

Editorial

P. Carlo Cacciabue · David Woods

Received: 7 March 2010 / Accepted: 10 March 2010 / Published online: 9 April 2010
© Springer-Verlag London Limited 2010

It has been an honour and pleasure to prepare this Special Issue in tribute to our friend, colleague and mentor Erik Hollnagel.

Commonly, editorials for special issues provide an overview of the significance of the contributions. In this case, the significance is built in as the contributions reflect the importance and influence of Erik's body of work and how his work continues to have an impact on each author's research. Instead, we will depart from custom and discuss how the set of invitations to contribute came about. In part this is necessary because there are so many other colleagues of Erik who would have been very pleased to comment on the widespread impact of his body of work.

In addition, we discovered that, if we had only utilized one of the several theoretical models developed by Erik, our endeavour would have been completed with less turmoil and in a more relaxed manner.

The "story" goes like this.

The initial "strategic" plan was to present and cover as many of the theoretical topics and problems tackled by EH in his professional life as possible. In particular, the importance of his theoretical work can be clearly demonstrated when the associated methods impact different domains of application through practical implementations.

With this initial idea in mind, we started to think of the possible authors who together could cover the wide range of topics and problems EH has addressed. Because EH has

been active over several decades, we thought we should involve colleagues who represented past, present and possibly future connections to his scientific and professional activities in both research and industry. Therefore, we had to ensure that safety, management, and design were discussed as related to domains such as Nuclear, Transportation, and Medicine. This "tactical" approach was used in order to produce a high-quality issue of the Journal that explored EH's accomplishments and influence.

In order to guarantee the completion of this Special Issue on schedule, the selection of the authors was further guided by a number of "opportunistic" elements in addition to the requirement of a strong relationship with EH and his work, namely:

- all authors had to be members of the Editorial Board of CTW and therefore with a specific commitment to the Journal;
- all authors, given their scientific reputation, would be required to produce a work of quality so that review processes could be expedited; and
- all of the authors had to be willing to respect the deadlines and, especially the "secrecy" of the endeavour, given that our intention was to produce this Special Issue as a surprise and gift to EH.

As a result, everyone was working on a very rapid timeline with less give and take than usual, and with no margins for delays or disruptions.

For these reasons, the list of authors represents a sort of continuity of contact over the last 30 years: Penny Sanderson and Tom Kontogiannis who have been colleagues of EH for many years; Fred Vanderhaegen and Toshi Inagaki represent interactions in more recent time period; and Chris Nemeth, Alessandra Re and Gigi Macchi, who represent some of EH's most recent collaborations.

P. C. Cacciabue (✉)
Milano, Italy
e-mail: cacciabue@aero.polimi.it

D. Woods
Columbus, OH, USA
e-mail: woods.2@osu.edu

The set of authors also represent EH's global geographic connections.

We thought all was under control, and indeed the competence and professionalism of the authors meant that the expected goals were achieved. Together the papers cover most of Erik's past and current work and its application in diverse areas. Every author has presented in his/her personal line of research and set their results in the context of EH's body of work. So goal achieved and "bravo" to all, authors and guest editors, for the work done!

However, when we were planning the special issue, we forgot one of the basic "control" modes of human behaviour and the elements that affect control: the subjective time dimension and the outcome of the previous activity. Indeed, the "scramble" control mode EH has described previously arose as one of our authors, who shall remain unnamed, had to produce and revise their contribution on flights across the world. Perhaps, the plan was

too precariously balanced, nevertheless, even this author managed to provide a high-quality contribution though at the very last available moment. Had we applied one of Erik's theories and conducted a thorough analysis using one of his latest techniques, we would have identified the potential gap and built barriers to lessen the anxiety associated with pulling off this special issue. But then again perhaps we just provided another example of the principle at the heart of his latest book.

These struggles only enhanced the wonderful experience of producing this "secret run" not just for us but for all of the authors who contributed to this Special Issue. We hope the special efforts everyone invested will succeed in transmitting the insight and power of EH's work to an even wider audience in the scientific community. Personally, we hope that Erik will welcome the process and product of this special issue as a special representation of our respect. It has been a gift to work with you for all these years.