So Boring, It Must Be Important

JEFF REINKE, Editorial Director

By JEFF REINKE, Editorial Director

As we do our planning for the content of each print issue of *Chem.Info*, as well as the overall strategy for www.chem.info [1] and the *Chem.Insider Daily* e-newsletter, we're faced with three primary marching orders:

1. Keep it interesting.
2. Keep in pertinent.
3. Address readers' critical issues.

It seems the multi-tasking never stops, but as any information provider can tell you, all three share the top spot in terms of content focus. As a reader, I hope you agree that we do a respectable job in hitting all three targets.

Some times it is easier than others. Talking about product recalls and explosions, and doing more on-site plant tours than anyone else easily keeps us three for three. However, when we address critical issues like training, safety and operational efficiencies, we can almost hear the eyes of our readership glazing over. It seems these topics definitely register in terms of relevance and importance, but interesting?

Even the most die-hard plant managers would be challenged to say they get excited over the prospects of additional information on topics that they are seemingly barraged with on a daily, or some times hourly, basis. It's not to say anyone is questioning the critical importance of such topics, but in reality, how long could anyone go before they start tuning out another Top 10 list of safety protocols, more information on lean manufacturing or additional listings of training resources?
We know from talking to plant managers around the country, in plants of varying sizes and specialties, that these topics are crucial to your success. We also know

from looking at traffic relative to this information on our websites that it's not sparking tremendous interest — all the time.

What we do know is that once an event or incident that negatively impacts output does take place, it's the basics that receive the most scrutiny. The Imperial Sugar disaster of a couple years ago was one of the most significant stories in the processing industry, and it all came down to simple safety measures.

U.S. manufacturing as a whole continues to lose its competitive grip in a global economy, much of which can be attributed to operational factors that drive up costs. Granted, little can be done to combat cheaper foreign labor rates, but the benefits of a workforce that functions more smoothly and is better trained can certainly help offset some of these balance sheet-inspired strategies.

Hopefully it doesn't take such drastic occurrences at your facility for these monotonous elements of processing to once again capture your attention and interest.

My constant references to what I call the "blocking and tackling" of our work as editors has become almost a punch line to those around the office. However, as our company grows and expands, I want to ensure we're still focused on all those less exciting factors that play such a huge role in our success.

Similarly, I'd hope that regardless of all the exposure and the sheer number of resources available in addressing several of the more common factors impacting your plant's operations, they'll remain not only prominent in your approach, but that you maintain a dedicated effort to constantly learning more about them — even if they are boring.

What do you think? Let me know by e-mailing me jeff.reinke@advantagemedia.com *[2].*

Source URL (retrieved on *04/27/2015 - 8:26am*):
http://www.chem.info/blogs/2010/07/so-boring-it-must-be-important?qt-most_popular=1

Links:
[1] http://www.chem.info/
[2] mailto:jeff.reinke@advantagemedia.com