



Byron Hill, President and CEO ABC Laboratories

Columbia, Missouri
www.abclabs.com

The greatest measure of a company is that which can be measured. And, in that regard, ABC wrote the book. ABC is in its 42nd year of providing analytical services to a long list of global pharmaceutical and chemical companies. CEO Byron Hill talks about coming to ABC, and moving the company to University of Missouri's Discovery Ridge Research Park in Columbia, Missouri.

"When I got to ABC in 2002, the company had its share of problems. But they also had tremendous potential. The market was rich at the time, and the ABC business model was sound. So we divested those parts of the business that were draining it and really started focusing on the things we were doing right – namely, analytical chemistry.

"A mere four years later, ABC had grown by a handsome 70 percent, and that growth put a squeeze on our facilities. We knew the door was wide open in terms of relocation, and communities around the country were rallying to attract our business. Gainesville, Florida made us an incredible offer.

"But it soon became clear we were to stay in Missouri. Boone County came through with bond incentives, and city, state and federal programs were combined into an attractive package that ultimately led us to become the first tenant of Discovery Ridge.

"ABC Laboratories has a long-standing relationship with the university. We were literally born out of MU. Our founder, Dr. Charles Gehrke, was a highly regarded biochemistry researcher there, and a good percentage of our employees are MU graduates. Over the years, we've interacted with faculty and drawn on University facilities and libraries. As the University seeks to commercialize research—particularly in highly regulated areas of pharmaceuticals and agrochemicals--the relationship has tremendous potential to grow."

Byron Hill talks about the move to Discovery Ridge:

"The move was a major operation that took several months. We hired an experienced individual specifically to oversee the facility construction and the move, so that we could guarantee uninterrupted service for our clients.

"Mid-move, the FDA dropped in for a routine inspection—these things are always unannounced– and our planning and preparation paid off. Our operation passed inspection with no observations.

"We expect a lot of ourselves at ABC, and our clients figure that out early and hold us to a high standard. Much of our business comes from the east and west coasts, and our clients sense something surprisingly different here. They are blown away by our facilities at Discovery Ridge and by our systems, our track record, our people. I am especially proud of our people. They are far and away our biggest asset."