STEPS TO ADDRESSING THE CONCERN OF AN OVERLY SUPPORTIVE CAP

Have a mission and groundrules

- developed by CAP members
- recognize that a CAP is not just a chance for a plant to tell its story
- address all the concerns, such as mission, openness, membership selection, company's role, agenda, etc.

Provide the information people need to provide advice; they don't want to look foolish by giving uninformed advice

- avoid jargon
- avoid overwhelming them with long answers
- provide information first, then educate them about what they want to learn more about
- have speakers present alternate viewpoints
- involve wage roll employees as members or presenters

Make the membership as diverse as possible

- put activists on the CAP
- spell out what you mean by diversity

Companies should tell CAPs how they are changing their performance in response to CAP's input

- listen for the underlying concern, not just what people say
- listen for indirect as well as direct input
- companies should tell CAPs they don't want the CAP to be just PR, and what that means

Company people should acknowledge the relative power positions of members vs. plant managers, realize that few people want to be seen as troublemakers, and that people often feel a sense of futility that makes them feel it is useless to get involved.

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WHEN A CAP IS OVERLY SUPPORTIVE OF ITS SPONSORING COMPANY...

Panel lacks diversity in members

- company controls selection of panel members
- no serious effort to seek diversity
- "same old, same old" people who do everything
- too many titled members
- no diversity in viewpoints toward industry
- no demographic diversity
- selectors fear confrontation, so they avoid activists, whom they see as troublemakers

Company tries to "snow" members

- monopolizes conversation
- gives unduly long answers
- uses too much jargon
- plant people serve as members

Company avoids full truth

- lies by commission
- lies by omission
- masks unpleasant facts
- uses half-truths and innuendo
- is defensive in answering questions, making panel members reluctant to ask questions

Company's purpose is PR

- it wants to inform rather than receive advice
- it asks the CAP to support an expansion, a project, etc.

Company controls materials produced by group

- writes materials for group
- exercises editorial control over group's work
- acts as media spokesperson for group
- changes meeting notes to eliminate unfavorable comments

Company controls the agenda

- decides what to do and tells the group what that will be
- pushes the group to do feel-good projects with minimal connection to plant's health, safety, and environmental performance
- chairs the meetings

CAP's purpose is unclear: no mission, purposes, or scope of issues

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