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Top Ways a Refinery Can Use to Help Weather Current Market Conditions

What are the top ways a refinery can use to help weather current market conditions is a question we posed to our 160+ engineers. This is the next article in the series which includes responses from several different authors.

Johnny LeBlanc

1. Have a long term vision (realizing there will be ups/downs in the market) with systematic cost management.
 - During the upswing don't spend more, stay on plan. You will need the cash for the downturn.
 - During the downturn, don't cut things that will oppose your reliability objectives.
 - It will cost you much more if you neglect the basics. Maintenance is much cheaper than equipment replacement.
2. Invest in reliability; maintenance repairs that make the vision achievable.
3. Obtain and maintain a quality workforce (people).
 - This seems counterintuitive to some; however, lowest cost labor will not bring expected results (Good, Cheap, Fast – pick two).
 - Invest in community training organizations that will encourage and train skilled contractor workforce.
4. Invest in your employees; quality training and mentoring following solid succession plans.
5. Set your people up for success. Many companies are increasingly adding work to their people with unreasonable, unachievable expectations.
 - Do the material balance to ensure that the company goals and objectives are realistic and motivating.
 - Leadership, Leadership, Leadership. If you do this right, everything else falls into place.
 - Many companies are putting people in positions who are not leaders. They are only in it for themselves.
 - + Real leaders see themselves as a servant to the people they are responsible for.

Upcoming Training Course

- *API 936 Refractory Inspection & Code*
October 24-26, 2017
Fort Erie, Ontario, Canada
For more information, see our website at www.carmagen.com.

Work Highlights

FCCU

- *Continuing our FCC consultation helpdesk liaison arrangement to assist a licensor address specific questions/issues received from their clients promptly. This can flexibly support client refinery inquiries as needed for questions or short efforts. Work has included test run preparation, reactor cyclone and catalyst slide valve replacement document reviews, and responding to client's specific questions.*

Process

- *Provided conceptual support to an entrepreneur investigating feasibility of various water recovery concept options and potential process improvements associated with his novel technology.*

Process Development

- *Provided process development consulting support associated with a client's novel proprietary technology and pilot plant process support to a major international company.*

Win Robbins

Increase unit run lengths by:

- Increasing range of crude feedstocks
- Adopting additional process analyses
- Upgrading to new generation of catalysts
- Increasing equipment inspection frequency
- Optimizing process chemicals

Jim Riggs

- Implementation of process optimization
- Improved process control

About the Authors

Johnny LeBlanc has over 35 years experience in process plant maintenance planning and management. He has extensive experience in the areas of work management, training, and data analytics.

Win Robbins has extensive analytical method development and applications expertise in the areas of reactive sulfur/naphthenic acids characterization, aromatic ring class separation and characterization, heteroatom class separation and speciation, and polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PNA) characterization. Development and application of laboratory corrosion testing with upstream emphasis on wetting phenomena and downstream experience in refinery naphthenic and sulfidation corrosion.

Jim Riggs has over 40 years experience in instrumentation and process control, process optimization, and modeling. He has had extensive interactions as well as consults with process industry professionals while a university professor.

Please contact Vince Carucci (vcarucci@carmagen.com) if you'd like more information on Carmagen's expertise.

