



Hands-on Management

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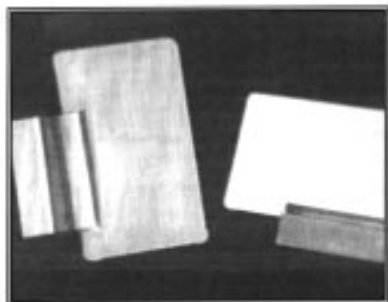
Before We Can Follow the Road, We Have to Help Build It

New approaches to environmental policies should allow finishers to reach a cleaner environment in a cost-efficient manner. Or, in the words of Intel Corporation's Tim Mohin, "Business says we'll give you cleaner if you let us do it cheaper."

The Strategic Goals Program (SGP) *Industry Update* (a newsletter you should be getting—if you're not, call Bob McDowell, Project Manager—Industry at 716/425-7500 to find out how to get on the mailing list) broke the news about the bilateral

efforts between the Surface Finishing Industry Council and the U.S. EPA. The January 25, 1999, issue reviewed the regional updates. I took a special interest in the Region III review, because I know one of the finishers serving on the workgroups: Jim

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Abbott. When I asked him why he volunteers, Jim said, "I recommended the Goals program to my friends and I want to be sure the program stays something that I can be proud to recommend." This kind of personal involvement, however, comes with a price, often more costly than money—time away from work. In short, we owe a great deal of gratitude to the leadership of the AESF, EPA, MFSA and NAMF for their efforts in making environmental excellence in surface finishing possible.

This was a very tough column to write, because I had the ending before I figured out the beginning. I was going to use a whimsical approach and point out parallels between the CSI/Goals programs and the movie classic, "The Wizard of Oz." Let me explain.

In the beginning of this parody, Dorothy would be the finisher who lands her house in an environmentally sensitive area and begins her journey down the yellow brick road. On the way, she meets the Lion, Scarecrow and Tin Man (representing the three organizations—AESF, MFSA and NAMF), who join together to help Dorothy and, in return, are helped as well.

Together, despite many obstacles along the way, our heroes find the Emerald City and meet the Wizard of Oz—representing the EPA ... are you still with me? The Wizard listens to their requests and considers their futures. Just like in the movie, the great and powerful Oz/EPA is a little less scary after you get to know him, particularly when you have the strong backing of good science. Eventually, of course, the Wizard finds a way to grant our travelers' wishes—perhaps not the way they had expected, but the end result is satisfactory. Everyone lives happily ever after ... in the movies.

Now please don't think I am making light of all the hard work everyone has given to the joint government relations effort. But it's a long road and, as far as we've come, we've still only just begun our journey. It helps to remember that in

"The Wizard of Oz," the path to the Emerald City started out very small and went in circles. Dorothy had to begin there, and so does the finishing industry.

Finishers need to build their own yellow brick road, one brick at a time. As I said, however, it's a long road, and all of this brick-laying costs time and money. My hope is that a majority of finishers will consider buying a few bricks of their own to add to the path. The task will be much easier if we work together.

We have the brains ... we've shown we have the heart ... and I believe we have the courage to build this road. Will you join me? P&SF

Bibliography

SGP Industry Update, January 25, 1999.

Environmental Technology, "Viewpoint" & "Problems Finding the Path," Michael E. Hilts, September/October 1997.

As Seen in the SGP Industry Update:

"Industry and government representatives have shown it takes courage, trust and a vision to build the 'roadmap' that will help metal finishers improve their environmental performance in a cost-effective manner. New ideas and bold, common-sense approaches to removing barriers are discussed freely."

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