

MEETING THE CHALLENGE

Every once in a while something happens to fundamentally change the nature of your business. Despite the best of intentions and the most careful planning, there's no way we can anticipate every event. What do you do, for example, when your two biggest competitors merge, when the economy collapses in the region that imports your products or when key employees leave your company? Your reactions may make the difference between success and struggling to survive.

One of the keys is not to over-react. Overcoming challenges such as these can make your company stronger, more profitable or more efficient—but only if you approach the problem as an opportunity rather than a crisis. When things seem to be at their worst may be the best time to reexamine your organization. Find your strengths and ways to use and exploit them to turn negative into positive.

In today's economy, big companies swallow little ones, and competing interests form partnerships to gobble up more market share. When these marriages occur between your competitors, it's easy to feel like a bitter spinster. But it's important not to act like one. Don't be content to be left behind, and don't feel like it's your only course of action. Perhaps it's time to look into new areas of technology. Perhaps it's time to concentrate on what you do best. Perhaps it's time to carve out an unexplored market niche. The point is, it's probably time to do something. You just have to figure out what.

Chances are, if you've been minding your business all along, your company probably isn't in bad shape anyway. You probably already have many of the right people, skills, products or technologies to bring you through the struggle.

This topic hasn't come to me out of the blue. We've recent-

ly undergone some changes of our own at *Gear Technology*, and hopefully our reactions to them—and our approach to the problem—will make us stronger in the long run.

Many of you have come to know—if not in person, through her words—our departed senior editor, Nancy Bartels, who has recently accepted greater responsibility as managing editor at another publishing company. Over the past decade, Nancy has become the driving force behind the content of *Gear Technology*. If you read it in these pages, you can be assured that she read it first. Then she shaped it, polished it and made it into a finished product. Thank you, Nancy, for your years of hard work.

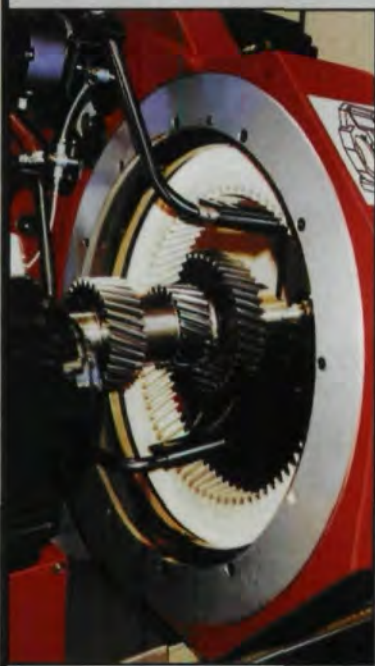
We've also recently said good-bye to Ed Mueller, who was our associate publisher. While many of you probably didn't get to know Ed, he was responsible for decision making, administration and overseeing of our magazine and two Web sites. Like Nancy, Ed left to pursue other opportunities.

In a relatively small operation such as ours, the loss of a key employee can be difficult. The loss of two can be crippling. We will certainly miss Nancy and Ed and the work they did here. But within every crisis lay the seeds of potential. Although the coincidence of these events seemed unfortunate, it forced us to act quickly. Instead of looking on our situation as a catastrophe, we looked on it as an opportunity to redesign and rebuild our organization.



Fässler Focusing on Direct Honing!

Fässler K-300 & K-400 Gear Honing Machines



Fast, economical hard gear finishing process that increases gear life while reducing or eliminating gear noise.

- Internal or external gears
- Spur, helical, or cluster gears

With Direct Honing you can hob, heat treat, and hone your gears to market requirements.

With Universal Honing it is possible to finish a family of gears having the same tooth characteristics with varying numbers of teeth.

With Combi-Honing you can rough and finish on the same machine with honing stones mounted in tandem.

MACHINE FEATURES:

- 5 and 6 CNC controlled axes
- Synchronous drives on the K-400
- CNC control of lead crowning and taper
- Short setup times

CHARACTERISTICS OF HONED GEARS:

- Increased wear resistance
- High surface finish
- Favorable machining marks for noise reduction
- Low surface roughness guarantees a permanent oil film

Fässler

Fässler Corporation
11782 N. Maple Road
Germantown, WI 53022
Phone: 414-255-0695
Fax: 414-255-9676
E-Mail: fassler@execpc.com

Fässler AG
Ringstrasse 20
CH-8600 Dübendorf
Switzerland
Phone: 011-411-821-3745
Fax: 011-411-820-3906

Fässler makes good gears better!

CIRCLE 136

PUBLISHER'S PAGE

You may already recognize the name of our new managing editor, William R. Stott. Some of you may even know him by "Randy," which is the name he uses when he's not in print. Randy has been our associate editor since 1994. He comes from a newspaper and magazine journalism background and will continue his efforts to make this publication the best possible information source for the gear industry. If any of you have ideas to make *Gear Technology* better, please give him a call.

Over the years Randy has also taken on the responsibilities of circulation manager for the magazine and Webmaster of our two Web sites. Because of his involvement in these other areas of our company, it seemed natural for him also to step into the administrative role that was formerly held by the associate publisher.

In addition to these changes, we've added strength from outside our organization. Our new associate editor, Charles M. Cooper, comes to us from the Illinois Pharmacists Association, where he was managing editor of their bimonthly journal and monthly newsletter. He will be doing a lot of writing and editing both for the magazine and our Web sites. He has already proven to be a valuable, productive member of our staff, and we hope you'll join us in welcoming him to our industry.

The challenge of an unusual coincidence of timing has forced us to make these changes to our staff. While this will undoubtedly change the personality of the magazine, we want to assure you that *Gear Technology* remains committed to bringing you the best technical information available on the gear industry. We will continue to bring you both the basics and the cutting edge technologies, as well as all the news and information that helps you do your job. It's our goal to help you compete more effectively, economically and successfully.

We met the challenge of our difficult situation by looking on it as a chance to move on. What seemed at first like a crisis has turned out to be an opportunity. We restructured and consolidated. We found talent within and brought more from without. There's no reason why your next crisis shouldn't be treated in the same way.

Michael Goldstein, Editor-in-Chief

P.S. Recently I had the honor of speaking before the AGMA on the topic of the Internet and how it can benefit companies in the gear industry. Many who attended have asked that we publish this information, so we will be including this material as an article in our July/August 1998 issue.