

# Books

## Rekindling the Spark

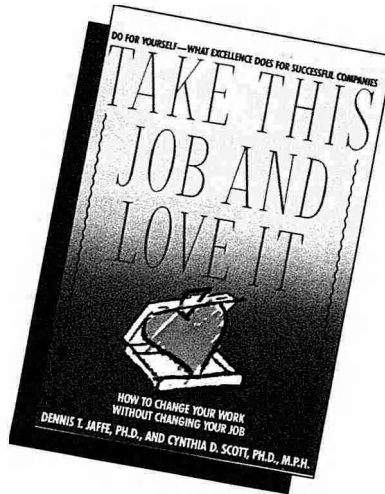
**Take This Job and Love It: How to Change Your Work Without Changing Your Job**, by Dennis T. Jaffe and Cynthia D. Scott.

We all remember Bob Dylan's song about how he wasn't gonna work on Maggie's farm no more. Then Johnny Paycheck recorded the blue-collar hit "Take This Job and Shove It." In a new twist on a familiar theme, Dennis Jaffe and Cynthia Scott explore that attitude in their book *Take This Job and Love It*.

This esteem-building book addresses the primary struggle many people face—getting beyond the monotony and boredom of a familiar job and continuing to be motivated about work. "You spend one-third of your waking life at work. What you do there and how you think about it are very consequential to your well-being. . . . Allowing the spark of intensity, commitment, and creativity to die in your work life is like killing half of yourself."

Designed to help people rekindle that spark and keep it burning, *Take This Job and Love It* shows how a job can become an opportunity to learn, to grow, and to connect with people and goals in a meaningful way. Each chapter contains visioning and self-exploration exercises to help people redefine their connections to work and develop new skills for improving their work environments. Anyone interested in career growth and development and life planning will enjoy this balanced, self-help book.

In Part I ("Intrapreneur or Entrepreneur? The Choice is Yours"), Jaffe and Scott discuss the hazards and warning signals of job burnout, which too often strikes "the best and the brightest" employees. They place the blame for that "crisis of the spirit" on the pressures of a transitional work environment, where the old ways no longer work.



Mergers, downsizing, changing job responsibilities, unmet needs for job retraining, and undefined employer expectations mean that change is no longer an option; it is the only choice. Resulting feelings of upheaval and burnout manifest themselves in absenteeism, turnover, poor performance, and dissatisfaction.

Also to blame for today's burnout epidemic, say the authors, are obsolete assumptions about human nature, which can destroy a company's most valuable resource—human energy. "A company that treats its employees like machines to operate on full steam and then throw away is like a steel plant trying to turn a profit competing against automated new technologies that make better products at far lower costs." Chapter Two includes a quiz to help people assess their own feelings of upheaval and job burnout.

Drawing extensively from a "Heart Work" seminar they give on helping people learn new ways of approaching work, Jaffe and Scott say to "think of your job as an empty house. You move in and look at its form and structure. Then your own creativity takes root. You design your space, decorate, and make the house into your home. You personalize it by putting your

stamp on it. Just doing what is expected at work is like living in a bare house—there is no 'you' there."

In Part II ("Change: The First Step to Personal Excellence"), the authors encourage people to take personal responsibility for becoming attitudinal change agents. "The energy you could bring to work gets drained away every time you withdraw from a situation without trying to change it. . . . Many people who are burned out are upset about something at work that they do not feel they can change."

The authors offer further steps for getting through the transitional times. Listen to yourself, they say, and tune in to your inner voice. Recall times when you were at your personal best and try to define the elements that made those times satisfying. In addition, they describe the process of visioning as a means of creating a new reality.

"Visioning, or imagination, is opening yourself to feelings, thoughts, intuitions, and wisdom that you often neglect or turn away from. We find that high-performing workers are people who are able to tap into their inner experience for access to the creativity, energy, and flexibility that are the keys to inspired performance."

The third part of the book ("Taking Charge: High Tech Meets High Touch") focuses on developing skills that create personal power. A four-quadrant "personal power grid" is one example of an action strategy for taking charge of the things in your life you can control and letting go of the things you can't control. A gray area between each quadrant is specified as the risk zone—the area "in which you test the limits of your powers and even push the line a little. . . . People who feel alive, challenged, and growing at work inhabit the risk zone fairly often in their jobs. Only through risking can you increase the limits of your freedom and let your personal contribution shine through."

# Books

Finally, the authors challenge people to redefine and make "fluid" their perspectives of a job. A job should be more than just a paycheck, they say. "A job is something that exists in your own mind and in your actions and relationships with others at work. It is based on who you are, on what you want and need, and also on what is or may be possible in your company."

As organizations continue to face turbulent times, as continual change becomes the norm, and as job burn-out becomes not just a personal crisis but a ballooning organizational crisis, books like *Take this Job and Shove It* may become standard reading. Every HRD professional can gain from this book—if not in evaluating one's own job and life, then surely in sharing the concepts with employees and clients. The book is timely, non-technical, and "caring" without being "soft." It's also one of the most reasonably priced books of its kind on the market.

The authors are organization consultants and psychologists. They have worked together for 10 years creating programs to help people tap their personal resources and learn how to contribute to their workplaces and their lives.

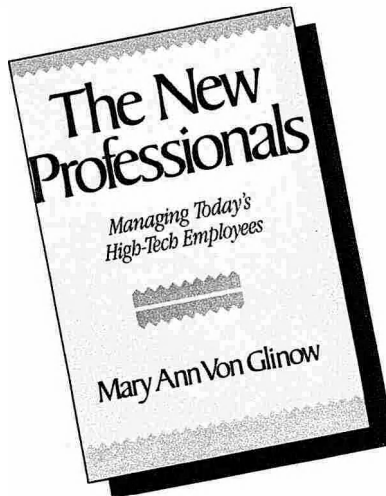
*Take This Job and Love It: How to Change Your Work Without Changing Your Job.* 217 pp. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 212/245-6400, \$9.95 paperback.

Circle No. 180 on Reader Service Card.

## Critical Questions

**The New Professionals: Managing Today's High-Tech Employees**, by Mary Ann Von Glinow.

"High technology" is a label that has spawned a whole new vocabulary and style of working. It has been called the "growth engine of



the future"—an engine that is driven by a new generation of "knowledge workers." This exponentially expanding field brings with it a unique set of human resource issues.

*The New Professionals* will appeal to managers and researchers who are concerned with the "fit" between high-tech firms and the professional employees who work in them. Author Mary Ann Von Glinow attempts to help HR practitioners diagnose and correct the problems of today's knowledge workers and develop innovative responses to meet their needs and aspirations.

This is a practical and scholarly resource based on empirical data gathered by Von Glinow and other researchers over a period of ten years. In four sections, she presents useful new strategies for working with high-tech, specialized employees, and addresses such specific topics as

- changing trends and the growth of knowledge workers in the workforce;
- key dilemmas in managing knowledge workers;
- attracting, motivating, and retaining knowledge workers;
- rewarding high-tech employees and how reward systems affect company culture;
- designing improved performance-

appraisal systems;

- structuring the organization to accommodate professional career development;
- managing change and the growth of international competition.

The first section deals with the expansion of high-tech firms and the number of employees in the technical workforce. One table indicates that in the decade ahead, the fastest growing occupations will be in the medical and computer industries. Von Glinow discusses alternative forms of employment—job sharing/pairing, "rental" employees, off-site workers, "sunlighters" linked via computers, and more.

The second section addresses critical human resource questions:

"How can the professional segment of the high-tech workforce be recruited, particularly in tight labor markets? How can a sense of loyalty or commitment be fostered among these professionals? How can productivity be increased, with respect to innovation and development of high-tech products?" Von Glinow offers her own research-based suggestions, as well as the findings of other studies.

"Many firms attract professional and high-tech talent through the use of networks and through informal contacts. Former students are frequently used to recruit new talented employees. Some firms participate in 'meet-the-firms' nights at local universities. . . . For top-end positions, search firms have become the norm . . . . Senior scientists are told they will be able to create their own labs, develop their own projects, and staff those with top-flight professionals."

Von Glinow probes some of the critical tension points between professionals and organizations, including issues of autonomy, professional standards, responsibility, and ethics. She asks, "Are professionals in exclusive service to their firms, or are they responsible to the public? Do professionals place the values of the firm above those of the client or the

# Books

general public? Further, if professionals are acting merely as employees, what does that do to the legitimacy of the profession?" Her treatment of ways to overcome workplace tensions is less than exhaustive, and, for the most part, inconclusive, but it does suggest some of the findings on key issues.

In the third section, Von Glinow explores the relationship between a firm's culture and the role and effectiveness of its reward system. Graphs of two hypothetical firms—a healthy firm and an unhealthy one—show how revamping a company's reward system may help reinforce performance goals. A self-administered test is included for readers to gauge the success of their current reward systems.

The final section of *The New Pro-*

*essionals* highlights strategies and systems for increasing organizational success—from designing performance-appraisal systems to setting up and conducting evaluation and feedback processes. In one chapter, Von Glinow looks at how international competition is accelerating the rate and pace of change for high-tech firms and how companies are responding. "Some firms, like National Cash Register and Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing, are dealing with the continuing impact of technological change by streamlining internal research, by changing their previous unwieldy bureaucratic structures to more nimble independent units, and by joining research consortia to share the risks of changes in technology."

For practitioners, *The New Profes-*

*sionals* summarizes many of the issues regarding high-tech professionals and may dispel notions about working with "techie." For researchers, the referenced chapters, each with theoretical and practical components, will serve as a useful resource and as a springboard for in-depth studies.

Von Glinow is an associate professor of management and organization at the University of Southern California, in the Graduate School of Business Administration.

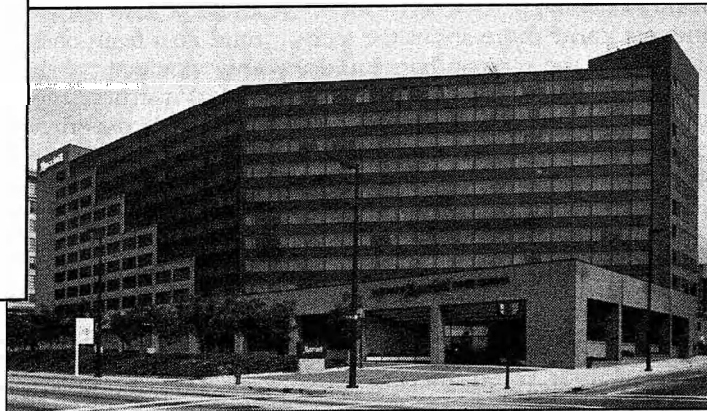
*The New Professionals: Managing Today's High-Tech Employees.* 199 pp. Cambridge, MA: Ballinger Publishing, 617/492-0670, \$29.95. Circle No. 181 on Reader Service Card.

## *The Perfect Choice for Business or Pleasure*

The outstanding Baltimore Marriott-Inner Harbor is right where the action is... central to Baltimore's Convention and Civic Centers, dynamic downtown business district and Baltimore's most exciting attractions. Like sensational Harborplace, the renowned Aquarium and Science Center.

And superb location is only the beginning... complemented by exceptional meeting facilities and gracious accommodations:

- 12 meeting rooms to suit any size function
- Grand Ballroom, accommodating up to 700



- 352 spacious guestrooms & suites, including exclusive concierge service
- Complete health club, including indoor pool, jacuzzi, sauna and exercise room
- *Promenade Sea Grill* for fine dining, *Illusions* for entertainment and dancing nightly

The Baltimore Marriott-Inner Harbor, where business meets with pleasure, in style: Call (301) 962-0202.

*Marriott People know how.*

BALTIMORE **Marriott**<sup>®</sup>  
INNER HARBOR

Pratt and Eutaw Streets, Baltimore, Maryland (301) 962-0202

Circle No. 126 on Reader Service Card

# Books

## A Case Against Instructional Danglies

*Making Instruction Work*, by Robert F. Mager.

Telling people how to do something is not the same as teaching them to do it. "Just as an ability to make a tuba is not the same as an ability to play one, an ability to play one is not the same as an ability to teach someone else to do likewise."

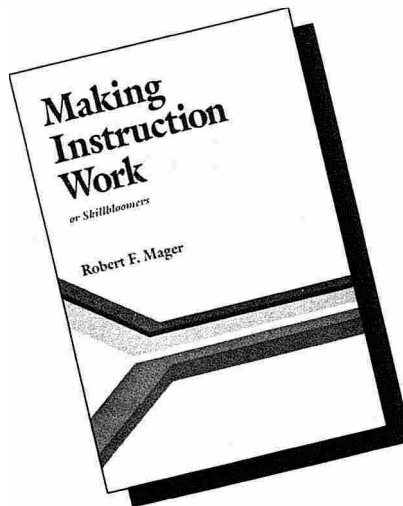
In *Making Instruction Work*, Robert Mager tells (teaches) instructors and trainers how to make instruction as effective as possible with the tools at hand and how they can help adults learn to learn.

On the one hand, teaching seems like it would be fairly straightforward. You have something to say about a topic that others want information on, so you stand up and talk about it, right? Perhaps, but what happens when your methods don't work? What happens when your students know more about the technicalities of the subject than you do?

Mager outlines a process for ensuring that instruction is the correct solution to a problem; that the objectives of instruction are derived from and addressed to demonstrated needs; and that instructional practices add to, rather than detract from, the learners' eagerness to learn more. It sounds complicated, but Mager makes it all quite simple and logical. He presents his process in four stages—analysis, development, implementation, and improvement.

The components of the first stage are performance analysis, task analysis, target population description, course objectives, skill hierarchies, and course prerequisites. Analysis is important at this stage, Mager says, because if you don't know where you're going, you might wind up someplace else and not even know it.

Suppose a manager comes to you, lamenting about how employees are coming late to meetings, and asks you to develop a course to fix the



problem. "What would you teach?" asks Mager, "The history of time? How to read clocks? The importance of promptness? Pendulum appreciation?" Most employees already know *how* to get to meetings on time, so a front-end analysis probably would show that in this case, formal instruction is not the most time- and cost-efficient tool to get the job done. Effective instruction, he says, must teach something that needs to be learned. It must have a method for getting to that knowledge and for indicating arrival.

Discussion in the second stage—development—covers criterion tasks, content derivation, delivery-system selection, module development, and more. Mager defines terms and functions and clears up semantic discrepancies (What is a task, what is a task analysis, who should do the analysis, and how? What's the difference between a target population and an audience?).

Mager advises instructors on methods that don't always work well—for instance, questionnaires ("an impractical and largely unworkable method") and multiple-choice and true-false tests for competence ("irrelevant and time-consuming").

Mager empathizes with competent instructors who don't want to be

slowed down by jargon and overly complicated directives, and he invites the enlightened to vent their annoyance. In regard to writing course objectives, he declares in his characteristically pointed way: "If it were not for the obfuscators, the preparation and use of objectives would be relatively simple. We would simply describe what we want students to be able to do and then get on with developing instruction that teaches them to do it. Unfortunately, there is a gaggle of folks who like to make things harder than they are, who like to hang all sorts of danglies on the dashboard of their instruction. . . . They actually try to propagate the fiction that a shovel is not only a shovel, but also a spade, a digger, a scooper, and a dirt-remover," he says.

"When you write an instructional objective, you are simply trying to communicate something about what you want students to be able to do when they leave you. That's all. If you want them to be able to unscrew a lightbulb while rubbing their tummy, say so and be done with it. Don't let the bedazzlers tangle your objectives with ornaments that are neither useful nor pretty."

In the third stage, Mager gives hints on implementing instruction, fine-tuning course procedures, capitalizing on work already completed, and minimizing the obstacles to learning. Don't jeopardize your own success as an instructor, he says, by telling the class, "This is a stupid film, but it's the only one I've got," or "I already answered that question three weeks ago."

Finally, Mager advises instructors, "If it's worth teaching, it's worth finding out whether the instruction was successful. If it wasn't entirely successful, it's worth finding out how to improve it" through measurement and evaluation. These questions are a vital part of measurement: Does the instruction work? Is it of value? Is it efficient?

# Books

He emphasizes the importance of follow-up feedback, when to do it, and how. Practice may make perfect, but if trainees are practicing the wrong thing, the trainer's efforts have been in vain. Mager wisely notes that if you want to learn to dance, you'd better not hope to do it while playing the tuba!

Mager's philosophy on instruction is to find the simplest, most straightforward method of getting the message across. Happily, the text mirrors that philosophy. Step-by-step directions, checklists, flowcharts, self-evaluations, and clear outlines walk the reader through the process. Mager helps bring alive the topic of instruction, with clear, concise writing, thorough subject-matter knowledge, and a few "Magerfables" and anecdotes thrown in for realism and humor.

The author is president of Mager Associates and has produced several workshop courses and films on instructional design, development, and implementation.

*Making Instruction Work*. 200 pp. Belmont, CA: David S. Lake Publishers, 800/877-4283, \$11.95. **Circle No. 182 on Reader Service Card.**

## Additional Reading

*Break-Away Thinking: How to Challenge Your Business Assumptions (And Why You Should)*, by Ian I. Mitroff. 195 pp. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, 212/850-6418, \$17.95.

**Circle No. 183 on Reader Service Card.**

*Crucial Decisions: Leadership in Policymaking and Crisis Management*, by Irving L. Janis. 388 pp. New York, NY: The Free Press, 212/702-5577, \$27.95.

**Circle No. 184 on Reader Service Card.**

*The Way to Succeed in Business and Life: From Confucius to Oz*, by Vernon Crawford. 115 pp. New Orleans, LA: Landmark Books, 504/891-1652, \$10.

**Circle No. 185 on Reader Service Card.**

"Books" is written by Susan E. Sonnesyn. Send books for consideration to Books Editor, Training & Development Journal, 1630 Duke Street, Box 1443, Alexandria, VA 22313. To order books, contact the publisher.

## Get your own copy of *Training & Development Journal* today!

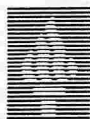
### And never miss an important story again!

As a *Journal* subscriber, you'll get all the training news when it happens — not months later when a colleague finally gives you an old copy of the magazine.

You can have your own fresh copy of *Training & Development Journal* delivered to your desk for just \$60 per year. That works out to only \$5.00 per month. It's a small price to pay for timely updates on the latest training trends, techniques and research results.



Barbra Horrell  
Assistant Director/Coordinator  
Office of Continuing Education  
University of Missouri



AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR  
TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

**Circle No. 202 on Reader Service Card**

Call (703) 683-8129 to order today!

Send to: ASTD J-5  
1630 Duke Street, Box 1443  
Alexandria, VA 22313

Yes, I'm tired of pass-me-down issues! I want my own subscription to *Training & Development Journal*.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Check or purchase order enclosed  
\_\_\_\_ VISA \_\_\_\_ MasterCard \_\_\_\_ Bank Number  
Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_  
Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**ASTD: PEOPLE MAKE THE DIFFERENCE**