

## **Edgar Peek: SHOW ME THE MONEY - OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE & TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT**

“Show Me The Money” is a well-known phrase uttered by the main characters in the 1996 movie entitled “Jerry Maguire”. Around the same time period I started my career in the mining and metals industry, which has covered both non-ferrous metal commodities, minor and precious metals. I was privileged to experience four different career changes during the past 20 years. I spent roughly equal amounts of time in research and development, projects and engineering, operations management and sales/business development. During those 20 years the mining and metals industry showed its well-known cyclical economic nature resulting in expanding and contracting human resource requirements, especially in the field of technology development/R&D. Over an even longer period of time senior management of mining and metals companies has shifted away from leaders with an engineering, geological or entrepreneurial background. Instead, our industry leaders today often have a legal, economic or business degree; and there is nothing wrong with that.

In response to market developments, history and the author’s personal work experience, Molycorp Minerals Canada has created and consolidated engineering services, research and development, plant support (continuous improvement) and technology sales into one centralized team with cross-functional human resource capabilities. In addition, this team has supported several so-called Operational Excellence exercises. Our definition of Operational Excellence implies the addition or elimination of human resources or product/business lines from existing factories. Hence, “creativity” is actively deployed to not only grow, but also downsize or exit the business. The common thread that is employed in all our work efforts is defining our objectives and achievements in terms of money.

The focal point of this short course presentation is that throughout my career I have used a variety of communication tools to convert and connect engineering/R&D thoughts into financial objectives that my senior management understands and can relate to. In short, always adjust your communication style to your target audience. For the longest time I was under the impression that everyone did this effectively in their respective organizations, but more and more I am being reminded that what I do, think, say and communicate is no longer taught at any school or widely practiced in the work force today at the junior process engineering level. Hence, I was encouraged by colleagues to share some of my communication tools and experiences in the hope and expectation that you may learn to “Show The Money” to your boss as well, when being asked to make an effort to advance Technology or Operational performance in your company.