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On the Money!

Pat Galagan's article, "The Future of the Profession Formerly Known as Training" (December), is terrific and right on the money!

Galagan synthesized the myriad discussions I've had with my combined communication and performance improvement staffs. In fact, I've sent a notated copy of the article to my CEO to prep him for conversation with the corporate performance improvement manager, the manager of Web communication services, and me.

As Galagan is well aware, cultural change takes time. In our organization, corporate performance improvement moved in halting steps because such good people were promoted to the highly visible position of CPI manager, and they developed themselves so well that they were promoted to higher positions every year or so.

Two points:

1. Combining communication and learning elements creates a significant organizational development synergy. Promotion and business concepts are integrated into learning processes. Learning elements are integrated into promotion and business communications—internally and externally. Definitional lines between learning and education have become irrelevant in our organization. An effective in-

structor had better be a superb communicator; a top-notch communicator must be a quality teacher. Hmm...seems like the basis of a learning organization, God forbid!

2. I must take exception to an observation [in the article] by the renowned Peter Bloch. I know, I know. How can [I] have the temerity, the gall, to disagree with Peter the Great? Bloch dismisses the private sector as further fertile ground for people development because the brilliant consultants have done all they can and the private sector has lost interest in its people. If one had a cynical bent, the reply might be that the consultants have done a poor job. Taking a positive approach, changing the giant companies that span regions and continents...nah, how much can you really teach a giant other than how to slim down by canning thousands of employees?

The last time I looked, about 80 percent of our employment base is supplied by medium and small businesses. The problem may be that the big-time consultants can only make the big bucks with the giants. How many small businesses with family-oriented, caring cultures can afford a \$50,000 per hour speech by brilliant, high-roller consultants or an annual contract [costing] hundreds of thousands of dollars?

Of course, Bloch ain't no dummy. Government and religion have some pretty deep pockets. The real bottom line: Legions of small private-sector companies and their employees are thirsting for help. The challenge: They don't know what they don't know.

Surviving narrows focus. Our job is to be smart enough to merge the personalities and insights of Silas Marner and Dr. Phil.

Great job you guys, and thanks for the help!

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Not Lost in Translation

I was glad to read Jennifer Salopek's "Lost in Translation" [Trends, December]. Of course I was pleased to see myself quoted, but mostly I was pleased to see *T+D* cover this subject in a sensitive and accurate way. [The article] surely had lots of material to simmer down to make it cogent and to the point. I appreciate Salopek putting my quotes in the spirit in which I intended them, not with another spin.

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