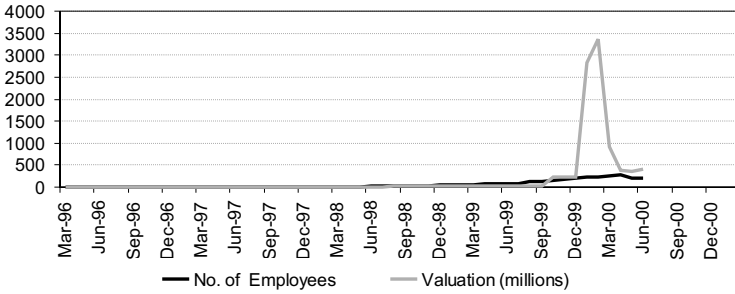


# June 2000



## Hospital Purchasing Co-Ops Link Up to Make Buying On the Web Easier

Buying co-ops representing more than two-thirds of the nation's hospitals are banding together with three fledgling electronic-commerce companies to demand that manufacturers and distributors of medical supplies adopt standard product codes to ease the buying of supplies over the Internet, Wednesday's *Wall Street Journal* reported . . .

*Dow Jones Business News*  
June 14, 2000

# Posing



Properly decorated and fluffed, the lightest of feathers can display a magnificent confidence.

I was still focused on the remnants of the capital-planning group in the company. We were bringing in just enough money to justify our presence in the new, lean and mean Neoforma. I still believed that Neoforma would eventually need to focus on capital equipment again, but I was also increasingly resigned to the fact that Neoforma might not have the luxury of keeping us around that long.

Jeff's role in the new organization was much less defined than mine. And he was definitely happier with his unconfined position. He had been assigned a small number of limited-duration projects by Bob. In his free time, Jeff assigned himself some additional tasks.

One day, my phone rang. "Wayne, how are you doing . . . Hey! I have a brilliant idea!" It was like old times.

Jeff's voice had that old, familiar fighting edge. His brilliant idea this time was to lead the formation of an industry standards group. The group would create standard ways of classifying and identifying health-care products and initially consist of GPOs and Internet e-commerce companies.

"The manufacturers and distributors have come together around some fuzzy idea of fostering efficiency through cooperation," Jeff said. "If we combine the major e-commerce players with the major GPOs, then we'll have nearly all of the hospitals banding together to *reject* the idea that the suppliers could or should control how they get their supplies. All of their expensive new offices and empty press releases would be useless!"

"Well," I said, "it seems to me that the suppliers should actually be the ones to drive standards, don't you think?"

"Yes, of course, but once the GPOs band together, the suppliers