



Center for Paper Business and Industry Studies

Newsletter of the Center for Paper Business and Industry Studies
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A Vital Underpinning of CPBIS — the Paper Industry

Like a three-legged stool, CPBIS can achieve its intended purpose only with the steadfast support of three separate but equally essential entities. The role of the paper industry in enabling the Center to fulfill its mission is no less fundamental and no less immediate than the corresponding roles of the Sloan Foundation and Georgia Tech. The industry is called upon not only to provide financial support but also, and more importantly, to actively participate in the CPBIS research program by collaborating with the Center in the pursuit of its goals and, as appropriate, by granting access to industry facilities, people and data.

In recognition of the critical importance of close interaction with industry, one of the first actions the Center's management team took was the creation of a body of industry representatives to facilitate CPBIS programs. This group, the Industry Advisory Board (IAB), performs two main functions:

- It works broadly with counterparts in the global paper industry to provide input and guidance to CPBIS with regard to its strategic direction and operating plans.
- It helps to generate industry awareness of the Center, soliciting industrial sponsorship and collaborative support of CPBIS research projects and educational programs.

Under the chairmanship of CPBIS Executive Director Jim McNutt, the IAB has been extremely successful in securing industry support for the Center. To further enhance its effectiveness, the group has very recently

decided to take fuller advantage of the talents and enthusiasm of two of its members by appointing them to leadership positions. Ray Heuchling of Irving Forest Products, who also serves as PIMA Foundation Chairman, has been appointed Chairman, and Phil Jones of Imerys will serve as Vice-Chairman. Jim McNutt will continue to participate as the IAB Senior Advisor, and Colleen Walker, CPBIS Associate Director, Industry Liaison, will continue to work closely with the new leadership team as IAB Liaison Officer.

The IAB meets at regular intervals, each meeting focusing on a selected aspect of CPBIS activities. The next meeting, scheduled for September 24, will be devoted to the research program, and will be spent reviewing results and charting a path forward.

Learning from Other Industries

As announced in the August issue of the Newsletter, CPBIS will sponsor a two-session symposium on paper industry business issues in conjunction with the TAPPI Fall Technical Conference at the Atlanta Marriott Marquis on Monday, November 1. The first session, entitled "Workplace Transformation" will include a presentation on change management by Donald Fedor of the Georgia Tech College of Management and one on workplace transformation by Charles Parsons, also of the College of Management. Both papers identify key needs of the paper industry for knowledge and insight on issues of growing importance. More to the point, they respond to those needs by presenting information drawn from extensive industry studies. Although paper is but one of several industries in which the studies were conducted, they have generated a large body of

information that has high potential for application within the paper industry. The following summaries are based on excerpts from the two papers, which will be made available in their entirety at the conference.

Managing Change Frequent and often pervasive change is becoming a fact of life as organizations face increasing challenges in ever more competitive environments. This is particularly true for companies in the paper industry as they work to adjust to a rapidly changing business environment. Unfortunately, as in most industries, it appears that companies in the paper industry are struggling with how best to implement the myriad changes needed to minimize employee resistance and gain their buy-in and support. Without this acceptance, it can be extremely difficult to fully realize the potential gains envisioned by the initiators of change-intensive processes such as mergers and acquisitions.

In this paper, Donald Fedor and David Herold provide an overview of the findings from their research on change management. Because their studies have encompassed 92 different change initiatives in many different organizations spanning a broad cross section of industries, the results are expected to be valid for many different types of organizations.

The bulk of the research on organizational change takes an organizational rather than an individual perspective, dealing with such issues as strategic adaptation to environmental changes or processes and procedures used for implementing changes. Yet, ultimately, the key elements in determining the success of organizational changes are the attitudes and behaviors of the individuals charged with their implementation. Much less is known about how individuals perceive organizational changes, how such perceptions are affected by the specifics of the change itself as well as by other changes occurring in the environment, and the factors that determine their ultimate responses to the change.

The authors' findings, to be described in detail at the conference, have practical implications for organizations facing change. They point to a need to improve our understanding of the effects that multiple levels of change have on individuals, since most organizational changes have, at a minimum, personal and work-unit implications. They suggest that the role played by change management practices is complex, and provide clues as to when such processes may or may not ameliorate the negative consequences of change. Finally, they emphasize the

need to consider individual differences and how they affect responses to change.

Transforming the Workplace In recent years, organizations in many industries have transformed work processes and the role of the production worker through the introduction of high performance work systems (HPWS). Job and organizational design practices often include elements of networking, decentralized decision-making and teamwork, supported by human resource practices such as employment security policy, selective hiring, extensive training, and performance-based compensation.

In this paper, Charles Parsons and Raul Necochea describe a framework for understanding the adoption, implementation, and management of these innovations, drawing on the results of research that has been conducted in the aircraft, automobile and paper industries. Preliminary results from an on-going survey of high performance work practices in the paper industry provide a new look at this topic. They conclude that, although the practice of HPWS is not as widespread as the evidence on its effectiveness might dictate, there is an opportunity for those companies who can become better than the competition at the adoption, implementation, and management of these systems. Examples abound of companies that have prospered for years in very competitive industries, in part because of their successful embrace of high performance work systems.

Upcoming Events

PIMA/CPBIS Webcast Course on Six Sigma, Sept. 22 and biweekly thereafter. For details, see <http://www.pimaweb.org/training/fall04seminar2.html>

CPBIS Industry Advisory Board (IAB) Meeting, Friday September 24, 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m., Room 114, IPST at Georgia Tech. For more information, contact Colleen Walker, 404-894-5756.

Management Development Course, October 25-29, IPST. See <http://www.cpbis.gatech.edu/mgtdev>

Techno-Business Forum, October 26-27, Ga. Tech Hotel and Conference Center. Innovation, Transfer and Deployment. Noted speakers will explore critical linkages between newly developed technologies and the paper business. See http://www.cpbis.gatech.edu/news_events/news/04_0910technobusiness.htm

CPBIS at the TAPPI Fall Technical Conference, Nov. 1, Atlanta. See article above. ■