

BUSINESS

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Morton Marcus
ON BUSINESS

Cooking up a recipe for success

Clovis Crowder did not become a leading Hoosier executive by default. He did not inherit his position, he earned it.

A man of rugged countenance, imposing stature and brilliant intellect, he is often mentioned as a candidate for elected office, but he humbly declines all such invitations. Also, he has no ambition to be a university president or a basketball coach.

Recently he and I had the following conversation:

MM: "Tell me, Mr. Crowder, what has been the essential feature of your success?"

CC: "Call me Clovis. It's a good Hoosier name, and I want to be seen as one of the guys. See that picture on the wall? I'm in a coffee shop eating doughnuts with a crowd of diabetic retirees. Makes me look folksy, doesn't it?"

MM: "Is that the secret of your success, being one of the guys?"

CC: "Not at all! I would not consider hiring one of those idiots. Success is based on the quality of the people you hire. Those fellows are customers."

MM: "That seems cynical."

CC: "Realistic. Customers make their own choices. They can buy my products, or they can buy from my competition. I will not harm them by making an unsafe product, but I am not responsible for their choices."

MM: "So tell me, what are you looking for in an employee?"

CC: "I want someone who can speak well, write well and think with perspective. I turn down anyone who can not identify Napoleon, Waterloo and Wellington. I reject those who say, 'I done went there and I seen, like, what they's been a 'doin'. If you say, 'My Dad give it to him and I', you will not get a job here. I expect a person to know who was the president at the time of his or her birth."

MM: "I hope you will not take offense, Clovis, but that sounds both old-fashioned and elitist."

CC: "Nonsense. Today's emphasis on teaching STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) uses our schools for vocational training, not for education. I support SHE (science, history and English). Students must know how the world is structured. That is the purpose of science education."

"Workers must know how our current society evolved. That is the purpose of history. They must be able to communicate and relate with others. They should want to be readers so that they know what is happening today. That is the purpose of English, or language arts, if you prefer."

MM: "I see the logic but not the practicality."

CC: "I want people working for me who see themselves and our times in perspective. They will have those interior resources of imagination and inspiration that lead to innovation. Literature is tied to the changing social forces in society."

"History, properly taught, covers music and art, not just politics and military events. The study of science is also an exploration of social and technical progress."

"If an employee of mine does not have perspective on today's world and cannot communicate well, he or she is likely to lack sensitivity and resourcefulness. I do not want my company represented by people who are ignorant or sound ignorant."

MM: "Do you have a dress code for your employees?"

CC: "Absolutely. Shoulders, navels, knees and toes are not to be seen. Body piercing jewelry, beyond earrings, is prohibited at work."

MM: "That all sounds very Puritanical."

CC: "It has been very profitable without being unduly repressive."

That is Clovis Crowder, a Hoosier legend, a man living against his times and doing quite well.

Morton Marcus is an economist, formerly of the Kelley School of Business, Indiana University.

AT&T plans sweeping cuts

\$67 billion buyout of BellSouth would cost 10,000 jobs

By PETER SVENSSON
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK

One way AT&T Inc. hopes its \$67 billion proposed merger with BellSouth Corp. will pay off is by allowing it to get rid of redundant operations.

That means up to 10,000 job cuts in three years, mostly through normal employee turnover rather than layoffs, AT&T Chief Financial Officer Rick Lindner said Monday.

The deal, expected to close next year after shareholder and regulatory approval, would form the nation's largest phone company by any measure. It would have nearly half of all lines, be the largest cell-phone carrier and the largest provider of broadband Internet service.

Because the merger would effectively unite three companies — AT&T, BellSouth and Cingular Wireless LLC, their joint venture — executives expect that plenty of overlapping functions can be eliminated.

"This merger will allow us to move to a single brand for wireline, for wireless, for business and consumer, and that's AT&T," said Randall Stephenson, AT&T's chief operating officer. "A single brand is much more cost efficient and far more effective."

If the announced job cuts aren't offset by hiring, they may be felt particularly strongly in Atlanta,



Cingular Wireless, the nation's largest mobile-phone company, is a joint venture between AT&T and BellSouth, which announced Sunday a merger plan valued at \$67 billion.

where both BellSouth and Cingular are based. Cingular's headquarters will remain there, but San Antonio, Texas, where AT&T is based, will be corporate headquarters.

Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue and Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin said Monday they both will fly to Texas soon to try to persuade AT&T's executives to move their headquarters to Atlanta.

"It's hard to replace Bell South," Franklin said. "They've

contributed so much over the last decade. We're anxious for their national headquarters to move here."

Before the cuts, the combined company would have around 317,000 employees, including Cingular.

The 10,000 planned cuts are in addition to the 26,000 job cuts AT&T has already announced — 13,000 due to SBC's acquisition of AT&T Corp., which closed in

November, and 13,000 due to shifting priorities in its operations. The combined SBC-AT&T took the name AT&T Inc.

At the Communications Workers of America, which would

have about 200,000 workers at the combined company, spokeswoman Candice Johnson said the merger would be an opportunity for job growth as the company expands into new technologies.

"We're not looking for job losses at all," Johnson said. The union has not yet endorsed the merger.

AT&T expects the acquisition announced Sunday to save it \$2 billion annually at first, increasing to \$3 billion a year by 2010.

Slightly more than one third of the savings would come from reduced labor costs and consolidation of support functions and corporate staff, Lindner said.

More savings from the proposed acquisition would come from reduced advertising expenses and combining the companies' backbone network and information-technology operations of the companies.

"Over the last couple of years as we have operated Cingular and our Yellow Pages venture, it became clear that there was a lot of duplication that could be eliminated," said Duane Ackerman, chief executive of BellSouth.

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