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Chemical Engineering Progress

(ISSN 0360-7275) is published monthly by the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE), 3 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10016-5991. All correspondence should be sent to the Editor-in-Chief at the address above. ■ The statements and opinions in this magazine reflect the views of their contributors and not of AIChE, which assumes no responsibility for them. ■ Subscription rates for AIChE North American nonmembers annually: \$95; international: \$155 (air service included). AIChE members: \$12; included in dues. Back issues are available from AIChE Customer Service (1-800-AIChemE). AIChE members can buy individual copies for North America \$15; International \$17. For others, single copies less than three years old cost: North America \$25; International \$30. Orders from outside the U.S. should add \$5 per copy for postage. ■ Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY and additional mailing offices. Copyright 2002 by AIChE. Postmaster: Please send changes of address to AIChE Customer Service, 3 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10016-5991. ■ Copying restriction and permissions: AIChE authorizes the photocopying of individual articles from CEP for personal or internal use, or for the personal or internal use of clients, by libraries, and other users registered with the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC) Transactional Reporting Service, providing that a fee of \$19 per article is paid directly to CCC, 222 Rosewood Dr., Danvers, MA 01923. Fee code: 0360-7275/00 \$19. This consent does not extend to other kinds for copying, such as that for purposes of general distribution, for advertising or promotion, for creating new collective works, or for resale. Send permission requests to Karen Simpson. ■ Quantity reprints of specific material can be provided directly by CEP. Contact gghallman@tsp.sheridan.com. ■ Each issue of CEP is indexed regularly by Engineering Index, Inc. and Applied Science & Technology Index; microfilm/fiche copies of each issue are available from University Microfilms, Inc.

Letter from the Publisher



Redefining the CPI

In the January issue of your magazine, we presented a special feature on the evolving nature of the chemical engineering profession. In addition to an historic timeline, we interviewed a dozen practicing chemical engineers in a variety of disciplines. Then we presented findings about where graduating chemical engineers are employed. Finally, we posed this question to our readers — based on the contents of our special report, *is it time for a new definition of the CPI?*

We received several responses. Our staff expected a bell curve distribution of comments, with some readers strongly in favor of, some strongly opposed to, and the majority neutral about a new definition of our industry. To our surprise, many more comments were positive, *i.e.*, these readers indicated support for a description of their industry that more closely reflects what they do.

Unfortunately, we have not reached consensus on what the new definition of the CPI should be. We posited the notion that “CEI” (chemical engineering industries) might work, since the education and training acquired by chemical engineers are essentially similar, regardless of the industries where they work. We concluded, however, that CEI is not exactly right because many of today’s chemical engineers are using their superior analytical and problem solving skills in companies that are neither chemical- nor engineering-based businesses.

We feel that *CEP* should continue to stimulate conversation and moderate the debate over a new definition of the CPI. We think it is important to our readers, marketing partners and, ultimately, to our industry, to have a clear definition of our identity.

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