Olympic Games. Approximately 14,000 athletes from over 200 Olympic teams will represent their countries at this prestigious sporting event. Each team will have as its goal to achieve success and bring back gold for their country. Each member within an Olympic team possesses individual leadership qualities as they act as role models and leaders in their field of sport. The sense of pride, collegiality and recognition of individual ability is clearly evident throughout each team and these qualities are recognised as an essential aspect to keep team spirits high in order to achieve success.

One of the effects of poor leadership and lack of team spirit is highlighted in Susan Tame’s article. Some readers might find Susan’s article hard to digest as horizontal violence is almost a taboo subject especially amongst the caring professions. Horizontal violence is not unique to theatre departments it is recognisable in many areas, in particular where there is a lack of leadership and team cohesiveness. Susan’s research, although limited to one trust, shows how workplace culture and intra-professional conflict can have a negative effect on staff morale and continuing professional development.

As professionals we all have a part to play in transforming the perioperative environment into a culture of learning and development. We need to move past old learning debates and move towards using our minds collectively. However, despite numerous studies such as Susan’s indicating that collegiality and team effectiveness is necessary to create a positive working environment, dysfunctional relationships and dissonance amongst staff continues to exist. By acknowledging each other’s contribution and achievements the ability to conceive and invent new ways of working for the benefit of staff and patients can become a realistic goal.

Every practitioner following registration may not want to undertake a course of further academic study; others will decide to take a more vocational approach to continue their personal development. Whatever approach practitioners decide to take to ensure they remain competent in both knowledge and skills is not important. What is important is that each practitioner takes responsibility for their development to ensure that the perioperative care they deliver is safe, current and of a high standard.