

LETTER FROM THE
E D I T O R

Susan Gilbert
Associate Editor
*Journal of Nuclear Medicine
Technology*

The time has come for the Technologist Section to develop a formal leadership training program. This is important to encourage competent leadership in the clinical arena as well as to provide leadership at the local, chapter, and national levels of the Society.

Science and technical curricula generally do not allow for training in what many consider "soft" subjects such as group dynamics, the importance of a meeting agenda, public speaking, effective writing, etc. Yet it is these nonscientific skills which often determine how successful a technologist is in maintaining positive working relationships, both as staff and in supervisory clinical positions, and in leadership roles within the Society.

Currently, many of the skills necessary are learned "on the job" or by individual effort. I know of technologists who have joined Toastmasters in order to improve their public speaking skills, while others read books and/or enroll in courses on communication, management, and leadership topics. The experience of becoming a Technologist Section officer or committee chairperson at the local, chapter, or national level is often rewarding because the individual learns a lot during his/her term of office. Unfortunately, they do not feel fully competent until near the end of their tenure. Sometimes the experience is not positive and results in negative feelings toward the profession and the Society.

Why is leadership development important? It provides inspiration and information that allows technologists to grow—to realize their potential as technologists and to make significant contributions in the workplace and as members of the Society. Networking helps individuals to gain a wider view of the profession and stimulates creativity. Leadership development provides for leadership succession and could increase participation by the membership in the Technologist Section. Elected officers, committee chairpersons, and committee members would better understand their roles and responsibilities—the Technologist Section would be the best it could be.

A leadership development program could be structured in many ways. One approach would be to develop a multi-tiered program with different topics presented at local, chapter, and national meetings or for small groups at these levels. Another approach would be to select one or two topics of special interest during one year and provide training sessions and/or recommended resources for use across the membership during the year. Topics would change yearly in this format.

The Technologist Section is uniquely available to encourage individual growth and experience and to foster fellowship among technologists. Both the profession and the Society would enjoy long-term benefits from a more formally structured leadership training program.