

From the Editor

In 2004, I wrote in a *From the Editor* the following:
“The words of actor Alan Alda of MASH, express for me how to address the rapidly changing and often-unpredictable health and rehabilitation marketplace:

‘Have the nerve to go into unexplored territory. Be brave enough to live life creatively. The creative is the place where no one else has ever been. You leave the city of your comfort and go into the wilderness of your intuition. You can’t get there by bus, only by hard work and risk and by not quite knowing what you’re doing’. Alan Alda, actor

However, many of us feel more like Regis Philbin, who declared to the world in his autobiography: “*I’m only one man!*” He’s right, and we all feel this way from time to time. We think to ourselves, “*Sure, I’d change the world if I could, but I’m just a regular person doing a job. It’s a job that’s important, and I love doing it, but I’m nothing extraordinary. I’m just an ordinary person doing an ordinary job.*”

As founding editor of *WORK* for twenty years, my sage advice remains the same: *You’re right.* We are ordinary people. However, we must realize that the ordinary is, in fact, *extraordinary*; we must embrace it with passion and share it through journal publications so we can learn from each other.

The articles contained in this issue of *WORK* are about everyday, ordinary people, but are written by extraordinarily talented researchers and practitioners who are making a difference in these individuals’ lives.

Authors from four countries compose this issue. They are from Australia, Sweden, Canada, and the United States, but also include populations from other countries such as China. Gentzler and Stader start this issue of *WORK* with an important article on posture stress on firefighters and emergency medical technicians (EMTs) associated with repetitive reaching, bending, lifting, and pulling tasks.

There are two articles from Sweden. One investigates a psychometric evaluation of the Scale of Work Engagement and Burnout (SWEBO); and the other has a more political focus on the medicalization of work absence. Researchers Tompa, Scott-Marshall, and Fang also investigate work absence, but from a difference perspective in a United States population. Their article is on the social protection and the employment contract and its impact on work absence. I encourage you to compare and contrast these two informative articles.

This issue includes an important follow-up study on the effectiveness of ergonomic keyboards for typists with work related upper extremity disorders which was authored by Ripat. For those of you involved in computer ergonomics, I know you will find the findings very interesting.

Other topics included in this issue include predictors of lost time from work among nursing personnel with back pain; emerging workplace issues for Chinese health care workers; isometric strength assessment; simultaneous bilateral hand strength testing; and assessing readiness to work from a stages of change perspective.

I encourage you to consider submitting a manuscript to *WORK*. We welcome research, clinical practice, review of the literature, case studies as well as narratives. I know that you are making a difference and we welcome sharing your contributions with others.

Cheers
Karen

E-mail: [kjacob@bu.edu](mailto:kjacobs@bu.edu)
<http://blogs.bu.edu/kjacobs/>