

From the Editor

Notes from the AmSECT International Meeting

At the end of April, I had the opportunity to attend the 2018 AmSECT International Conference in San Diego. As in previous years, there were a number of papers presented related to perfusion science, data collection, and data analysis. As the presenters are expected to submit a manuscript to the *Journal of ExtraCorporeal Technology (JECT)*, you will have the opportunity to read and digest the content from these presentations. In addition, a significant part of the meeting was devoted to leadership development, optimizing team management, and the potential consequences of stressful working conditions. Although the knowledge of perfusion science has grown, it appears that this continued growth in the art and science of perfusion (i.e. the application of perfusion science) will require an increase in the development of more leaders in the field of perfusion. This is coming at a time when a potential shortage of perfusionists is looming in the near future as perfusionists retire and the population of patients who may need cardiac surgery is increasing. More attention to leadership and human resource development will be important to maintain an effective perfusion workforce and ensure an environment of safety and commitment to patient care. It may turn out that all perfusionists, not just the chief perfusionists, will need to develop leadership skills to handle more responsibilities in their jobs and become or remain engaged in the continued evolution of the perfusion community as a whole. Consider locating Kenneth Shann's outgoing presidential address. In his address he stressed the importance of leadership and professionalism throughout the perfusion community.

Although there have been a large number of studies about the importance of an effective leader to an effective team, the specific leadership behaviors that create an effective leader have not been adequately characterized (1). We know an effective leader when we work with one but being able to describe the actual leadership qualities is difficult. In essence a good leader is one who creates an environment that creates a dynamic team able to respond to variations, sometimes extreme variations, in the work or workflow (1). The creation of such an environment requires strong communication skills, information sharing, providing opportunities for career development and resources for



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growth and retention, and implementation of new technologies and guidelines to ensure excellent patient outcomes. A review of the leadership research suggests that gaining a better understanding of leadership qualities has become a major focus of studies in the health-care industry, where the stresses and strains of the workplace are creating continued medical errors, job dissatisfaction, and staff retention issues, and overall health-care costs (2,3). In essence, the health-care industry has come to realize improvement in health care requires more than improvements in the science of medicine. Attention must also be directed toward leadership development of health-care professionals in schools. Simulations may offer one avenue for the development of these leadership skills. Simulations offer a supportive team learning environment where leadership qualities can be practiced and improved by all team members, not just the designated leaders of the team (4,5). It will be interesting to see if the use of simulations being used in most perfusion schools to develop technical skills will someday include the development of leadership skills.

Enjoy the content presented in the June 2018 issue of *JECT*. There is a variety of articles covering a range of topics that include original research, technique papers, and case studies. Although all the articles cover a topic related to practice of perfusion, I look forward to more articles from the perfusion community on building leaders and subsequently individuals engaged in improving the community as a whole.

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