

Letters

Education and professional issues

Dear Editor,

Recently I attended the ELISS Conference 'Educating for Change — Grasping the Vision', in Melbourne, and found much that was stimulating and challenging. However, I wish to highlight an issue raised by Margaret Trask and by John Levett. The current emphasis on training and development ignores the wider issues of management of human resources and of the knowledge base for our profession.

Human resource management has to occur within a context of strategic planning for organisational change. Training on its own will not achieve much without planning and organisational needs analysis. Training and development are only two of the functions of human resource

management. Others include job design and analysis, recruitment and selection of staff, appraisal and compensation, safety and health issues, employee rights and union-management relations. Such activities attract, motivate and retain staff and, by improving quality of work life and productivity, have an impact on the bottom line.

Training and development, as a term on its own, seems to imply building skills onto an existing knowledge base. I fear that we, like many professionals in our post-industrial society, are users of knowledge rather than producers of knowledge. If so, we will find that we cannot keep up with the pace and complexity of the changes around us.

As a profession we need to do more to promote, sponsor and reward those of our members who bring new knowledge, ideas, and innovations into our profession. A distinctive aspect of a profession is that it has its own knowledge base. We must constantly add to that knowledge base by encouraging scholarship and experimental research.

Training and development used to be called professional development or continuing education. Like electronics engineers, whose knowledge is said to be out-of-date five years after leaving their

formal education system, might we not need more formal (continuing) training and development — and hence continuing access to the new knowledge, innovations and research that flow into our profession?

Maryna Mews

AV libraries under siege

Dear Editor,

Congratulations, Paul Evans, on your *inCite* article (8 July 1991) concerning beleaguered AVM librarians. Many 'Library Managers', to use the flavour-of-the-month phrase, have never had direct, substantial experience of working with a broad range of AVM, nor any commitment to providing other than token AV resources and services. It is hardly surprising that they see watering down of AV departments as a good way of cribbing funds for other developments. Academic staff and students tend to see things quite differently.

Bert Cornelius

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