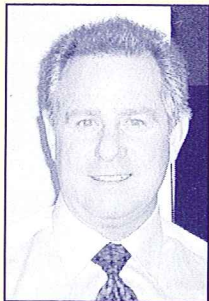


Metallurgical Products Finds International Success with WTCGP Resources



*Michael Goodman
President
Metallurgical Products*

Metallurgical Products Company is celebrating its 95th year as the world's source for phosphor copper, copper anodes, copper-base master alloys, and specialty metals with real value. Michael Goodman is President of Metallurgical Products and spoke with us recently about his experience with the World Trade Center of Greater Philadelphia and doing business internationally.

Q. You were one of the original members of the World Trade Center of Greater Philadelphia. What aspects of the organization appealed to you?

A. I guess when we first joined the WTC because it was a resource we would be able to use in developing international trade. If you needed assistance in a foreign country, a WTC would be located there. We feel we more than got value for our membership. The WTC in Philadelphia is on the smaller side and we got a lot of personal attention, especially from Dr. Tang. He became aware that one of our priorities was to develop more Chinese phosphorus suppliers. He took us under his wing and found and introduced us to the right resources, personally went with me to visit one company that had a lot of potential, then attended the meeting when they visited Metallurgical. He gave me a lot of coaching about how to do business with the Chinese so that we could develop the relationship at a quicker rate.

Q. Have you attended any of the seminars or events of the WTCGP?

A. The events that I have attended have all been social events. They are good networking opportunities.

Q. You recently spoke on the impact of foreign exchange fluctuations on international business transactions at a seminar jointly sponsored by the WTCGP and the Chester County Economic Development Council's CCIBC. What advice do you have for companies doing business internationally?

A. Well, it is important to know the territory. If you want to be successful in international business you can do it and never leave the U.S., but my recommendation is that you go and visit the people you are doing business with and learn more about the country, the culture and exactly who your customer is. We sell to copper tube producers around the world. If you visit the plants, they may look exactly the same, but the cultural differences

really change how you do business with that company.

Q. What was your experience on the recent Pennsylvania Trade Mission to Singapore in which you participated? Do you anticipate doing any business as a result?

A. We have already done business as a result of the mission. On the last day of the mission, the company I visited gave me an order. So it is really nice to actually come home with an order in your hand. I also have commitments for trial shipments from three other companies that I visited. When they are approved, we will become a regular supplier for them. We will definitely be doing business with these companies.

With the aid of the WTCGP we were able to meet with people who met our criteria. In the past when I have traveled internationally, maybe 50% of the time I am on my own where I am doing business with four or five different customers. There is no one to act as a liaison. But having the PA Overseas Representatives to assist with logistics, with the culture, with how to do business really made a big difference. Also, it eliminated the need for an agent. We were able to be more competitive because there was no middleman.

Q. What is your favorite country to do business in? Why?

A. Japan would be my favorite because it is the most difficult. Their emphasis is on quality first and price second. Our product has been sold and accepted by every single major customer in the U.S. Yet the Japanese are much more stringent on quality. If you can supply the quality that is required by the most difficult customer, then everything else becomes easy.

I have a tremendous sense of satisfaction in knowing that my product meets their quality requirements. Also, you have to develop the relationship with the Japanese which takes longer than most. While they start out very formal, they are a very warm people. I definitely like doing business in Japan.

Q. What advice do you have for a business just beginning to explore exporting or importing opportunities?

A. Keep focused! It is a small world, but a huge world. Pick a geographic area and focus on one area at a time. Do not spread yourself too thin. ■