

July 2, 1981

It is my understanding that only so much money can be spent on "non productive" programs so I need clarification of priorities. Since everything cannot be done at once, should the money be spent first on protection of employees from injury and toxic exposure, or on training for future upper management? Perhaps both can be done, as I said, I do not know.

Abex is, in my opinion, sadly in need of Safety Training Programs. No safety program is any better than the implementation of the program by supervisors or foremen. We are not training these people but are castigating plants and groups for poor safety performance. Again priorities -- if money allows only one training program or the other, do we train executives or safety men? Can we do both at once?

The structure of the Safety Program under Mr. Given's regime consisted, as I am told, of a corporate director and at least three "regional directors" who had a certain number of plants which they were responsible for. We are going back in that direction through Jim Nieves and Jim Aldrich and hopefully will achieve improvement in the near future, but again -- priorities.

It is my opinion that medical care, safety, and industrial hygiene are a corporate responsibility. It is my belief (again perhaps wrongly) that Dave Christensen believes in Group autonomy and responsibility,, with my department acting as consultants. Ideally, this could be great but it can't be accomplished by simply saying "let it be so." It will take years of gradual changing of entire attitudes at all levels and in the meantime, all medical programs could go to hell in a handbucket.

Dave is understandably too busy. Dr. Hamlin had direct access to Mr. Given and it seemed to work out pretty ideally from all historical data I can garner. You have given Dave one hell of a large chunk of responsibility and if I am reading the trend correctly, it is to take a direction that I couldn't agree with more. However, he is human and can only accomplish what time and physical limitations allow. It seems to me that delegation of Medical Department's responsibilities is a way of lessening his burden and should be done to as great a degree as possible while still inter-relating corporate goals.

I am sincerely interested in the future of Abex and intend to do my very best to support the medical program in whatever direction you wish to take it. However, I am in very great need of knowing what you want and what priorities I am to operate under.

F. W. Knoch, M.D.
Medical Director

FWK:np

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