

FOCUS: Visions And Directions



Chuck Smith

Where is OE going? Will we stay with the self-management concept? Why not just tell us what you want us to do? These are just a few of the questions being asked as we struggle with the transition to a new culture in which we hope to use everyone's thinking capabilities to improve our ability to prevail over our competition.

The fact that we have not dictated how self-management will be implemented, but have allowed freedom to experiment, has resulted in several different approaches. While this inconsistency may make some of us uncomfortable, we are learning a lot about what works and what doesn't. We are also learning how to focus the best of our thinking to improve the way we are organized and how we function.

Change is difficult for most of us. It can be stressful to be encouraged and expected to think about things that may have been off limits in the past. "Just tell me what you want me to do" is a natural response brought on by the temptation to return to our old ways while we are still experimenting and learning from our successes and mistakes.

I'm encouraged! I see general recognition and acceptance of the idea that we must use everyone's thoughts and talents more fully to improve our competitive edge. Satisfying our internal and external customers is a high profile emphasis now apparent throughout the plant.

We are seeing more efficient meetings, logic grids and frameworks, purpose statements and attempts to operate based on well-defined principles. At this early stage in our new culture development, it is very reassuring to see that overall bottom line results such as quality, yield and productivity are better than they were last year. They must continue to improve opposite the gains of our competition.

Even though we believe it is appropriate to allow freedom to experiment with alternatives in implementing methods such as self-management, we know it is also very important to have a well-defined and well-understood sense of direction so that we can align our efforts and move forward with unity of purpose. To provide that direction, the Plant staff is working to develop a description of our future; a vision of what we believe the Brevard Plant must become to remain a strong competitor in our business. Our direction will be to move toward that vision of our future.

The product of this vision development work will be shared soon, and teams will be assembled to upgrade the vision, identify barriers and help develop strategies to move toward our vision. The vision description will deal with our market, how it is changing and the effects of these changes on our plant. It will include a view of possible future organizational structures, job roles and our relationships to each other and our business.

We believe this is important and timely work which will affect all of us. It is also important that everyone have the opportunity to influence the strategies we develop to move forward.

...And Now, We're "Imaging Systems"

Once again, the name changes. The Brevard Plant has gone from Pigments Department to Photo Products, to Photosystems and Electronics Products — and now we're "Imaging Systems."

What's it all about? The latest change is part of a company-wide emphasis on customer service, bringing products and resources into an organization that targets specific markets rather than grouping operations by manufacturing process or product type.

Local history shows the need. The original Brevard Plant was established to produce silicon, the material that revolutionized electronics. The operation was managed by the Pigments Department because the silicon process was similar to that for producing titanium pigments. The idea was sound. "Sister" plants can share their experiences to improve similar processes. But problems came when paint-and-pigments thinking could not keep pace with the explosive growth of the vigorous new semiconduc-

tor businesses. The pigments business was stable and slow to change; the needs of silicon customers shifted like the wind. In the early days of solid-state electronics, new devices and technologies evolved, seized the market and became obsolete almost overnight. The Brevard Plant manufactured silicon to the highest standards in the world — but it wasn't what the customer needed.

Today, DuPont's organizations still consider the need to share the know-how, but with the added imperatives of staying in touch with the market, sensitive to customer needs and alert for new opportunities.

Imaging Systems, with solid resources in technology, manufacturing and marketing, intends to be "a solid contender in all the markets we serve." Brevard is a key player on a team carefully chosen to play the toughest game of all — continually winning customers in America and the world.

Lewis To Retire Shirreffs In Saddle

Following the announcement that Gordon Lewis will retire and the changes that restructured Photo and Electronics into a new department, John J. (Jack) Shirreffs, Jr. has assumed leadership of Imaging Systems as Director of Manufacturing.

Shirreffs is an ex-marine ('59-'63), received his BS from the U.S. Naval Academy following undergraduate work at the University of Pennsylvania. He started with the company in 1963 as a design engineer in the Seaford, Delaware, Textile Fibers plant. After working in maintenance and manufacturing positions there, he worked in Nylon headquarters in Wilmington, Del., then moved to Martinsville, Va., and Chattanooga, Tenn., returning to Seaford in 1977 as Plant Manager.

Following his return to Wilmington (1982), as a production manager for Textile Fibers, Shirreffs became "Orlon" business manager in 1985.

He is active in community affairs, aviation, and holds a commercial pilot's license.



Jack Shirreffs

ASBESTOS: New OSHA Standard Disallows Beards And Yellow Respirators

Asbestos has received a lot of attention as a health hazard because of its link to cancer and lung disease. It has created economic crises in some of the corporations that manufacture products containing asbestos, setting many legal precedents in personal injury and property damage litigation. Most of us have heard concerns about asbestos outside of the workplace, in schools and other public buildings.

Asbestos has been used extensively in industry. It is most often encountered as high temperature insulation at the Brevard Plant. It can be worked with safely if the hazard is recognized.

Wherever possible, asbestos is being replaced with other materials during the course of construction or maintenance. It is not hazardous until such times, when the fibers can become airborne as the material is damaged or removed. Then, protective steps are mandatory. OSHA developed two sets of rules, one for small maintenance operations and the other for large construction projects. Both sets of rules cover air monitoring, protective equipment, labeling and training.

Now, new OSHA regulations reduce the permissible exposure limit from 2 fibers per cubic centimeter of air to 0.2 fibers per cc. Fibers are measured in microns, one micron being one millionth of a meter, about 39 millionths of an inch. OSHA defines a "fiber" as being at least 5 microns long.

At Brevard, we've been well below the 0.2 f/cc limit for years. Our procedures call for wetting down insulation before disturbing it and protecting people with appropri-



Ed Hallowell
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ate respirators.

But "appropriate" protection is redefined by the new OSHA standard. There are two changes that affect almost everyone whose job brings them in proximity to free asbestos fibers: the very popular yellow (3M No. 9910) disposable respirator is no longer approved for protection against asbestos fibers — and beards are definitely out. Other changes include more air monitoring, changes in waste labelling, and additional training and respirator fit testing, every six months for people who regularly work with asbestos.