

Community of Learners

Save to myBoK

by Linda Kloss, CAE, RHIA, chief executive officer

I've had the pleasure of attending several state and local association meetings this spring and witnessed firsthand the HIM community's commitment to learning. Sure, there's the need to earn continuing education credits, but that's not the only motivator for attendees who show up at 8 a.m. and stay through the last session. These meetings are a precious opportunity to consider new views on the work we do and to share experiences and ideas. And considering the demands of work, a little time to catch up with colleagues can be rejuvenating.

The Breadth of Learning

It's June, and the *Journal* again focuses on education. In "Informatics: How an Emerging Field of Study Benefits HIM" Danita Forgey and Jennifer Vickrey reflect on informatics as a science and an academic field and describe how principles developed in informatics will enable us to be more effective HIM professionals.

Rita Bowen, a member of AHIMA's Council on Certification, provides us with a useful definition of informatics and its relationship to HIM in "RHIA Reality Check." Bowen describes what a job analysis is and how it's conducted and used as the basis for the RHIA certification examination. The council is currently preparing a new version of the exam that better reflects what practicing RHIAs need to know today.

Michelle Dougherty offers a roundtable discussion with HIM professionals who are advancing their education through distance education programs designed for adult learners. Many of you are students or are thinking about getting that bachelor's, or doctoral degree. The message from participants in this discussion is a resounding "Just do it!"

In "Designing Effective Training" Christina Mayer Duggan describes Jane Dowd's experience of training thousands of staff and physicians to use the electronic health record at Evanston Northwestern Healthcare. Dowd emphasizes the importance of effective planning for training of this scope, guidance that is helpful to any who are involved in rolling out a new system. Evanston Northwestern Healthcare's excellent execution has earned the organization the Davies and other national IT and leadership awards.

The Depth of Learning

"What questions lie at the heart of your work?" is the basis for new research conducted by Peter Senge and colleagues in *Presence: Human Purpose and the Field of the Future*.¹ In it, the authors explore how to move from being reactive learners to a deeper level of learning. Reactive learning recycles habitual ways of thinking that confine us to seeing the world in the categories familiar to us.

This may seem abstract, but consider the challenges we face in HIM. Today we envision future health information management from our current mental models. Senge and colleagues say that deeper learning helps us increase "awareness of the larger whole—both as it is and as it is evolving."² The HIM learning community must keep stretching the boundaries so we shift long-established views and ask the right questions about the heart of HIM in the future.

Later this month, HIM educators will convene in St. Louis for AHIMA's Assembly on Education. They have a special challenge: to prepare new professionals who enter this field at a time of great change. HIM educators also have the opportunity to create new mental models for the future.

Notes

1. Senge, Peter, C. Otto Scharmer, Joseph Jaworski, and Betty Sue Flowers. *Presence: Human Purpose and the Field of the Future*. Cambridge: The Society for Organizational Learning, 2004.
2. Ibid, p. 9.

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Driving the Power of Knowledge

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