

## Lutz Talks About Life in the Automotive Corporate World

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stone-age way and if Lutz “stone-aged” with the rest of them, he’d last.

“That sounds funny,” Lutz said. “But actually, that was clear advice and instructions on how to act from a boss. In the end, it ended up being more positive than negative.”

Lutz then talked about Red Poling, a former president and CEO at Ford.

“Red was the bean counter’s bean counter,” Lutz said. “He was hungry for information. He’d take home a stack of papers and read all the information until 3 in the morning.”

The result, said Lutz, was that Poling sometimes nod off during long meetings.

He concluded by talking about former GM CEO Rick Wagoner. He said that the story written by *The Detroit News* about Lutz’s book didn’t talk enough about how Lutz praised Wagoner’s strengths.

Wagoner should get credit for

making a lot of important structural changes at GM and for setting in motion the launching of products such as the Volt and other popular products credited with turning GM around, Lutz said. These projects were initiated during Wagoner’s time at GM.

Lutz said that while Wagoner came from the finance side of the business, he had a better sense of auto style than he gave himself credit for.

“After Ford relaunched the Mustang, it was obvious it was going to be a success,” Lutz said. “So it was decided that we would bring back the Camaro. We talked with the Camaro club presidents and came up with a design that resembled the 1967 Camaro because that’s what people said they wanted. Rick came by and looked at the design and said that it looked too much like the old Camaro.”

Wagoner told Lutz that they didn’t just want to sell the new Camaro to 55-year-old men feeling

nostalgia for the 1960s. Wagoner wanted a well-made rear-wheel-drive sports car that would evoke the heritage of the Camaro while attracting younger buyers who like the new, modern look.

“(Designer) Tom Peters and I looked at each other and said, ‘Of course,’” Lutz said, indicating that Wagoner’s comments made sense.

The end result of Wagoner’s advice was the new Camaro, which turned out to be a great success for GM. Lutz gives full credit to Wagoner for developing the overriding idea of what the car should be.

But ultimately, Lutz said, Wagoner was too in love with developing processes.

“Processes are great when you’re talking about manufacturing and you want to reduce as many of the variables as possible,” Lutz said. “But applying that notion to engineers and marketers who are trying to develop new ways of doing things, of being creative, that just doesn’t work.”

Far too much time was spent by executives “box balancing” their work, checking off the boxes on their procedure forms. Lutz said the Aztek was considered the perfect car because everyone could tick off the boxes on the procedure list, but no one stopped to ask if the actual product was any good.

Lutz called Wagoner a good peacetime CEO who had the bad luck to be in charge of GM during the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression.

Lutz said that a good executive shouldn’t need a piece of paper filled out in the previous year listing current goals. He quoted a Japanese executive who said he wouldn’t hire someone like that.

The Japanese executive, said Lutz, wanted someone who intuitively knew how to respond to quickly changing market forces and wouldn’t be tied to a to-do list made under different circumstances. He said the good executive looks forward, not backward.



Diana Tremblay

## Tremblay Named GM VP of Global Business Services

General Motors has created an all-new Global Business Services group that will streamline back-office processes to improve service quality, reduce complexity and achieve cost efficiencies.

Diana Tremblay is named Global Business Services vice president and will report to Dan Ammann, GM senior vice president and chief financial officer.

Tremblay’s appointment is effective July 1, and her team, initially comprising certain groups of employees from Finance, Human Resources, Facilities, Real Estate and Indirect Purchasing, will begin implementation immediately.

When fully operational, Global Business Services will manage dozens of common processes across GM and include thousands of employees across the globe.

The group is expected to reduce associated costs by at least 30 percent over the next four years.

“Every dollar of efficiency unlocked through Global Business Services is a dollar we can put back into our vehicles for our customers or is a dollar we can take to the bottom line,” Ammann said.

“Diana’s proven leadership, creative problem-solving, relationship-building and tenacity make her the right leader for this crucial effort.”

Tremblay, 53, most recently was North America Manufacturing vice president.

## SAE-Approved Charging Stations Pass Muster with GM

Following several days of joint testing, General Motors and BMW AG engineers have declared that they are confident that Direct Current (DC) “Combo” Fast Charge stations from several suppliers will consistently allow an electric vehicle to take on an 80 percent charge in about 20 minutes.

The first electric vehicles expected to benefit from the Society of Automotive Engineers’ new industry standard for DC fast charging are the Chevrolet Spark EV and the BMW i3.

This industry-coordinated early confirmation of DC Fast Charge hardware and software will accelerate efforts to roll out SAE Combo DC Fast Charge infrastructure in the coming months. Among the suppliers participating in the testing were ABB, Aker Wade, Eaton and IES.

“This unprecedented cooperation among OEMs and equipment suppliers demonstrates the maturity of this important technology that will help speed the adoption of electric vehicles around the world,” explained Britta Gross, GM director, Advanced Ve-

hicle Commercialization Policy.

Just as most major automakers adopted the SAE’s 120V/240V Alternating Current (AC) connector standard to assure plug-in vehicles could access all charging infrastructure, eight automakers – GM, Ford, Chrysler, BMW, Daimler, Volkswagen, Audi and Porsche – have committed to adopting the SAE combo fast charge connector, assuring standardization of the DC Fast Charge connectors.

“Our goal with this cooperation was to ensure that DC fast charging stations be available to provide BMW i3 customers the premium fast charging experience in time for the arrival of the BMW i3,” said Cliff Fietzek, manager, Connected e-Mobility at BMW of North America. “We are pleased that we will meet our goal.”

This new combined AC and DC charging, or combo, connector provides added ease of use for DC Fast Charging, including a single charge port on the vehicle, and allows electricity to flow at a faster rate, making EVs more convenient and reliable to use for consumers who may not have access to overnight charg-

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DC Fast Charge hardware and software speeds up efforts to roll out SAE Combo DC Fast Charge infrastructure in coming months.

ing at home. DC Fast Charging allows EV owners to recharge their batteries up to 80 percent in less than 20 minutes.

“This successful testing is an important milestone that underscores our commitment to enable the next generation of electric vehicles,” said Cal Lankton, director of ABB’s EV Charging In-

frastructure for North America. “By offering a broad charging portfolio, we can fully support the needs of all EV drivers and infrastructure providers.”

The DC Fast Charge option is expected to be available a few months after the Spark EV launches in California and Oregon this summer.

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