

Happy January 1st!

Only 365 days to go before you can celebrate another New Year's Eve.

Congratulations

CREBO, Ron – (IMP) – is now Vice President Sales & Marketing – Hollaender Manufacturing, Cincinnati, OH – in addition; Ron also completed his MBA at the University of Cincinnati.

JONES, Dave – (PSP-02) – is now Vice President Sales – Norris, 8203 Willow Place South, Suite 625, Houston, TX 77070 – Bus – 817-239-9555 – Cell – 817-239-9555 – djones@norrisrods.com.

KNISS, Jason – (EMP-18) – is now Product Manager, End Effectors – DE-STA-CO, 47495 Clipper St., Plymouth, MI 48170 - Bus – 734-207-1377 - Cell – 734-637-519 - jkniss@destaco.com.

MICKEL, Hugh – (EMP-17) – is now Vice President, Corporate Risk & Training - Contech Construction Products, Inc., 9025 Centre Point Drive, West Chester, OH 45069 - Bus – 513-645-7007 - Cell – 513-256-7607 – hmickel@contech-cpi.com.

MILLS, Tony – (EMP-11) – is now Director of Engineering and Product Development – OPW FMS, 6900 Santa Fe Drive, Hodgkins, IL 60525 - Bus – 708-485-4200 – tmills@opwfms.com.

MORRIS, Robert I. – (ALP-03 & 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.

NESBIT, John – (ALP-1) – is now Account Executive – FuelQuest, Inc., 3396 Woodlawn Ct, Loveland, OH 45140 - Cell – 513-545-8528 – jnesbit@fuelquest.com.

PLISKA, Ross – (EMP-16) – is now Vice President Sales and Engineering – Alberta Oil Tool, 9530 60 Ave., Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6E 0C1 – Bus – 780-434-8566 – rpliska@aot.ab.ca.

WHITNEY, Eric – (EMP-17) – is now Sales Manager – Arizona – Contech Construction Products, Inc., 12550 West Butler Dr., El Mirage, AZ 85335 – Cell – 207-294-2573 – whitney@contech-cpi.com.

Magnificent Pictures

CANNON, Steve – (EMP-16) - Manager, Automation Business Units - Ferguson Beauregard, 2913 Specialty Drive, Tyler, TX 75707 - scannon@fergusonbeauregard.com visited the Mendenhall Glacier in Alaska to photograph Eagles – his pictures are fantastic. You can see them at - www.pbase.com/txan/alaska_2007.

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

To enroll please contact Tom Stevens at (865) 458-3429 or email at - inmco@mindspring.com.

Class 23

→ Week 1 – Oct. 13 – 17, 2008 ←

Class 24

→ Week 1 – Dec. 1 – 5, 2008 ←

Professional Sales Programs**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.

Class 9

→ Week 1 – Aug. 18 – 22, 2008 ←

Week 2 – Nov. 17 - 21, 2008

Week 3 – Mar. 16 – 20, 2009

Week 4 – Jul. 13 – 17, 2009

Identifying the Future

“The important thing is to identify the future that has already happened.” Peter Drucker

Futurists always measure their batting average by counting how many things they have predicted that have come true. They never count how many important things came true that they did not predict. Everything forecasters predict may come to pass. Yet, they may not have seen the most meaningful of the emergent realities or, worse still, may not have paid attention to them. There is no way to avoid this irrelevancy in forecasting, for the important and distinctive are always the result of changes in values, perception and goals, that is, in things that one can divine but not forecast.

One of the most important functions of the executive is to identify these changes that have already happened. The key challenge in society, economics, politics, is to exploit the changes that have already occurred and to use them as opportunities. It is crucial to identify the “future that has already happened” – and to develop a methodology for continually perceiving and analyzing these changes. A good deal of this methodology is incorporated in Peter Drucker’s book *Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, which shows how one can systematically look to the changes in society, in demographics, in meaning, in science and technology, as opportunities to make the future.

ACTION PLAN – Identify the major trends in your market that have already appeared. Write a page on their likely longevity and their impact on your life and organization.

Opportunity

In 1999 a math teacher took the US Post Office – (already here) – and movie CD’s – (already here) and combined them into a company called Netflix. To date they have shipped over a billion CD’s to 8.8 million subscribers. Revenues have increased at a compound annual growth rate of 113% – 1.2 billion estimated for 2007. The founder, now a billionaire, identified the future that was already here. Blockbuster didn’t even recognize it.

“In great affairs we ought to apply ourselves less to creating chances than to profiting from those that are already here.” La Rochefoucauld

“There is no security on this earth - there is only opportunity.” Douglas MacArthur

John’s Jottings

Happy New Year! The scorecard is empty. Like a new ball game. Anticipation is high for exciting achievements ahead. Time for a quick “pre-year” – pre-game check.

The game. Is everyone clear on what the game is? How it’s played and what the rules are? No sense in playing the wrong game.

The game plan. Remember, you can’t control the game; you can’t predict what will happen. All you can do is make plans based on what you think will happen. The more explicit, the more helpful. The sooner you will be able to determine the need for adjustments.

Goals. Are they explicit? Do they represent your strong convictions? Are they measurable? Stated concisely? Challenging yet achievable? Do all the team members know them? Imagine what happens when the players don’t know the rules!

Next, score keeping and the scoreboard. Are the scorekeepers ready? Do they know the rules for counting? Are they measuring the right things?

Who keeps the score board up to date? Is it showing the things that matter, the accomplishments that advance to the goal? The things that cause great pride when reflected on the scoreboard or cause redoubled effort when not up to expectations?

Do all the team members know where the scoreboard is? And how to read it? Could you envision what it would be like if the players played, the scorekeepers kept the score, but didn’t tell anyone what it was? Doesn’t make any sense, does it?

Positions and roles. Do all the team members have their unique accountability plans? Do they understand what their responsibilities are? What you will look at when assessing their performance? Do they know what they are expected to do?

Remember what Vince Lombardi said: “If the players can’t play, the coach hasn’t coached!”

The more checks you have, the more likely you will have a dynamite year!

NOW, GO OUTSIDE AND PLAY TO WIN!!

“Year’s end is neither an end nor a beginning but a going on, with all the wisdom that experience can instill in us.” Hal Borland

Readers' Corner

Some of our clients are already talking about a tough 2008 in front of them. Thank about it – what a wonderful opportunity to innovate – to do the *unpredictable* in your business and market. Pick up a copy of Peter Drucker's book "*Innovation and Entrepreneurship*" – it's a classic in thinking about your business in a different manner. Below is another book that might get your minds working in new directions.

"How to Grow When Markets Don't" - by Wotzky, Adrian and Wise, Richard - ©2003

In this shrewdly titled volume for today's tough economy, global strategy consultant Slyworsky – (The Art of Profitability) – and Wise analyze companies in mature markets that have managed to achieve significant growth without venturing outside their industry, manipulating their financial statements or acquiring dot - coms. Their chief insight is that established companies with experience in their field have, aside from their core business, a wealth of hidden assets – customer contacts, technical expertise, efficient business models that they can exploit to grow new business. Take John Deere, which studied the growth in home ownership - (and consequently in the residential landscaping market) - and decided to graft its trusted brand name and expertise in agricultural equipment onto a significant growth market. Clarke American took a waning check printing business and morphed it into a customer services firm for large banks. By building on intangible assets like brand recognition, knowledge of the customer and distribution channels, these companies transformed themselves into growth centers for new products and services. This book takes an imaginative look at the possibilities open to mature companies looking to rejuvenate themselves. From Publishers Weekly.

Stress Management

We have become increasingly aware of stress in the lives of our seminar participants. It is predictable that stress will not decrease but rather increase in an alarming manner. According to recent studies the rate of change in the United States and Canada is such that a new high technology is produced in the marketplace every 17 seconds. That's more than three a minute, more than 200 an hour, and well more than 5,000 a day. With each new high technology product comes at least 100 related services. In just a few years there will be 17 new high technological products produced *every second!* Now - doesn't that make you feel better!

A group of alumni, highly established in their careers, got talking at a class reunion and decided to go visit one of their old university professors – now retired. During the visit their conversation soon turned into complaints about stress in their work and lives. Offering his guests coffee, the professor went to the kitchen and returned with a large pot of coffee and an assortment of cups - porcelain, plastic, glass, crystal, some plain looking, some expensive, some exquisite bone china - telling them to help themselves to the coffee.

When all the alumni had a cup of coffee in hand, the professor said - "Notice that all the nice looking, expensive cups were taken up, leaving behind the plain and cheap ones. While it is normal for you to want only the best for yourselves, that is the source of your problems and stress. Be assured that the cup itself adds no quality to the coffee. In most cases it is just more expensive and in some cases even hides what we drink.

What all of you really wanted was coffee, not the cup, but you consciously went for the best cups and then you began eyeing each other's cups. Now consider this - life is the coffee; your job, money and position in society are the cups. They are just tools to hold and contain life. The type of cup one has does not define, nor change the quality of life a person lives. Sometimes, by concentrating only on the cup, we fail to enjoy the coffee God has provided us."

The happiest people don't have the best of everything. They just make the best of everything. God brews the coffee, not the cups. Enjoy your coffee! Live simply. Love generously. Care deeply. Speak kindly. Spend time with God over your coffee. Submitted by - UNDERWOOD, Scott – (EMP-8) - President – Maxwell Industries LLC, 203 Hicks St., PO Box 1429, Athens, TN 37371 - Bus – 423-746-4899 - Cell – 423-744-4789 – scottu@maxwellind.us

"One way to get high blood-pressure is to go mountain climbing over mole hills." Earl Wilson