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Sheppard to Capgemini: "This is wrong" Managers' meeting shuts down

The Society has reacted strongly to Capgemini's announcement last Thursday that they plan to move hundreds of Society and PWU jobs to Poland and India.

"We've been nice, we've been polite, we've listened to what you had to say," Society President Rod Sheppard told a meeting of Capgemini managers. "But that's over. You're talking about moving good, high-tech Canadian jobs overseas. This is just wrong."

Around 20 Society representatives invited themselves to the meeting, called to discuss Cap's offshoring plans. Previously, Capgemini managers had informed Society representatives that they had "nothing to hide," so, said Sheppard, they shouldn't mind if a few Society types were there to observe. Labour Relations director Alex Brat thought otherwise, however; he closed the meeting and sent his managers away.

Capgemini owns Inergi and New Horizon System Services, companies that provide support services to the electricity industry, mostly to Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation, respectively. They were spun off to Capgemini in the early 2000s. Capgemini told its employees yesterday that the company must achieve "significant transformational initiatives" that "make use of RightShore® resources." By "RightShore®," they mean "cheap foreign labour."

"It took three days to bring the electricity system back after the 2003 blackout," said Rod Sheppard, President of the Society of Energy Professionals. "I can't imagine trying to get through a crisis like that if our IT support was in India."



President (pro-tem) Rod Sheppard speaks to Capgemini managers

"It's not that we don't want people from India to have jobs," he added. "We just want them to have their own jobs, not ours."

Capgemini announced the offshoring of dozens of jobs in Data Centre Services, Applications Management, Service Management group, and Desktop Services (Technical Change), at least 29 Society positions from Inergi and 69 from NHSS. Most bizarrely, Capgemini intends to move their “help desks” to Poland. The “help desks” advise Bruce Power, Hydro One, and Ontario Power Generation employees on their computer equipment, and fix problems for them.

“This will be a disaster for engineers and others who are heavily dependent on their hardware and software,” Elaina De Luca, Vice President of the Society’s Inergi Local, said in a release. “If you’ve tried to get your telephone fixed lately from Bangalore, you’ll know what we mean.”

According to the Inergi Local, it appears that Capgemini’s end goal is to move all work out of Inergi and into other Capgemini operations. The evidence?

- ◆ Their lack of interest in growing Inergi—pursuing new business
- ◆ They’ve told the Society it won’t be Inergi pursuing the Hydro One contract when the current one expires—it’ll be Capgemini

Inergi Local leadership expressed frustration with Cap’s lack of interest in Inergi, telling its members in a communiqué:

... Capgemini’s sales team has been conspicuously absent at various energy sector events, despite the Society’s efforts to get them there and provide space for them. They’ve given us no explanation for their failure to show. Imagine! Salespeople with no interest in expanding their business relationships! The Society sees our competitors, such as Accenture and IBM, at conferences/conventions in the sector but not Capgemini.

In what is certainly a coincidence, De Luca was phoned by the office of new Energy Minister Gerry Phillips Thursday afternoon, seeking a meeting. President Sheppard and VP De Luca had met Minister Phillips the previous weekend at an Ontario Liberal Party provincial council meeting.

“This isn’t the last you’ll hear from us,” Sheppard told the Capgemini meeting. “We’ll go to OPG, we’ll go to Bruce Power, Hydro One. We’ve got relationships with these companies. They want the high quality service our members provide.”

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