (without regard for how other employees are doing).
- Joint identification of strengths and weaknesses.
- Joint development of a performance improvement plan.
- Effective on-the-job coaching by the manager.

I agree with Kelly that effective communication and training are necessary. Selling the program to managers is also important so that they will look at it as a positive process rather than as something they do to please the personnel department.

Managers and HRD professionals should look at performance appraisal as a positive process that helps managers be more effective. It will take effort to develop the right forms and procedures, communicate and sell the program and train managers to implement it.

*Donald L. Kirkpatrick
Professor of Management
University of Wisconsin—Extension
Milwaukee, Wis.*

Reference

1. Kirkpatrick, D. *How to improve performance through appraisal and coaching*. New York: AMACOM, 1982.

Table 1—Two Kinds of Performance Reviews¹

	For Salary Administration	For Improved Performance
Looks	Backward	Forward
Considers	Overall performance	Detailed performance
Compares employee with	Other people	Job standards and objectives
Determined by	Boss, higher management, personnel department	Boss and subordinate together
Interview climate	Subjective, emotional	Objective, unemotional
Factors to be considered	Salary range, total money available, inflation, seniority, performance, education	Performance

On criticism

This letter is a reaction to the letter from Robert M. Champlin published in the Issues section of the January 1984 *Training & Development Journal*.

It is almost inconceivable that a person in Mr. Champlin's position in such a large organization would make critical comments without offering suggestions for improvement. Also, Mr. Champlin apparently has stopped listening to and learning from others unless they have his years in the field and have achieved his professional level.

It is obvious to the rest of us who read the *Journal* that every article is not intended for everyone. However, there is always something in the *Journal* for everyone, no matter what his or her level of expertise. The next time Mr. Champlin reacts to an article, I hope he will be more constructive and amenable to assisting with the work and less boring and berating.

I want to compliment you on the fact that you responded to him. Your reply was a diplomatic-aggressive one that displayed a sensitivity to both positions. It also took a stand on the issues he attempted to raise even though he did not raise them in a responsible way.

*Donald J. Ondusky
Director of Career Services and Placement
Morse School of Business
Hartford, Conn.*

Editor's Note: To express your views in our monthly "Issues" department, please address all correspondence to: "ISSUES," Training and Development Journal, 600 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Suite 305, Washington, DC 20024.



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