2006 American Industrial Hygiene Conference and Exhibition

Taking Industrial Hygiene to New Heights - one industrial hygienist’s story

Marc Kolanz, CIH
Brush Wellman Inc.
Who am I?

Marc Kolanz
Certified Industrial Hygienist
Vice President, Environmental Health and Safety

Brush Wellman Inc.
- Half billion dollar corporation
- World’s leading producer of beryllium-containing materials
Why am I here?

I’ve had an interesting and rewarding career...thus far.
Career history…in brief

Education
- BS Environmental Health

1st IH job at 23 years old
- Grey iron foundries to indoor air pollution

2nd job as Industrial Hygienist for Brush Wellman Inc. at 26 years old
- My new job criteria?
  - More money
  - Job satisfaction
  - Work with a knowledgeable mentor
  - Planned to stay 3-4 years

25 years later…it’s a career
Career foundation - typical

- Related science degree
- Field IH work
- Safety
- Workers compensation
- Training
- Other duties as assigned
- Survived multiple reorganizations
Career foundation – non-typical

- 25 years with one company – no mergers, buy-outs or bankruptcies
- Environmental
- High visibility/controversial issue – beryllium
  - Legal
  - Media
  - Regulatory
  - Research
Roles & Responsibilities

- Identify investments in science
  - Product-specific health research

- Product stewardship

- New program initiation
  - EH&S management systems

- Media relations - print, television, radio
  - Toledo Blade, Chicago Tribune, NY Times, Washington Post, Business Week
  - 20/20, Public Hearings,

- Company historian
Roles & Responsibilities

Governmental relations

Product liability fact witness

Regulatory affairs – domestic & international

- OSHA/EPA
- ACGIH
- REACH/RoHS/WEEE etc.
Roles & Responsibilities

Soothsayer – big picture view
(either have it or you don’t)
What skills/knowledge help ensure success?

The trick, as I see it, is to insulate yourself with layers of deadwood.
What skills/knowledge help ensure success?

**Technical Knowledge**

- Do diverse field industrial hygiene work
- Learn & do environmental
- Learn & do safety
- Learn workers compensation
- Gain an understanding of the legal system
What skills/knowledge help ensure success?

Communications skills

- Develop and practice your presentation skills
- Tailor to the audience
- Learn to write well.
  - write smart
  - write to the audience
  - keep it brief (when possible)
- Learn to negotiate
- Learn to read people
  - Pay attention to behaviors, body language
- Seek to understand so as to be understood
  - Be willing to adjust your position/agenda
- Let facts and data lead you
  - But trust your guts
What skills/knowledge help ensure success?

Organizational knowledge

- Learn the history of your issue(s), company or organization
- Understand the customer (internal and external)
- Understand your customer’s customer
What skills/knowledge help ensure success?

Networking

Look beyond your own world
Keep up with what is going on in the world
Become the dependable source of accurate information
Identify and partner with stakeholders – early and often
- NIOSH
- Trade associations
- Professional associations
- Companies with like/similar issues
Monitor the internet for news on your issues or organization
Life Lessons Learned
Life Lessons Learned

Tell the truth

Listen well, load brain, open mouth

Don’t guess, always provide accurate information

Don’t ready, fire aim or ready aim, aim, aim, aim…

Avoid conflicts of interest, or perceptions of COI

Stand up for what is right and good

Admit mistakes

Perception is reality
Business Lessons Learned

“I’d like your honest, unbiased and possibly career-ending opinion on something.”
Business Lessons Learned

Good intentions and commerce drives EH&S regulations

Don’t ever underestimate this

The organizational culture in government agencies drives outcomes

agency memory is long.

Don’t try to be a 100% worker on everything. Tailor the effort to the need
Business Lessons Learned

News media usually have the story written before you are contacted

- Media is rarely motivated to get your story out

Remember, people you knock down on your way up a ladder...

- May take a different path and meet you at the top or;
- May meet you on your way down

Don’t go around your boss or the system

- Manage your responsibilities and save the whine for the cheese
Why pursue a high level EH&S position with industry, trade association or government?

Make a difference

Job satisfaction

Salary & Benefits (government health benefits, early retirement, job security)

Stock options (not under water)

Bonus plans (even government)
How to find your niche?

So, Jim, where do you see yourself in ten minutes?"
How to find your niche?

Identify existing issues
- ID a mentor < 10 years from retirement

New/future regulations
- OSHA/EPA semi-annual agendas
  - Silica
  - Gluteraldehyde
  - Chromium
How to find your niche?

Emerging issues/needs

- nano-particles
- pop corn manufacturing
- product stewardship
- green image/sustainable development
How to find your niche?

Sources for Emerging Issues

- NIOSH research agenda
- World Health Organization
- National Toxicology Program
- Environmental activist targets
  - chemical trespass
If you truly want a high probability of success ... 

Marry the owner’s kid!
For the rest of us …

Career opportunities are what you make of them …

minus set-backs, mergers, bankruptcies, reorganizations, children and life in general.