

# Hank Leander



Hank Leander always knew he wanted a business career, and as a student at DePauw University, he earned a BA in economics. He subsequently earned a Master's in Business Administration (MBA) from Harvard University School of Business.

After graduation from Harvard, Leander says he had “an idyllic career. My uncle owned an insulated copper wire company in Texas, and I took a job with his company.”

Leander made sales calls in the company's territory, and then became the factory manager in Los Angeles. When he realized he didn't like selling commodity products, Leander talked to his father-in-law about his family's business, Ford Meter Box Company, in Indiana.

In late 1959, Leander joined Ford Meter Box Company, which at the time employed approximately 100 people and had sales of \$3 million per year. He started in sales, selling the company's products to wholesale houses in the water industry throughout the west, then worked out of New Jersey, growing the sales on the east coast. When he moved back to Wabash, he became the company's sales manager and was able to learn even more about business from Stanley Ford, who was president of the company at the time.

“When Stan died suddenly in 1978, I found myself President and Chief Executive Officer of the company. I had never thought of myself as a CEO, but I assumed the position, and we carried on the tradition of taking care of employees and giving back to the community we worked in,” Leander says.

Leander assumed a leadership style that successfully guided the company through 13 years of substantial sales growth and plant expansion. When Leander retired as President and CEO in 1992, after 33 years of service, the company had grown to yearly sales topping \$75 million and more than 700 employees.

In addition to making the company successful, Leander was always interested in making his community successful, too. Over the years, Leander has served on a number of boards within northeast Indiana, including the Honeywell Foundation, Inc. He also helped fund-raising efforts for the Honeywell Center in Wabash.

He was named a Distinguished Citizen by the Wabash Area Chamber of Commerce, and he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from Manchester College.

