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Send editorial items to the editor, Richard A. Swanson, University of Minnesota, 1954 Buford Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55108. Telephone 612-376-5065. A broad range of contributions are accepted for the *Journal*, brief news items, opinion articles, letters to the editor, data-based articles, papers of a theoretical nature, tips for technologists, poems, humor, and other original items. Manuscripts submitted for the Research and Theory Department will be refereed. The *Journal* generally cannot handle manuscripts over 2000 words (eight double-spaced, typewritten pages). The APA style of documentation is prescribed. Author guidelines are available from the editor.

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EDITORIAL

Performance—With or Without Instruction

As human performance technologists we should be aware that our fiercest rivals are not among instructional theories, instructional methods, or instructional technologies. Even though most of us are at our best with instruction, it should not always be foremost in our minds.

A few illustrations are in order. On the way to a meeting this morning, my friend Brian picked me up in his *Rabbit* automobile. The automatic seat belt settled in its final position without my direct intervention. Volkswagon has solved the sticky attitudinal training problem of *buckle-up* through a non-training solution.

Yesterday I viewed a Ford Motor Company television advertisement that demonstrated a robot spraying paint. I had observed the grandfather of that machine in the early seventies. It worked just fine way back then. Spray painting irregular shapes is difficult work. We should all note that Ford does not train legions of paint sprayers any more. Given the cost of training and the salaries of human paint sprayers, I wonder why they waited so long to implement their robot.

United States Steel wanted to increase their shareholders' return on equity. They did not buy new steel furnaces or expand their training. Instead, they bought Marathon Oil Company. Honeywell, like other major corporations, is strategically placing jobs in states, regions, and countries that already have the human resources they need. Corporations do this sometimes because available workers are highly educated and sometimes because they are dirt cheap.

Conglomerates can easily decide to go out of a slice of business rather than try to fix the employees in a bad situation. This is crude talk for those of us that have only *instruction*, *more instruction*, or *high-tech instruction* cures for organizational problems. But then again, most of us have never met a payroll or fired anyone (both are human resources interventions).

Performance—with or without instruction—is the economic mandate that our organizations work under. Realizing this truth is requisite to placing human performance technology in its proper perspective in an economic institution. Management judges the contributions of human performance technologists against the costs and benefits of non-training technologies available to organizations. We need to improve our communication to management in this realm.

We can more assertively and constructively contribute to the goals of our organizations. In most instances, this means that we should be making more reasonable decisions, incurring more reasonable costs. At other times we should be making more radical proposals, incurring both higher costs and exponentially greater benefits to our organizations. Finally, we should be willing to acknowledge that training may be an impotent solution for specific problems. The high road of human performance technology requires a vision and a level of analysis that our profession presently lacks.

This issue of the *Journal* marks the completion of a full year of the *Journal* and the culmination of my term as Editor. It has been a privilege to serve as *P&I* Editor and to have had the competent support of Deane Gradous, Editorial Assistant. The silent partners during my editorship deserve credit. With hardly a flinch the University of Minnesota committed significant resources in support of my role as editor. Sandi Emmerson and Bonnie Williams are professional office personnel in my immediate work group whose contributions have made us all look better than we are, and for that I am grateful.

Sivasailian (Thiagi) Thiagarajan will be serving as editor beginning with the April 1984 issue. Thiagi is an unusually qualified professional and a dedicated NSPIer. He deserves support from all of us in continuing the tradition of excellence in our *Journal* and our profession. **P&I**

Richard A. Swanson
Editor