

Interview with ELPEN pharmaceutical company

Q: Can you tell us a few things about ELPEN's historical course in the drug field?

A: ELPEN was founded in 1965 by Mr. Dimitrios Pentafragas, pharmacist. During its course, the company has collaborated with numerous multinational corporations. ELPEN has had a continuous growth course up until today; we currently rank first among Greek pharmaceutical industries, with well-known and established pharmaceutical products – both generics and prototypes with international patents.

Q: How many scientists-chemists does ELPEN employ?

A: The company presently employs 56 chemists and 6 chemical engineers.

Q: Have any partnerships with domestic or international university departments of chemistry, pharmaceutical and related sciences bloomed in your company?

A: Certainly. For several years, ELPEN has been collaborating with domestic as well as international Universities, in an effort to develop new technologies for the production of drugs with added value and usability for humans, and to make good use of the Greek plants' biodiversity, so as to purify and use any active ingredients they might contain.

Q: Does ELPEN have a specific department whose main interest is the research/synthesis of new active substances?

A: ELPEN is, in fact, one of the first companies that focused on the research and production of active substances; however, due to the related high costs and the economic crisis that is currently ravaging our country, the company has been forced to temporarily "freeze" any research in this particular domain.

Q: In your opinion, in what aspects does ELPEN differ from other companies of the field?

A: The principal and most pronounced difference from other companies of the field concerns human resources. Founder & President Mr. Dimitrios Pentafragas, a man of great vision and love for his fellow men –patients and partners alike–, has created a company in which executives and employees participate in policymaking and growth. As a result, on the scientific, social and communication level, they all do their best.

Q: Amidst a constantly changing environment in the drug field –both globally and domestically, where an economic crisis is ongoing–, what is the vision of ELPEN?

A: ELPEN considers the crisis that has been tormenting the drug field, as well as the general global and Greek turmoil, as a challenge – a challenge, through which it will prove that it has the organization, ability and will to overcome any obstacles and emerge victorious, for the sake of all Greeks.

Q: How does ELPEN differ from other companies that are active in the field, with respect to professional development of chemists/scientists?

A: Encouraging the professional development of its scientific staff, ELPEN offers all scientists working in the company (hence, including chemists) the opportunity to follow training related to their expertise, but also to implement new technologies in the field. In fact, through the Research & Development department, the company has

given young scientists the opportunity to perform hundreds of postgraduate and doctoral theses.

Q: Could you please name 3 significant chemical molecules in the course of ELPEN?

A: Iron protein succinylate, Carvedilol and Simvastatin.

Q: Tell us a few words about the Research Centre of ELPEN.

A: Total surface: 1500 m²

Laboratories: pharmaco/technical, analytical, inhaled powders

The industrial unit supports industrial GMP derivatives

Laboratory for in vivo animal studies

Clinical studies department

Auditorium

Employees: 55 (40 are scientific staff)

Q: Working as a chemist for ELPEN, is there anything in particular of which you feel proud?

A: Any chemist working for ELPEN would feel proud, because he/she belongs to the family of the largest Greek company in the field of pharmaceutical industry, with a true pro-human attitude.

Q: What would an ELPEN chemist like to improve in his company?

A: Well, all chemists –regardless of their level– have a duty to improve their position as well as the position of their company, both in Greece and abroad.

* The questions were posed by Dr. Vassilios Binas, chemist.

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The interview has been published at the following link

<http://atmitos.gr/sinentefxi-me-ti-farmakeftiki-eteria-elpen/>