

**Congratulations**

**ANDERSON**, Tim – (EMP-8) – is now Area Vice President for Contech Bridge Solutions – 6075 Atlantic Blvd., Suite A-1, Norcross, GA 30071 - Bus – 770-409-0814 - Cell – 770-317-1550 – [andersont@contech-cpi.com](mailto:andersont@contech-cpi.com)

**DUGAN**, Lindon – (PSP-3) - is now Western Sales Manager – Norris, 8203 Willow Place South, Suite 625, Houston, TX 77070 – [ldugan@norrisrods.com](mailto:ldugan@norrisrods.com).

**EMERY**, Ed – (EMP-5) – is now Vice President of Marketing – Carolina Tractor, PO Box 1095, Charlotte, NC 28201 – Bus – 704-596-8880 x2445 - [emery@carolinacat.com](mailto:emery@carolinacat.com)

**GORRIVAN**, Tom - (EMP-14) – is now Strategic Initiatives Manager – Contech Stormwater Solutions, 200 Enterprise Drive, Scarborough, ME 04074 – Bus – 207-885-9830 x286 – Cell – 207-409-9286 - [gorrivant@contech-cpi.com](mailto:gorrivant@contech-cpi.com).

**HUNTER**, Jim – (PSP-3) – is now Western Sales Manager – Norris, 147 Las Lunas St., Castle Rock, CO 80104 – Bus – 303-688-2414 – Cell – 303-324-8921 - [jhunter@norrisrods.com](mailto:jhunter@norrisrods.com).

**JONES**, Dave – (PSP-2) – is now Vice President, Sales – Norris, 8203 Willow Place South, Suite 625, Houston, TX 77070 – Bus – 817- 238-9555 – Cell – 817-577-8315 – [djones@norrisrods.com](mailto:djones@norrisrods.com).

**KACHOVEC**, Tom - (EMP-16) – is now Vice President & Chief Operating Officer – Long Stanton Manufacturing, 9388 Sutton Place, Hamilton, OH 45011 – Bus – 918-250-2450 x219 – Cell – 513-907-5222 - [tomk@longstanton.com](mailto:tomk@longstanton.com).

**MORRIS**, Robert I. – (EMP-13) – is now Sales Manager – Florida Region – Contech Construction Products, Inc., 930 Woodcock Road, Suite 101, Orlando, FL 32803 – Bus – 321-445-6825 – Cell – 404-391-7615 [rmorris@contech-cpi.com](mailto:rmorris@contech-cpi.com).

**PLISKA**, Ross – (EMP-16) – is now Vice President Sales & Engineering – Alberta Oil Tool, 9530 60 Ave. SW, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6E 0C1 – Bus – 780-434-8566 – Cell – 780-995-8894 - [rpliska@aot.ab.ca](mailto:rpliska@aot.ab.ca).

**SCOTT**, Sean – (EMP-2) – is now Manager of Sales & Marketing – Humphrey Products, 5070 East N. Ave., Kalamazoo, MI 49048 – Bus – 269-381-5500 x253 – Cell – 269-352-5523 - [sscott@humphrey-products.com](mailto:sscott@humphrey-products.com).

**Congratulations – con't.**

**SOMASUNDARAM**, Soma – (EMP-16) – is now President - Fluid Solutions Platforms – Dover Fluid Management, Inc., Highland Oaks 1, Suite #520, 1100 W. 34<sup>th</sup> St., Downers Grove, IL 60515 – Bus – 630-725-2913 – Cell – 630-400-2379 - [soma@dovergeg.com](mailto:soma@dovergeg.com).

**WHITE**, Brett – (PSP-2) – is now National Operations Manager – Norris, 4001 Alken St., Bakersfield, CA 93308 – Bus – 661-589-5280 – Fax – 661-589-6381 - [bwhite@norrisrods.com](mailto:bwhite@norrisrods.com).

**Seminars in 2008**

**Executive Management Programs**

**Class 20 - CLOSED**

→ Week 1 – Mar. 10 – 14, 2008 ←

**Class 21 - CLOSED**

→ Week 1 – Jun. 23 – 27, 2008 ←

**Class 22**

→ Week 1 – Aug. 11 – 15, 2008 ←

Week 2 – Nov. 10 - 14, 2008

Week 3 – Feb. 9 – 13, 2009

Week 4 – May 11 - 15, 2009

Week 5 – Aug. 10 - 14, 2009

There are eight (8) openings. To enroll participants please contact Tom Stevens at (865) 458-3429 or email at - [inmco@mindspring.com](mailto:inmco@mindspring.com).

**Class 23**

→ Week 1 – Oct. 13 – 17, 2008 ←

**Class 24**

→ Week 1 – Dec. 1 – 5, 2008 ←

**Professional Sales Program**

**Class 8**

→ Week 1 – Mar. 03 – 07, 2008 ←

Week 2 – Jun. 16 - 20, 2008

Week 3 – Oct. 27 – 31, 2008

Week 4 – Feb. 16 – 20, 2009

(Because this program draws on survey feedback from customers and/or distributors, participants must have established customer/distributor relationships.) To enroll participants contact John Barnes at (423) 504-5641 or [john@jbarnesconsulting.com](mailto:john@jbarnesconsulting.com).

## Understanding Your Customers

“What does the customer consider value?”

The final question needed to come to grips with your business purpose and mission is – “What is value to the customer?” It may be the most important question. Yet it is the least often asked. One reason is that managers are quite sure that they know the answer. Value is what they, in their business, define as quality. But this almost always is the wrong definition. The customer never buys a product. By definition the customer buys the satisfaction of a want. They buy value.

For the teenage girl, for instance, value in a shoe is high fashion. It has to be “cool.” Price is a secondary consideration and durability is not value at all. For the same girl as a young mother, a few years later, high fashion becomes a restraint. She will not buy something that is quite unfashionable. But what she looks for is durability, price, comfort and fit, and so on. The same shoe that represents the best buy for the teenager is a very poor value for her slightly older sister. What a company’s different customers consider value is so complicated that it can be answered only by the customers themselves.

Some years ago the Packard automobile was the prestige automobile in America – Cadillac wasn’t even a close second. Then Packard management forgot why the customer bought their automobile and now Packard is only part of automobile history. Not to long ago Pan American Airways was the premier international carrier. Again management forgot why their customers flew Pan Am – today it is part of airline history.

Managers shouldn’t even try to guess at the answers – they should always go directly to the customers in a systematic quest for why their customers buy a product.

**ACTION PLAN** - What do your customers consider most valuable about the product or service you provide? If you don’t know ask your customers. If you do know, ask your customers if you are delivering.

### Missed Birthdays

I need to apologize to those of you whose birthdays I’ve missed. I discovered this week that my calendar program lost some dates – repeated others every month and kept some for only one year. I am diligently working to fix it – my apologies and Happy Birthday to every one I missed. Tom Stevens.

## John’s jottings

Some miscellaneous thoughts and reminders.

First, it’s February 1st. Normally this is time of the year managers get paid any bonuses earned in 2007. If you get one, be sure to set aside the 5% we talk about in class. Don’t spend it all on things like cars, boats, etc. Set aside that 5% so that years from now you’ll have the beginnings of financial independence. Having that will enable you to be a principled manager. You will have the wherewithal to act according to your convictions.

The year is 8% gone. Have you encountered any problems yet? If so, here are some things to consider. First, problems are good. They provide opportunities to learn and grow.

Many problems are accompanied by strong emotions, emotions that are natural and predictable. Don’t try to overpower the emotional aspect of your problems, rather work through them. How, you ask?

Begin with cooling the problem by seeking facts. As you get them, occasionally repeat and summarize the facts so that the parties know you are listening. Then follow up with “What else?” Keep doing that until you are sure you have all the facts to be had. This process has a way of settling the emotions.

The next step is to ask when the problem was first observed and inquire about what else changed about the same time. If you are “outside” the problem it is frequently easier for you to see the “bigger” picture.

Don’t forget the 80/20 principle in problem solving. It says that the overwhelming portion of problems come from a relatively small number of causes.

Try it. And don’t forget that we can learn much from Asian cultures in problem solving - help all parties “keep face.” Master this and you’ll be recognized as a true professional!

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“Problems are only opportunities in work clothes.”

Henry J. Kaiser

“Everything has two handles, one by which it may be borne, another by which it cannot.” Epictetus

“Problems should be utilized. If you’ve never been unhappy, how would you know what happy is?” Forbes

“Problems are not stop signs – they are guidelines.”

Robert Schuller

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# Readers' Corner

World Diversity Business Calendar. This is a must for anyone traveling or doing business in other countries. At \$14.95 US it is a bargain! This calendar covers national and civic holidays in over 190 countries. For example – today – February 1, 2008 – it is Abolition Day in Mauritius – Heroes' Day in Rwanda – Lammas in the southern hemisphere. (Lammas – Christian first fruits celebration observed by placing bread baked from the first harvest on the altar. From the Celtic Christian tradition. September 1 in the northern hemisphere and February 1 in the southern hemisphere.) At the back of the calendar there are three pages describing the Religious Holidays around the world. Months and days are given in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.

Go to [www.worlddiversitycalendar.com](http://www.worlddiversitycalendar.com) and do your shopping. They have a number of items that could be useful in working across cultures. For you Finance types they have a booklet giving the bank holidays around the world. Their address is Orison Publishers, P O Box 188, Grantham, PA 17027 – phone number 1-877-338-4642. I have used their calendars for years – kept me from arriving in a country during one of their holidays. (The only negative – their calendar is 14" X 11" - not conducive to be carried on a trip – but great for the office.)

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## OTHER STUFF

SLAUGHTER, Steve – (EMP-16) – is part of a ten-person international expedition climbing Mt. Aconcagua in Argentina - elevation 22,841 feet or 6,962 meters. They began their ascent on January 19 and hope to be back at base camp by February 8. Last year in January Steve's team was 200 yards from the summit and had to turn back. Winds reached 100 miles an hour, temperature was minus fifty degrees Fahrenheit and the snow was chest deep. If you are interested in mountain climbing and want to follow Steve's progress go to [www.bergadventures.com](http://www.bergadventures.com). On the right side of the web page click on Aconcagua. You can then follow a day by account – with beautiful color pictures – of the expedition's progress. Steve is Vice President Operations – Heil Trailer International, Bangkok, Thailand - [sslaughter@heiltrailer.com](mailto:sslaughter@heiltrailer.com). We wish him luck in reaching the summit this time!

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## A Language Lesson

A Spanish teacher was explaining to her class that in Spanish, unlike English, nouns are designated as either masculine or feminine. "House" for instance, is feminine - "la casa." "Pencil," however, is masculine - "el lapis." A student asked, "What gender is computer?" Instead of giving the answer, the teacher split the class into two groups, male and female, and asked them to decide for themselves whether "computer" should be a masculine or a feminine noun.

Each group was asked to give four reasons for its recommendation. The men's group decided that "computer" should definitely be of the feminine gender - ("la computadora," ) because: 1. No one but their creator understands their internal logic; 2. The native language they use to communicate with other computers is incomprehensible to everyone else; 3. Even the smallest mistakes are stored in long term memory for possible later retrieval; and 4. As soon as you make a commitment to one, you find yourself spending half your paycheck on accessories for it.

The women's group, however, concluded that computers should be masculine - ("el computador," ) because: 1. In order to do anything with them, you have to turn them on; 2. They have a lot of data but still can't think for themselves; 3. They are supposed to help you solve problems, but half the time they ARE the problem; and 4. As soon as you commit to one, you realize that if you had waited a little longer, you could have gotten a better model.

*The women won!*

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- In the 1400's a law was passed in England that a man was allowed to beat his wife with a stick no thicker than his thumb. Hence we have the saying - "the rule of thumb."
  - The percentage of Africa that is wilderness is 28%. The percentage of North America that is wilderness is 38%.
  - What do bulletproof vests, fire escapes, windshield wipers, and laser printers all have in common? They were invented by women.
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