The Roman geologist Sulphurius Emanaceous was absolutely correct. Without geoscientists, there wouldn’t be ore bodies. Without ore bodies, there wouldn’t be mines. Without mines, there wouldn’t be a need for mining or processing engineers (the latter are also known as metallurgists). Without engineers, there wouldn’t be environmental issues and the need for original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and most vendors. Could it possibly be any simpler? I know that some of you are engineers, so do you need me to slowly walk you through this logic?

The three pillars of mining — geology, mining and processing — become one big pillar with two stubby pillars.

Geoscientists carry a heavy burden with mankind being so dependent on our superhuman skills. But we also know that our genius makes the world a better place. Without our successes, humans would still live in caves (miners’ home turf). It gives us indescribable pleasure knowing that our hard work and ability to decipher nature’s secrets creates thousands of jobs for those less fortunate — people who would otherwise be using their college and graduate degrees working at fast-food restaurants.

But we are also humble and live normal lives despite being surrounded by the immense adulations of others. Mac Davis summed it up perfectly, “Oh Lord, it’s hard to be humble when you are perfect in every way.” This mantra guides us through every day.

However, we have an awesome obligation to mentor others in the mining industry. For instance, in this new age of environmental awareness, we have had to teach engineers that the best way to prevent forest fires is by not strip mining. Processing engineers must learn that the froth on a float cell is not a milkshake and that optimizing a flow sheet does not mean coloring within the lines. While most of you take your jobs for granite, we actually know what a granite is.

OEMs owe us twice. They get to use our newly discovered metals to build their toys for boys and then sell them to unsuspecting engineers.

Given our elite status in the world of mining, we would like to offer the following advice to our engineering brethren:

- If they are yawning at your presentation, it is not because they didn’t get enough sleep.
- You should not have more friends on the internet than in real life.
- Buying flowers for your girlfriend or upgrading your RAM is not a moral dilemma.
- You can write on paper that does not have both vertical and horizontal lines.

Seriously, everyone is important in the mining industry. We geoscientists are just more important. For instance, there is no god named Engin. There is one named Geos. Just saying.

So geoscientists unite! Let’s prove once and for all that we are the masters of the universe. Please vote with your wallet to help us win our self-ordained supremacy.

The Great Debate is intended to be a good-natured debate about the mining industry with a goal of raising funds for the U.S. National Mining Hall of Fame and Museum. The opinions expressed here are those of the author and not necessarily of SME or Mining Engineering. Each edition of the Great Debate will be available on Mining Engineering’s website. To get involved in the debate, visit https://me.smenet.org/greatdebate/.

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