Evaluation of Human Work (Fourth Edition)

Both editors have had professorial appointments in human factors at the University of Nottingham. John Wilson who died before the book was published was heavily involved in both writing and editing the previous three editions. A total of 68 contributors mainly originate from UK, USA and South Korea.

The target audience is related to serious investigators of detailed or complex ergonomic/human factor problems. It is certainly not a primer but more a practical manual to facilitate evaluation of human work. The book is composed of seven sections: Fundamental Approaches and Tools; Methods for Design of work; Assessment of Impact of Work on Individuals; Assessment and design of the Physical Workplace; Methods in Organisational and Social Human Factors; Implementation and Analysis of Human Factors; and Conclusion.

As the fourth edition of an established book, the editors and contributors have provided five completely new chapters (inclusive design, situation awareness, neuroergonomics, ergonomics and quality and standards in ergonomics design and evaluation as well as the conclusion). The latter, written by Sarah Sharples and Peter Buckle, deals eloquently and thoroughly with reflective practice.

The text is very readable with excellent referencing and diagrams. The clear photographs are all in black and white. There are some very useful worked examples and exceptional descriptions of keynote accidents and their investigation findings. The book celebrates both the work of the deceased first editor and the acquisition of the award of a Royal Charter to the United Kingdom’s Institute of Ergonomics and Human Factors. The book’s content is scientifically correct and gives a balanced discussion into controversial topics. The text is comprehensive and the subject matter will be valuable to a wide range of ergonomic students and specialists as well as occupational advisers. I believe the text meets the needs of its target audience and provides a standard which will be hard to beat in the foreseeable future. The e-book format enables mobile access. The cost of the sizeable volume is very affordable despite the quality and comprehensiveness of the contributions.

For most occupational health physicians, ‘Evaluation of Human Work (Fourth Edition)’ is likely to be a handy reference source for study or research due to the variety and complexity of the specialist areas discussed. For the trainee in occupational medicine or the experienced consultant, it will be an enlightening source of balanced material to give direction in problem-solving investigations. With its very reasonable price, it would be an asset to any occupational health office or clinic where there is a genuine interest in working practice.

Rating
★★★☆ (Buy and keep)

Alan Bray

Wanted: Questionnaires and Questionnaire Reviewers

*Occupational Medicine*, the journal of the Society of Occupational Medicine, is running a series of articles covering questionnaires used in OH clinical practice. If you use a particular questionnaire in your practice and would be willing to review it and submit it for consideration for publication please contact Angela Burnett at om@som.org.uk to check we haven’t already got a review of that questionnaire underway and for guidance on the review content we are looking for.