Foreword

These are exiting times for managers of information technology professionals. IT professionals are an endangered species. They are endangered because they are constantly confronted with the challenges of adapting to rapidly changing IT platforms, software development tools, and business processes. These professionals have to engage in constant learning and updating of their skill sets. In the literature, there are reports of higher job stress and burnout among IS employees when compared to employees in other areas. The literature cites job stress and burnout as the main contributors to IS employee turnover. IS managers must ensure that ISD employees and end users become perpetual learners and have the ability to assimilate new technologies and business processes.

The book sets out to provide a platform for the discussion of issues related to strategies for managing IS/IT personnel. What strategies are currently employed by IS managers so that they help IS professionals cope with rapid change? How can IS managers reduce the problem of stress and burnout among IS employees? What should IS managers do to attract more minorities and women into the IT workforce? What are the responsibilities of top management, the Information Systems department, and the Human Resource department in recruiting, placement, socialization, development, and retention of IS employees? How do organizations measure the effectiveness of IS/IT human resource strategies?

The diversity of authorship in the book's chapters ensures that there is wide coverage of the important questions surrounding strategies for managing IS personnel. Our authors are involved in a wide variety of research and consulting areas, as can be seen from their biographical sketches and from the chapters themselves. The chapters not only provide the results of ongoing studies, they also provide best practices and recommendations that will be helpful for managing IS personnel.

We see different audiences for this book—IS managers, CEOs, HR managers, and IS students and teachers. Students and teachers of IS policy and strategy will find research and practical issues that require immediate attention to improve the IS workforce and workplace. CEOs will benefit by understanding the challenges faced by IS managers and professionals, and strategies they should take to develop IT human capital. HR managers will benefit by learning the recruitment, placement, evaluation, promotion, and development issues facing the IS managers and their responsibilities for helping them. IS managers will foremost find issues that need their care and attention, and learn of the best practices employed by their fellow managers in confronting IS personnel management challenges. We hope that all our readers will enjoy the research, analysis, conclusions and recommendations presented in these chapters.

We are grateful to our families, friends, and colleagues for their support and help with this book. We developed the idea for this book after finding that there is no book that specifically dealt with strategies for managing IS/IT personnel. We thought there was need for a book that covered the various IS/IT human capital issues because, in the new networked economy, IS/IT human capital is at the core of organizational value creation. We immediately went to work and submitted a proposal to Idea Group Publishing who promptly gave us the go ahead.

The authors who contributed their ideas and time in writing the chapters for this book were a delightful bunch to work with. Even after the passing of Magid, they quickly agreed to continue working as a tribute to our departed friend, colleague, and scholar. On behalf of Magid, I thank each author sincerely for your willingness to continue and complete the work we had started.

Our appreciation also goes to the folks at Idea Group Publishing—Jan Travers, Mehdi Khosrow-Pour, and Michele Rossi—for their professionalism and support all the way.

Finally, on behalf of all individuals who will benefit from this book, we thank you Magid, wherever you are, for your indefatigable contribution to the IS field.

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