



COST SAVINGS CAN BE OH SO VERY COOL

With it being July and summer having arrived, most people prefer to stay indoors to enjoy air-conditioning and avoid the hot sun.

We are all aware that buildings here are the biggest electricity users. With our manufacturing industry having moved north, our buildings now use the largest proportion of energy.

Of all the building energy uses, air-conditioning is the biggest by far. In the interests of the environment and the economy, air-con power usage must be controlled and minimized.

We have already applied state-of-the-art technology to our air-con equipment to save on power use, but I think the human element in managing use of air-con equipment is by far the most effective management tool.

I had the benefit of listening to a presentation by the president of Energy Institute, Hong Kong branch, who I respect as a renowned leader in energy matters.

I was impressed by his promotion of the "ABC concept" to energy efficiency.

At work, he manages a huge building complex in Tsim Sha Tsui with very high quality building services, so I can say he practices what he preaches.

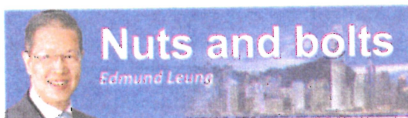
His concept adds significantly to engineering theory, as it puts heavy emphasis on the need for a human touch to ensure best results. The ABC concept comprises: absorb talent; business continuity and changes in behavior.

We know that even the best racecars need top drivers to achieve championship wins, which involves a lot more than relying on anyone with a driving license.

Education and training will produce competent operators, but to be proficient in one's duties, talent is required as it adds additional dimensions to innovation and adaptability to changing scenes.

Business continuity is an obvious element for survival, and is especially important under the current economic climate, when the pandemic has wreaked havoc on most businesses.

An organization may have the best technology but if it ends up losing money,



it cannot survive for long. In Hong Kong, watching the bottom line is vital for any organization, even NGOs, as there is no way they can survive when cash flow cannot be sustained.

Even more important are changes in behavior. New technology may require different approaches to operational and maintenance regimes.

If technicians continue to stick to old routines that they learned during apprenticeships with obsolete technology and operational regimes and ignore changes in market conditions and other improvements, the advantages of innovative technology will be eroded to the point operational difficulties will ensue.

These theories may look simple, but experienced managers will admit that applying them to effective use is probably the most daunting task for property managers.

When performed effectively, it will produce both tangible and intangible benefits.

The former include savings in energy costs and longer life of equipment.

The latter include an enhanced company image and better corporate governance.

As is always the case, hard work and focus are vital ingredients for success in any business, but in property management, it is even more important for survival.

In these challenging times, businesses around the world are struggling for survival and cost-saving actions are of utmost importance.

Fortunately, our faithful engineers remain focused on their vital duties to continue to serve our community without quibbling, and quietly guard our well-being, not only in health and safety, but in minimizing costs.

Veteran engineer Edmund Leung Kwong-ho casts an expert eye over Hong Kong's iconic infrastructure