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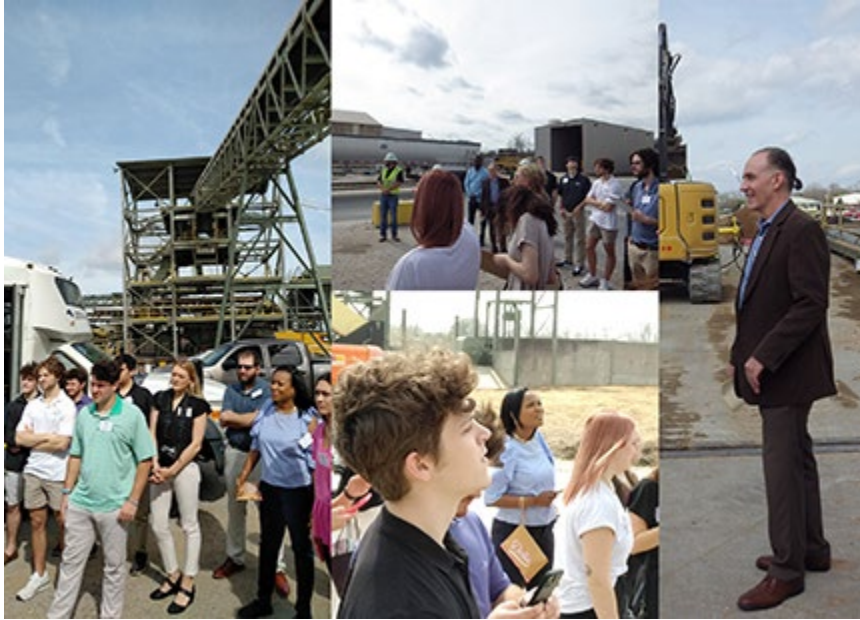
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Logistics Students Tour Peeples Industries

February 22, 2023



Scenes from PPI Site Visit

On February 21, students from LOGT 3232, travelled to Peeples Industries Inc. (PPI) for a 90-minute walking tour of the site and marine terminal led by Frank Pepples, PPI president. The students were especially impressed to have access to the president of the company they were touring.

Beginning in 1965 as Southeastern Maritime Company, a regional vessel agency and stevedoring service provider founded by Mr. Peeples, the company merged with SEMCO in 1977 to become PPI. After nearly 60 years in business, PPI remains firmly focused on its core bulk marine terminal operations capable of handling all of its customers' transportation logistics needs from the marine terminal gateway to inland facilities and destinations around the world. This tour is part of Parker College's Armstrong Pilot Program, which facilitates site visits for Statesboro- and Armstrong-based logistics and supply chain management (LSCM) undergraduate students. Previously, our LSCM students have visited the Garden City Terminal of the Georgia Ports Authority and Colonial Group.

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Message from the Dean – February 2023

February 22, 2023



With the holiday season and start of a new year now past, I want to return to the theme and topic I've been discussing since last fall. Specifically, I've talked about my approach to strategic management and how it informs and effects what we do at the Parker College. As you recall, strategic management is my academic discipline and area of specialty. I've spent more than 30 years reading, studying, conducting research, publishing books and articles, teaching, consulting, lecturing, and leading seminars on the topic—all over the world. Yet, in all of this, I find that misunderstandings and myths continue to beset and frustrate good leadership and effective business practice. Let me offer some examples.

Perhaps the most common misunderstanding I've seen relates to incentives. To paraphrase Steven Kerr (1975), it is folly to reward "A" while hoping for "B." Yet, that is often the reality of organizational life. We grease the squeaky wheel, and then we wonder why more wheels begin to squeak, as if asking for grease. A second example is what I call the myth of objectification and control. A numeric value can create a strong sense of legitimacy and validity. But, do we ever ask how those numeric values are obtained or what sorts of biases they mask? Finally is the misunderstanding of cause, effect, and attribution. If a firm is successful and that firm takes certain actions, it can seem that those actions caused the success. That attribution leads us to mimic the actions, with the expectation of producing the same results, even though the setting and context are different. As often as these and other myths and misunderstandings have been examined, explained, and debunked, they continue to plague managers and to masquerade as strategy in organizations of all sizes and types.

The patterns can be perplexing, even amusing, but they often lie at the root of dysfunction and, so, are things we work to avoid in the Parker College. Specifically, we talk about, think about, and work to avoid perverse incentives. Of course, that's easier said than done, especially when human nature draws our focus to things that are immediate and easily addressed. Still, when something seems not quite right, we look for a misalignment of incentives as the underlying cause. As for objectification and bias, of course, we want to be data driven. But, as recent history illustrates, we have no idea what the future holds; even weather forecasts are tenuous and prone to error, despite the impressive data used to produce them. So, we blend objectivity with

subjectivity and the wisdom of good counsel. Every decision involves a team and a range of inputs and opinions. Finally, we look for good benchmarks; however, we remind ourselves constantly that we are a distinct institution with our own mission, values, and market position. Our path and our future will be different from that of other market leaders. While we can learn from their experiences, we must chart our own course.

So, as we continue this series and continue to think about strategic management, think about these and other misunderstandings and the temptations they represent. Never forget that good strategic management is hard work with no short cuts and few easy answers. The challenge is to do well and do right every single day, moving forward continuously, even in the face of squeaky wheels, complex information, and novel settings. That's the sort of culture we're working to build and build into the business education we provide here at the Parker College of Business.

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