
There could hardly be a more appropriate time for such a title to appear on the United Kingdom book market. As NHS pathology departments struggle to cope with the dual culture shock of audit and cost effectiveness, many laboratories are indeed having to become more "customer orientated". So does this book help? The answer is probably yes. Provided the distinctly transatlantic style can be enjoyed, accommodated, or ignored, what Dr Umiker has to offer is a lot of sound advice on all aspects of pathology management. And in an amusing and readable way. I love the little lists—such as "invalid excuses for not getting feedback" or "great phrases to use when dealing with complaints". Different types of difficult customers are neatly categorised and we can all recognise the steamroller (Dr Furious, a surgeon).

Like many management texts, what is contained is mostly applied common sense, but in this case distilled in such a way that is thoroughly provocative. Readers will learn how to implement change, how to evaluate the service, how to recruit, train, and retain personnel, how to use EPOS (employee participation groups), and how to approach budgeting and cost containment. And, yes, of course, how to sell the service.

Despite the contents being pitched at the North American market, there is a basic international timeliness about service organisation and personnel management, and the quote from Henry Ford on page one sets the scene: "It's not the employer who pays wages. He only handles the money. It's the customer who pays the wages".

So, buy the book and you may be on the road to the Japanese system of Kaizen; the "theory of continuous improvement". Imagine the effect of that on your anticoagulant clinic.

AB AKOSA


This volume includes a rather curious mixture of subjects. About half the book comprises three chapters devoted to the biliary tree and liver in childhood and to the developmental pathology of the bile ducts. About another quarter consists of two chapters in which the basic pathology and immunology of transplantation are reviewed. The remaining two chapters are devoted to cardiac transplantation and to pancreatic transplantation for the treatment of diabetes. While these chapters provide a useful summary of some of the problems in these areas, much of the information is available elsewhere, and the chapter on cardiac transplantation does not include the standardised nomenclature proposed by the heart rejection study group of the International Society for Heart Transplantation.

The quality of production is excellent. The print is clear with few typographical errors and in general the photomicrographs are good. This volume will be of some interest to paediatric pathologists, but its high price and unusual nomenclature of subjects suggest that, while it may be a suitable volume to have in the hospital library, few pathology departments will feel justified in buying it.

A KENNEDY


There are several text books on practical histochemistry; some have defined their audience, while others, including this second edition, are not sure who is the target. Most of these "practical" books are reasonably strong on the theory and give, for the most part, sound methods. However, although they are entitled "practical", there is rarely any useful comment on application. This second edition is no exception.

On reading through the book I had a nagging sense of déjà vu, and when I compared the current text with that of the first 1973 edition, all was made clear. There is very little change, apart from a paragraph here and there, and the bulk of the text and diagrams is identical with the 1973 edition. This accounts for the general feeling that it seems about 20 years out of date, and it is in reality almost a first edition repackaged rather than a second edition.

It is unlikely to be found on many laboratory bookshelves.

BD LAKE


This text is written by one of the most reputable of British flow cytometrists. Dr Watson, probably has a lifetime of experience behind him building and adjusting flow cytometers than nearly anyone else in the country. This text sets out to "describe the fundamental principles behind flow cytometry, the basic methods involved, and the results that can be obtained from this important technique". The book does this in 385 pages with 142 pages of references. Roughly half of the book is concerned with the theories of fluid flow, light and optics, electronics, computing and instrument performance, with the second half dealing with nucleic acid analysis, chromosomes, and dynamic cellular applications. The last 40 pages deal with potential applications in oncology.

The style is informal throughout with many fine illustrations of flow cytometric data. In many situations the author draws on his own personal experience to illustrate applications.

The technical side of the book deserves little criticism and is a valuable addition to the literature. The methods sections on nucleic acid analysis and chromosomes are also valuable but the book falls down by its omission of a substantial section on immunology. Flow cytometry is an essential part of immunology and most machines are situated in these laboratories.

A further failing was to see only 40 pages on applications. A book written by a senior author in the field can be very valuable in drawing together many workers' papers in a common theme. A further chapter on commercial flow cytometers would also have been of interest to people new to the field who may be interested in purchasing instruments.

Does this book succeed in doing what it set out to do? It successfully describes the principles of flow cytometry in great detail and discusses the methods and types of results that can be obtained. This makes the book a useful reference source for the fundamental principles, but is it a necessary purchase for anyone wishing to start using or already using this technique?"