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Afraid of a label?

In her article (December 2003), Pat Galagan cites Pat McLagan, who states, "Calling [our profession] 'training and development' puts too much emphasis on what we do and not what on we're trying to create: knowledge organizations that release and focus people's energies for work performance."

I disagree wholeheartedly and believe that McLagan's statement is indicative of the trouble we've created for ourselves. Other departments and organizations are labeled by what they do: Sales sells, marketing markets, operations operates.

Why are we afraid of a label?

Having been in training and development for 25 years (12 years internally and 13 years as the president of a training company), I've come to appreciate the elegance of effective training and the impact it can have on the performance of individuals. I also recognize the limitations or boundaries that training has in the workplace.

For example, effective sales training can't improve sales if the company's products or services stink, or if the compensation system rewards contrary behavior.

Even the growing practice of outsourcing training speaks to the work that companies want from us. They want training! They aren't crying for help in

releasing and focusing people's energies. Sadly, we've grown into this amorphous entity that lays claim to a company's knowledge and performance, yet doesn't do anything except try to figure out who we are.

Let's take pride in what we do: We train and develop people. We are part of a team responsible for the performance of others. Our craft is designing, developing, and delivering training and other solutions that help people perform.

We know what we do and we know what we don't do. We know who we are.

Most important, others do, too.

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Impressed

I'm impressed by [Eva Kaplan-Leiserson's] call, "Are We OK?" (Intelligence, September 2003). Many changes are taking place in the marketplace and social setup. Globalization has heightened the process of change faster by surpassing the boundaries. The uncertainties have increased anxieties and lowered productivity. The gap between haves and have-nots has increased demographically.

TV and communication networks have increased the awareness and, thereby, the gap between expecta-

tions and reality. All these developments, gaps, and associated threats have increased unrest...and unhappiness. Then, how to go about the reality of life?

Developing and facilitating philosophical and value-based outlooks may offer stability and peace to individuals and society. "Simple living and high thinking" may be adopted by all. Simple living decreases consumerism and status quo, and facilitates a friendly nature to nature. High thinking broadens outlook to understand others and show concern.

If the so-called haves practice simple living and high thinking, it goes a long way in protecting the interests of have-nots and becomes a role model. The haves and have-nots don't imagine to have more or want more, and limit their wants and are satisfied with what they get. By limiting expectations, the gap between expectations and reality decreases, thereby limiting unrest and unhappiness.

If organizations and social setups facilitate a philosophical outlook to expose more models...happiness levels can increase. It might even facilitate global peace.

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