

From Our Readers

Weird Leonards: Creative, Practical, and Funny

I recently read “Weird Leonards in History” [*Defense AT&L*, January-February 2008], and like other articles that Air Force Majors Dan Ward and Chris Quaid have published, it is great: creative and practical (and funny).

I have gotten used to the fact that Ward and Quaid indeed demonstrate a great deal of courage in the string of articles they publish in a journal that is part of the DoD establishment. I am rather amazed that the editorial leadership of the journal is courageous enough to publish this material!

One suggestion: In future writing, the majors may want to demystify intuition somewhat. For example, see my book *Breaking the Code*, pp. 99-100: “Klein defines intuition as the way we translate our experience into action.”

Dr. Alex Laufer

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Postmodern PM: Theory at Work

I just wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed “Postmodern PM” [by Maj. Dan Ward, Maj. Chris Quaid, and Capt. Gabe

Mounce] in the May-June 2008 issue. What a great summary of the two models and how they play out in the tensions of project management. This is truly “theory at work” in a very useful way. The authors have a gift for explaining what is generally an academic construct in way that is accessible and applicable. In my experience, that is a rare skill. My compliments—great article!

Jennifer Tucker

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Visual Learning

Please pass on high complements to your staff for having the foresight to embrace comics as a form of conveying new ideas in the magazine. Studies inside the U.S. Air Force have shown that the number of visual learners vis-à-vis traditional learners is growing, particularly with the workforce born in the late 1960s and 1970s. Your periodic use of comics will enhance the visual learner’s interest in the magazine and help them help themselves.

Robert D. Pollock

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NSPS: Additional Nuggets

I want to compliment Marcia Richard on her article in the July-August 2007 issue of *Defense AT&L* magazine, “National Security Personnel System: Effective Management Tool for the Mission-centered Workforce.” It was very informative, unbiased, and well-written.

At the time the article was published, I didn’t look at it very carefully because I wasn’t yet scheduled to convert over to NSPS. But now I am scheduled to convert in October, and I just took a day-and-a-half training on crafting and evaluating performance objectives. So fortunately, I recalled the article, called it up from the *Defense AT&L* magazine Web site, re-read it, and enjoyed it.

We had a very good teacher for our NSPS class, thus underscoring the imperative for good training. He was a retired employee of NAVSEA and was intimately familiar with pay-for-performance systems.

Based on the training I received, here are a couple of nuggets I would add to the article:

- We not only need to think of rewarding our top performers, we need to think in terms of our organization making our goals. If everyone in the organization makes his or her goals and those goals are aligned to the organization’s goals, then the organization should make its goals.
- We need to get away from thinking that 3 is average. Either a 2, 3, 4, or 5 rating means you made your goal. Not equating 3 with average is a big cultural change.
- Getting a 1 rating means you have jeopardized the goals of your organization—and nullified the success of other people’s goals.
- Lots of 1 and 2 ratings not only reflect poorly on the employee, they reflect poorly on the supervisor because it’s the supervisor’s job to help the employee create and meet realistic goals.

Al Kaniss

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