

# JAMES DANDENEAU

## A Innovator in Polymer Technology

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**F**or ages, we have been hearing the debate on the ideal leader and what exactly is ideal leadership. The answer to this question seems easy but can get complicated. Today, a leader is expected to fill several other shoes along with leading the company. As society is evolving, clients are expecting more from the company and its leaders. The relationship between a business leader and the clients reflects on how the company is performing and more or less the future of the company. A leader has to be vigilant with the choice and decisions they make for the company and the clients. To understand more about the leaderships and current industry scenarios of businesses, we will look at the journey of **James Dandeneau, Founder and CEO of Putnam Plastics.**

Expressing his views on leadership, Jim says, *“I don't think there is “ideal” leadership. Leadership comes in many styles. I think leading by example is important, be willing to do any job, and illustrate good work ethics. Hold yourself to a high standard and treat people fairly. Be supportive to people who work for you and provide the resources to allow them to succeed.”*

### IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE

In 1984, James founded Putnam Plastics focusing on complicated extrusions for medical devices. Under Jim's guidance, Putnam Plastics has established itself as the leading source for complex extrusion technologies for catheters and device assemblies for the medical device industry. Prior to founding Putnam Plastics, Jim worked for Sabin Corporation, a division of Cook Inc. Jim holds a BS in Plastics Engineering from the UMass Lowell.

Since its inception, the company has grown from providing world-class extrusions to a multifaceted manufacturer of high-end, complicated components and complete catheter assemblies. The knowledge of plastic materials and processing methods allows the company to improve the function of catheters and thereby supports the mission of “Enabling Polymer Technology to Improve the Quality of Life”. For nearly four decades, Putnam Plastics has been a global leader in complex extrusions and components and continues to be a pioneer in the medical device industry. The company has been the leader in many areas of plastic processing and has expanded to offer many polymers-related technologies to the industry.

### OFFERING A WIDE RANGE OF PRODUCTS

When you are serving customers for a long period of time, it is important to constantly innovate and be unique from the other competitors. Putnam Plastics offers a broad scope of technologies all under one roof, which sets it apart in the industry. Customers reach out to the company as they know that they can make tubing/components/catheters that no one else in the world can make. Putnam Plastics Corporation has been a leader in medical tubing for over three decades with a focus on small diameters used for life-saving vascular catheters and minimally invasive medical devices. It offers the widest range of tubing technologies in the industry and frequently combines these to create components at the forefront of today's most sophisticated medical devices.

Putnam's range of equipment allows processing traditional thermoplastics and elastomers, as well as high-performance



Founder & CEO  
Putnam Plastics



materials such as PEEK and fluoropolymers. Configurations include a single lumen, solid profile and monofilament, multi-lumen, multiple materials in layers or stripes, tapers and bumps, variable durometer materials along the length, wire and fiber reinforcements, and wire jacketing. It also offers a wide range of thermoset polyimide tubing.

The comprehensive fabrication capabilities of the company include precision cutting of tubes to length, CNC grinding and lathe turning, thermal forming of tips and flares, overmolding of connectors such as luers or hubs, precision drilling of holes, pad printing on tubes over a meter in length and 360 degrees around the circumference. In-house plasma treatment technologies allow for excellent ink adhesion on challenging polymers such as polyethylene, PEEK, and thermoset polyimide.

### CONSTANTLY IMPROVING

Today, it is important for a company to be equipped with advanced technology. It allows the entrepreneurs and their company to lead in the industry while

## PUSHING THE LIMITS

Putnam Plastic has an innovative workforce, the production group runs new items that are similar to existing products, the R&D group constantly works with customers to develop new components. The company also has an advanced development group that focuses exclusively on new processes and new materials. “We’ve prided ourselves on pushing the limits of plastic technology for the last several decades and strive to continue to do so. Things like TIE tubing, tri-layer, reel to reel lined multi-lumen catheters, large thin-walled polyurethanes, Rilslix™, clean PI, NMP free PI to name just a few,” says Jim. In addition, the in-house automation build group has designed and implemented dozens of pieces of equipment that allow it to control tighter tolerances and produce a product that the competitors cannot. Jim believes that the company needs to be innovative to stay in CT. At present, the company is on the leading edge of technology in the industry. Jim and the team at Putnam Plastic aims to stay innovative as the industry is growing. He feels the need for medical tubing/catheters will continue to increase over the next 5 years as it has for the last 35.

maximizing the customers. This is where Putnam Plastics has been different from the others in the industry. The broad range of technologies allows it to create truly innovative solutions for advanced devices. Such innovations are supported by comprehensive services from prototype development, through process validation, and into full-scale volume production.

The highly skilled engineering and manufacturing team has the ability to leverage a range of distinct process technologies to create innovative products with unique performance characteristics, and focus on customer solutions from development through manufacturing.





“Constantly improving processes throughout the organization and fostering an entrepreneurial culture companywide are key.”

*“I think if you want to be an innovation leader you have to commit time and resources to technologies that may not succeed. A significant investment in research and development and a willingness to try things others pass on are necessary to truly be innovative. Constantly improving processes throughout the organization and fostering an entrepreneurial culture companywide are key,”* expresses Jim.

### **PROMOTING PLAY HARD WORK HARD CULTURE**

A successful company is comprised of highly motivated individuals who carry it on their shoulders. Alongside, it is important to have a leader who offers them exactly what they want. Addressing the same, Jim says, *“I do not change my leadership style, I allow my team to manage their own groups with their own style of leadership. Again I don't think one form of leadership is the only path.”* He encourages a work hard and play hard culture. The company is very supportive of many charities in the area. Moreover, the company pushes the employees and team members to be both physically and mentally healthy. A

huge corporate gym is available to all employees and their families. It also has a trainer available to work with anyone on specific physical or health-related goals.

Motivating the employees towards maintaining a good physical and mental health helps the company in achieving great success in long run. Putnam Plastics Corporation is focused on building an innovative workforce comprised of employees who pride themselves on challenging the status quo while providing the best quality product to the customers. Jim and leadership team at Putnam strive to provide the employees with the tools to be successful while working in a creative and fun working environment. Jim firmly believes that each employee contributes directly to the growth and success and that together, can accomplish great things. **GBL**

# **Putnam Plastics**