Roberto Cifuentes

Great Process (G-Process)

“ I saw an opportunity to improve the quality of copper production. ”

COUNTRY	Chile
INDUSTRY	Technology
EMPLOYEES	9
WEBSITE	www.gprocess.cl

COMPANY SNAPSHOT

Chile’s copper mining industry might be one of the few places where 99% just isn’t good enough. Copper production is a resource intensive process with extremely high costs and risks—the smallest error or advantage can mean a difference of millions of dollars in the value of the copper produced. It’s no surprise, then, that Roberto Cifuentes’ star product, DXG-F7 additive, is taking the Chilean copper mining industry by storm. DXG-F7 makes the copper cathode production process (called “electrowinning”) more efficient and improves the quality of the copper produced, increasing its value by up to US$100 per ton.

Metal runs in Roberto’s blood. He grew up in the town of Chiquicamata, home to the largest mine of CODELCO and the world’s largest open copper mine. His father owned a small hardware store where he was always innovating and improving, instilling this restless drive in his son. Roberto graduated from INACAP with a degree in technical illustration. In 1992, Roberto took charge of a chair manufacturing company his father had recently bought in Antofagasta. He quickly converted the business into a chair assembly factory because of the price advantages. To learn how to work with the chairs, Roberto enrolled in a course on “Techniques in Galvanization” where he met the course professor and metal-worker Ejnar Trollud and Eugenio Lizama, a chemical engineer. The chair business eventually closed, but the information Roberto learned in the course encouraged him to form a second business in chrome-plating called Comercial Grecia, funded by his father.

During a visit to a customer’s mine, Roberto realized that a chrome-plating process additive would improve the electrowinning process. He contracted his friends Ejner and Eugenio to research and test this theory. They were successful and, in 2007, Roberto chose to break from the family business. He formed his own business, G-Process.