

EDITORIAL

Father of value analysis, PW columnist, Larry Miles dies



Lawrence Delos Miles, the developer of the techniques of Value Analysis (VA) and Value Engineering (VE), died August 1 at his home, "Sedgefield" near Easton, Maryland.

Larry Miles, the acknowledged "father" of Value Analysis while working for GE in the late 1940s, was *issue after issue* one of the best read columnists in *PW*. His book, *Techniques of Value Analysis and Engineering*, first published in 1961, has been printed in 12 languages and remains the standard exposition of the techniques of "value" thinking.

Value thinking works only when old habits of thought and accepted ways of doing anything are questioned...challenged...and creatively answered. That was central to Miles's message—the creative efforts of people from different disciplines, not just procurement where VA began, had to be brought to bear on the point at which cost could best be affected. And that point was function.

To Larry Miles, there never could be a reason not to bring the full force and power of his analytic powers to bear on what might seem to the untrained to be a small and inconsequential functional component in some bigger system.

But neither we at *PW* nor you the reader ever ceased to marvel at just how some seemingly trivial element in a product could produce huge cost savings when uncovered and properly "value engineered."

In the 100 columns that Larry Miles wrote for *PW*, he never failed to shed light on the many and varied approaches to value thinking. *PurchasingWorld* is proud to have been one of the vehicles through which American industry

learned...and continued to learn...about value analysis from the man who is universally acknowledged to have been its first and greatest proponent.

The true impact of Miles and his work are worldwide in reach. He has been honored on every continent. He received the Distinguished Service Award from the U.S. Navy, and a special award was established in his name only last year in Japan in recognition of the brilliance of his contribution to industry. The Miles Award is given annually by a Japanese industrial group to those Japanese companies showing the most benefit from the use of value analysis methods.

We are happy that part of the memory of Larry Miles and that his contributions are found in past issues of *PurchasingWorld*. With his family we invite you to make an individual memorial donation in his name to Talbot County Hospice Foundation, P.O. Box 480, Easton, MD. 21601, or a corporate donation to The Value Foundation, Lawrence D. Miles Memorial Fund, 986 National Press Bldg., Washington, D.C. 20045

Larry Miles was 81 at his death. He was cared for in the last days of his debilitating disease by his devoted wife Eleanor at their home. When I spoke to Mrs. Miles last spring, she only said "Larry and I are a team in everything."

Jim Lorincz
James A. Lorincz
Editor-in-Chief

Editor's Query: Do you think that the purchasing department is getting full support from corporate management to fulfill its responsibilities? Circle Yes 50, No 51

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A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Jim Lorincz". The signature is fluid and cursive.

James A. Lorincz
Editor-in-Chief

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