

Companies must consider several elements to survive and prosper.

Disorder & Revision, Change & Correction

Last December CHEMARK discussed its views regarding the business environment. Here we provide a 2006-addendum.

The business environment within which we find ourselves today is disorderly, perhaps chaotic, and therefore, certainly troublesome.

We are coming to the end of an era of corporate responsibility where the business took care of us. We are concurrently embarking on a new and long trip where individual self control is considered to be in. This trend is considered both necessary and welcome by many.

However, although many welcome this shift towards self-governance, there are many others who are frightened and resist this inevitable transition, which requires and demands an individual transformation to survive in the new economy.

REVISION

Within this disorderly business environment, we can no longer count on the companies with whom we work to provide us with a security blanket. The companies are not to be blamed themselves, but that doesn't change the fact that our industry, which includes paint, coatings, adhesives, sealants and specialty chemicals, must consider significant changes in the methods of conducting business in order to survive as well as prosper in the future. An important element of this change within our industry will, as a consequence, influence its most valuable resource—people.

Companies must convey themselves through this revision, using its methods in order to capture and control more value in its respective supply chains. This will require change within an assorted set of positions, people types and

experiences as well as the means of managing and incentivizing those people involved.

Since disorder and chaos set the stage of our economic backdrop, instant gratification, speed and accuracy of decision-making is the success formula and the only success requirement. There are, as a consequence, the following discomfiting facts that must be dealt with including:

- Re-imagine our companies. We've not kept up.
- No rules, just right. The normal rules of engagement are null and void. Big box marketers and terrorists have made sure of that.
- Examination is out, destruction is in. Competition will disallow the late 20th century mind sets. You can't incrementalize your way into prosperity easily.
- InfoTech capabilities have changed all including the rules.
- Job shrinkage is to be expected.
- Job types will continue to change radically.
- So-called white collar jobs will be reduced to 20% of current levels in 12 years.

CHANGE & CHALLENGE

Yes, it's true, we are creatures of habit to a fault. However, we must change or become obsolete as individuals and as companies using people to accomplish their goals and objectives. As individuals and as companies, we must help each other through this change. We must do it for selfish reasons. Survival and prosperity are at stake.

CORRECTION

Future survival and prosperity for both individuals and companies depends on the recognition of the need for as well as the type of correction used in our industries. That is, sur-

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vival and prosperity lies in part, in the correction and reemergence of three business elements including market listening, customer caring and customer excitement.

If you fully understand that your customers don't really care about you as a business and they really only care about themselves, meeting their

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needs and making their lives comfortable, you're on the first step towards proper correction.

Further, if you understand, on the other hand, that you must care deeply about your customer and through market listening, customer caring and customer excitement, have accurate insights into their concerns, you're on the second step towards successful correction.

Remember Doug Hall's "three laws of marketing physics" as explained in his book, *Jump Start Your Business Brain* and you will continue the correction process. The three laws include:

- **Law #1: Overt Benefit.** What is the product or service's one great feature? One or two great features is far better than three or more great features. More than one or two confuses the end-users.

- **Law #2: Real Reason to Believe.** Does the organization really and consistently deliver that one great feature?

- **Law #3: Dramatic Difference.** Dramatic difference in a product or service offering makes a very dramatic difference in top- and bottom-line success.

We hope our collection of words and

thoughts makes sense and can be used to infuse our industry with the willingness and risk to change and prosper as individuals and companies together. **CW**

See Chemark's ad this month on page 43.