

# How Life-Long Learning is Woven into ChromaScape's Fabric



Joe Majewski, ChromaScape CEO believes in personal development and growth for his leadership team.

## Leader Perspectives

Benefits of life-long learning can emerge early in a person's career. For Joe Majewski, President and CEO of [ChromaScape, Inc.](#), a leading producer of color dispersions and additives used for mulch, concrete, asphalt, rubber, sand and graphic arts, it happened while working for the M.A. Hanna Company (now PolyOne Corporation after merger with Geon).

"In my career, I was fortunate to work for a company that believed in personal development and growth," Joe said. Through his opportunities at Hanna, he was able to participate in executive development and education that the company made available and helped paid for. "That set a foundation for how I view continuous education," he said.

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Joining Twinsburg-based ChromaScape in 2004 when the company was only six years old, he was hired to grow operations. In 2008, he became President and was faced with the question: "How do we grow as an organization?" His first priority was to design and develop the organization, filling roles in areas that needed specific skill sets the company did not have.

Joe also knew he had to make an investment in building a leadership team that would want to put the systems and processes in place to grow the

business. "I wanted us to become a learning organization so we could continuously grow and learn how to become more efficient and effective," he said.



In 2011, the opportunity to join [EDGE](#), the Northeast Ohio non-profit organization that helps mid-market companies build their leaders and grow their value, came available. EDGE membership "gave us the opportunity to network and collaborate. It gave us the opportunity to 'sharpen the saw,' learn new concepts and share challenges with peers."

For Joe, it's all about value creation. And being part of EDGE allows his leaders to learn and bring new value-creating ideas into the company.



Take ChromaScape CFO Chris Spilker. "Chris had always been a cost account," Joe explained. "He has evolved into a leader who works on the business rather than in the business. EDGE participation has been powerful for Chris, who is rather quiet

by nature, as it has helped him network and learn from other CFOs."

As a member of the EDGE Finance Leaders group, Chris appreciates meeting six times a year with the same people he can build relationships with. The speakers are regional and "always discuss relevant topics that may be useful today or tomorrow," Chris explained. "It's thought-provoking. I leave considering whether, how and when I need to take action."

Chris also appreciates the EDGE events that introduce him to other functional leaders who help him consider other perspectives. Among the kinds of meetings EDGE conducts to facilitate learning for company leaders are its Forum Series which bring in business speakers with national acclaim on a variety of topics, geared to mid-sized companies. "They are always relevant to today's issues," Chris said. "I like that the speakers facilitate interaction among the participants."



Another EDGE participant is ChromaScape's Director of Technology and Product Development, Ben Invergo, a Ph.D.

chemist. Ben was asked to participate on the leadership team following the acquisition of his previous employer by ChromaScape. At his old company, he had been operating as a "bench chemist," according to Joe. "Ben wanted to learn and grow, so he began to participate in [InnoQuest](#)," the EDGE innovation management program that engages participants in learning best practices for managing and guiding the innovation process. Ben helped set up ChromaScape's innovation process that has now



ChromaScape, Inc. Leadership Team

*Standing L to R:* Joe Majewski, Ryan Stayanchi, Bill Flynn, Chris Spilker, Jerald Wilhite

*Seated L to R:* Ben Invergo, Bill Nichols, Tischa Coffman, Paul Waidzunas, Scott Thompson

evolved into the ChromaScape Idea System.

"It's nice to see what other people are doing and how they are doing it," Ben said. "We've been exposed to ideas we would not have otherwise, taken the parts that are right for us and devised our own innovation system. Because of InnoQuest, we are probably farther along with our own system."

For ChromaScape, EDGE has introduced new ideas for profitable growth through peer-based learning.



To learn more about how you and your leadership team can benefit from EDGE membership contact **Sarah Shoaff (216) 536-9396, [Sarah@edgef.org](mailto:Sarah@edgef.org)**.

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EDGE drives growth for mid-sized companies by bringing together their leadership teams to share best practices and inspire each other to pursue the biggest opportunities. EDGE is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, and is the only NEO economic development group that is focused on helping mid-sized companies strengthen their leadership teams in order to take their companies to the next level.