

by *Lane Sloan*

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The Energy Image and Recruiting

The image of the energy industry is impacting its ability to attract top talent while the challenges the industry faces requires the best that universities can offer. Energy has nowhere near the popularity of other industries. This is partly due to its history of negative publicity. Current news events have added to the stigma. The image is equally impacted by the perception of it being a mature industry with cyclical layoffs and a far less lucrative upside than newer technologies. Yet, the need for energy is growing and the technology challenge to find it is considerably more demanding.

Unfortunately, the demographics of the energy talent pool do not bode well for the industry retaining its intellectual capability over the coming decade. Couple the demographics with the poor image and the industry may be facing a crisis in energy careers. The energy industry needs to work itself back up the ladder of what is hot for aspiring talent. We need a renaissance in people aspiring for energy careers. Industry leaders, educators, and other relevant parties need to engage in focusing on the drivers that can re-energize energy careers. Houston is the only city with the critical mass of energy leadership to even begin to tackle this problem; no one company can change the image; it requires a community effort. One part of this solution is the University of Houston's Global Energy Management Institute that is focusing on energy education and providing a forum for the energy community to address this critical issue. ■

Biographical Sketch

LANE SLOAN had a distinguished and diversified career with Shell Oil Company, retiring after 29 years of service at the turn of the millennium. He joined Shell in 1970 where his early career was spent in a variety of corporate roles in Houston, ranging from Information and Computer Services to Corporate Planning, Audit, and Treasury. In 1981, he became Production Administration Manager for Shell California Production Inc., followed by a position in the



corporate organization as Manager Services Planning. Lane was appointed to Shell's senior management as General Manager of Products Finance in early 1985. He then undertook an assignment as

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Liaison Shell Oil in London, returning to Houston in 1987 as Vice President Corporate Planning. He became the Chief Financial Officer for Shell Oil Company in 1989 as Vice President of Finance and Business Services. In this period, Lane orchestrated the formation of the shared services concept that later became Shell Services Inc. He returned to London, first as the Regional Coordinator for the Far East and then as Director of the East Zone in Oil Products. In 1987, Lane was appointed the Chief Executive Officer of Shell Chemical Company, later becoming the Executive Vice President-Americas when Chemical became a global organization in Royal Dutch/Shell.

After leaving Shell, he joined SAIC in 2000 as an Executive Vice President responsible for its Energy Sector. At the end of that year, he became CEO of GrandBasin, a joint venture between Halliburton and SAIC. He left that role in 2001 when GrandBasin was absorbed into Landmark Graphics, a subsidiary of Halliburton.

Lane received a BS in business from the University of Colorado. In addition, he attained an MS in quantitative management science from the University of Colorado, an MS in accounting and an MBA in finance from the University of Houston.

He has served on the University of Houston's Bauer College of Business Dean's Advisory Board for over a decade and is currently on the Executive Committee and Chairman of the Energy Committee. He was awarded an honorary Master's of Business Experience as well as the Distinguished Alumnus Award from the Bauer College. Lane is a board member for the Sam Houston Area Boy Scouts Council, and was a former board member of the Houston Zoological Society. He also serves on the board of the Houston Technology Center. Recently, Lane became a member of the Silver Fox Advisors. He is teaching courses primarily focused on corporate strategy and strategic leadership at the Bauer College.