



NEWSLETTER---

THE CHEMICAL CONSULTANT

Association of Consulting Chemists & Chemical Engineers

Volume 11, Number 5 & 6

May/June 1999

TAKING THE LONG VIEW

As the end of the century gets closer, there is more and more discussion of what should be in our thinking about the next one. Business has usually limited its forward vision to 5 years; the 5-year plan is commonplace. Now large corporations with long histories are entertaining serious consideration to the fundamental factors affecting their futures. They realize that things are very different already and that the old habits must be replaced by new ones. The 30-year forward look is becoming the way of planning.

The push for new thinking is already having effects. Consider how the major companies in the chemical industry--Dow, DuPont, Monsanto, Eastman, ICI, Hoechst and other familiar names--have been spinning off commodity as well as specialty chemicals and acquiring or making joint ventures with biotechnology firms. One obvious motive for these changes has been economics. Although the investments in research and new manufacturing facilities are high, the profit margins in the successful pharmaceutical and agribusiness outfits are several times greater than in the traditional "chemical" businesses. At the same time, it may be that there is a longer wait for the payoff, as time is needed for the research and the safety testing required.

Another topic has begun to appear in the news--Sustainable Development. Some ecological and ethical activists have been calling for policy changes in industry decision making that will require taking the long view with consideration of "unintended consequences" stemming from profit-based decisions made today that are regretted 10, 20 or 30 years from now. Others have suggested that there will be opportunities for new profitable businesses arising from shortages in traditional fuels and raw materials.

Staying with chemistry-related matters and leaving social and ethical aspects for others, it does make sense to look at today's decisions in terms of their possible effects on the well-being of companies in the next generation.

Consider such factors as the using up of natural resources and the accumulation of waste products. In the era now being replaced by one driven by our new information technology such consequences were slow in becoming critical. With news and information flowing so much faster today, it takes less time to spot problems or decide to start up a new technological business. Changes in manufacturing and marketing come quicker.

Attention will still be focused on economics. In addition we now have a stronger fixation on stock-

market evaluation of an enterprise. The new problem that we have is that everything is speeded up. This new velocity of change is undergirded by electronic information technology.

Computer-based data storage and analysis allows planners to simulate a variety of futures. They also make possible risk analysis that has more logic and less emotion. There is the lingering problem that those who make the decisions are inclined to plug in only those factors that they have been accustomed to deal with.

The result may be to make the "right" decision too easily with consequences that do not surface until there are unwanted side-effects that are costly or are damaging to a company's reputation. Taking the long view will require new patterns of thinking.

Questions: Is there an opportunity for consultants in chemistry and chemical technology in this new picture? Should an association of such consultants take steps to implement a longer view of its future?

Answers are already being put forward for these questions. ACC&CE Council is considering many. The emphasis has been on immediate actions such as expanding the eligibility for membership to include such specialties as biotechnology and computer science applied to chemistry-related problems. Taking the long view on the external factors expected in the next 30 years will bear examination. It could work for survival of the association in the next century.

CHEM SHOW 1999

The biennial trade show and exhibition will again be in New York City at the Javits Center. The dates are November 16, 17 and 18. As in years past ACC&CE will have a booth at which members will be present to answer questions, register visitors, display their literature and talk to clients.

Volunteers are needed to sign up for one or more of the 5 half-day periods of booth duty. Send your preference to ChemShow coordinator Meyer Rosen (member #808) at (516) 922-2167 or meyer_rosen@earthlink.net. Five ACC&CE members will be making presentations at a seminar on Wednesday, November 17, 1999, on "How To Be A Chemical Consultant in the Next Millennium." Brief descriptions of the talks follow.

ROBERT J. BOCKSERMAN (member #872), TITLE: Chemical Toxicology, Safety and Handling of a New Chemical Product(How a Chemical Consultant Approaches This Undertaking) Hazards must be assessed when the new chemical is still in the laboratory stage of development. A thorough study of the physical and chemical properties of the product and a knowledge of the hazards of related types of materials will help to determine how to safely handle a new chemical product.

ANGELO TULUMELLO (member # 565), TITLE: Stumbling Blocks on the Road to Successful Consulting The challenge to consulting success is evolving the art forms and common practices of the competitive marketplace. In many ways these are in fundamental contradiction to those cultivated as a professional technical employee. The fundamental function of the consultant in the marketplace is the exploitation of opportunity and the creation and protection of those opportunities as they evolve. This is of particular interest to those initiating their practice. The sources of these opportunities and the challenges to their successful production of wealth will be discussed.

ELLIOTT L. WEINBERG (member #637), TITLE: Will There Be Enough Chemists and Chemical Engineers? In the observed anti-science, anti-technology climate that exists worldwide, the academic candidates for the strenuous training as chemists and chemical engineers are not forthcoming. Spreading word on the joys and accomplishments of chemical practitioners should get more students interested in pursuing careers in the basic science-CHEMISTRY!!!!

JOHN C. BONACCI (member #821), TITLE: How To Be a Chemical Consultant In The Next Millennium Dr. Bonacci will illustrate approaches successfully used by a practicing Chemical Engineer. These areas will be addressed: * pricing * pitfalls * who are the clients * client needs * what a consultant can do that's different * example projects * success factors for the consultant * a successful consulting example.

JON BARB (member #884), TITLE: "Do What Works"(tm), Selling Skills For Consultants Barb will present the skills necessary to plan for and make effective consultative sales calls, how to prepare for the face to face interaction, how to probe, support, close, and involve the client using style matching techniques. The focus is on client centered selling, identifying the needs and wants of the client, and then positioning the product/service/idea to meet those needs. By focusing on the client, the consultant increases the likelihood the sales presentation will be heard and accepted.

LOCAL MEETING RECRUITMENT FOR MEMBERS

Bill Swartz (member #835), Marketing Committee Chairman, is launching a proactive effort to interest more people in membership. Council approved his committee's proposal for a program designed to reach a key segment of potential members - members of related technical, trade, or professional associations and societies.

The plan is to do short presentations by members of ACC&CE to local sections of technical societies, luncheon get-togethers and similar meetings. These "talks" are to be well organized, short, with good supporting materials, and well presented. They will be based on the self-examination information recently generated by this committee. Once created, these recruitment talks can be replicated and handled by members of ACC&CE in cities all over the country.

The next step is to clarify how we are to get "invited" to make such talks, and also how to handle any expenses associated with the activity. With the wide group of associations our members are affiliated with, we should be able to be invited to a fair number of these groups. Contact Bill Swartz with your ideas.

INTERNET SITES OF INTEREST

AIChE

The American Institute of Chemical Engineers has a web site that is kept up to date weekly with selected items in Business, Technology, Government and other areas, including members' news.
<http://www.aiche.org/>

MATH RECREATION

Some people will like this better than computer golf or solitaire. Topics range from number puzzles to geometry tricks. www.cut-the-knot.com

A CHEMICAL CONSULTANTS' SITE

This is our own web site, one that is constantly in evolution to higher states of completion. Please check on a companion story in this issue: ACC&CE WEB PAGE NEEDS INPUT
www.chemconsult.org

CLIENTS GROW ON SEMINARS

In our May-June issue one year ago we reported an effort to support ACC&CE members in creating seminar programs based on their technical or knowledge specialties. On the same page we ran an announcement of such a seminar offered by Dr. David Armbruster, now our President.

We haven't heard of any follow-up of the first idea but the second is with us again. Armbruster Associates is staging the 1999 edition of "Advanced Radiation (UV/EB) Curing Marketing/Technology Seminar" on September 29-30 at the Marriott Hotel, Newark Airport. This is the 8th annual seminar on the subject. We interviewed Armbruster for an account of his experience with seminars and their benefits.

Our subject told us that the work and expense he has put into this endeavor has been very rewarding.

First, it has expanded his list of contacts in the field of specialty chemicals, coating technology, specialized equipment for radiation curing and in allied business and marketing fields. He says that through these contacts he has learned a great deal about how to grow his small business and has found suppliers and service sources that he wouldn't have known about otherwise.

Second, with appropriate pricing for the seminar he has a net income for these events.

Third, and most interesting to all consultants, he has gained consulting contracts from companies that sent employees to his seminar. Attendance at past seminars led to consulting contracts; three on research for a national chemical company and two for development of specialty adhesive and coating chemicals for a photographic film manufacturer.

Armbruster explained that he owes his success over the seven-year period to focusing on a specialty niche he knows well and to investing in direct marketing of each seminar.

One can draw these conclusions from this successful seminar venture: focus your product offering and technical expertise; network your contacts; invest money on promotion of each event.

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