



Editorial

Collaboration

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From many perspectives, this is the easiest editorial that I have ever not written. The thematic content of this issue that addresses the Celebration of Success, the Honouring of our Heroes and Collaboration are editorials in and of themselves, expressing the views of a specific group of organizations - and accordingly require no further commentary.

Nonetheless, I could not let Collaboration slip by without adding some random personal observations...

There is little doubt in my mind that we have become an industry of "buzz-words" that become so abused through the variants of their use (as terminology and political correctness) that they lose the origins of their meaning and simply become "speak".

Let us ensure that "collaboration" is not enfeebled through that process

"Collaborate" according to my trusty 1973 Webster means "to work jointly with others esp. in an intellectual endeavor" and "to cooperate with and willingly assist an enemy of one's country..." On the surface, it's an interesting dichotomy; unfortunately in reality it inadvertently can become a fine line. Given the competitive nature of the stakeholders of our industry and "politics", we sometimes look for confirmation rather than collaboration.

This is a time for putting aside the cynicism that becomes the baggage of anyone who has been in this industry for decades. It is a time to revert to the

ideology that inspired us to convert our vocation to an avocation – based on the belief that "informatics" will ultimately contribute to the betterment of the health of our fellow human beings. Within that context, collaboration is a sensible and practical way to pave the path to the future; if not in fact, a duty.

We have made a lot of progress over the past few years - our common "enemy" is time; our common interest is to have a harmonious understanding with respect to standards, definitions and the like. The academic (education, science, research) community, in my experience, has done rather well through that process – I suspect largely so because collaboration holds little risk for their core business and is consistent with their inherent values and ideologies.

Throughout this issue, we have published articles and news items which illustrate the diversity of perceptions, methodologies, perspectives and "on – the –ground" initiatives. We trust that they will broaden the traditional confines of our thinking.

By way of a parting thought – if we want to be truly inclusive of the collaborative process and take advantage of the knowledge contributions and participation of those who are not paid through the public purse we need to level the playing field by equitably funding their participation.

No more to be said – that would be another editorial! ●