

All the I's at ISI

It's a sad fact, reported and repeated in scholarly articles, magazine features, and newspaper squibs, that most people don't enjoy the work they do. It's not a new dissatisfaction, but people have paid it more attention during the past decade as one aspect of the troubling alienation that affects so much of our society.

The problem is beyond the scope of any discussion here, but surely at the heart of it must be a basic doubt about the meaningfulness of individual effort. We hear that governments have become too complex either to govern effectively for social good or to change their structure to enable them to do so. We hear that corporations have become so large and their objectives so mindless of social welfare that the idea of corporate morality is a phantasma. And so it goes. Individuals have become mere numbers in more data for government and business.

It is a dismal view, increasingly dismal because it reinforces and perpetuates itself. When one forgets that governments and corporations *are people*, it becomes easier to accept the 'fact' that individual effort means little. That 'fact', of course, is a lie, one of those signposts that the Devil keeps well-lit and legible on the road to Hell.

I hope that there are few members of ISI®'s staff who doubt that their work has meaning, that it is significant, that it is valuable, that it is

socially useful. I want them to know that it is all those things.

Most of you, our subscribers, are deeply involved in medical or other forms of research. Perhaps your employees, as a result, can see more clearly the goals toward which you work, and their potential or real humanitarian benefits. I don't think I misinterpret the situation or exaggerate our contribution, when I say that we who provide information services are part of your work, share your goals, deserve satisfaction in your accomplishments. No one will argue successfully with *me* that scientific information is anything less than the life-blood of research.

ISI is people — not paper, systems and machines. There isn't time every day to acknowledge what each person does separately nor what we all accomplish together, but there are days when one should make the effort. I've made today such a day. On the next pages you will find a list of the names of all the people who make up ISI, all the *I's* who are ISI. And I hope that you will join with me in wishing all of them a Happy New Year. They all join me in the same greeting to all of you.



Eugene Garfield

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