



Bernard SAULNIER

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## Using video to capitalize the past and serve the future

*After 37 years at Air Liquide (from Process Engineer to Technical director, specialized in distillation and gas separation), Bernard Saulnier has found a new challenge. He is passing his experience, stories and learnings to younger generations and, to do this, he has reinvented himself as... a filmmaker!*

### Bernard, how come you became a corporate YouTuber?

Ha, ha! No, I'm not on YouTube, I may spread the videos wider as I get translation etc., but so far I have sent my videos only to colleagues whom I know for sure are indulgent! Almost one year ago, at the same time when I discovered scientific YouTubers and realized that a camera is all you need, a young researcher came to me and asked how neon is produced. The poor guy certainly only expected a few minutes, but I gave him two hours of explanations and anecdotes. Well, not only he listened till the end, but he even said "I should have filmed you"...

### So you bought a camera?

I already had some equipment, and I was happy to do something with all these stories never written down... I learnt a few tools to add drawings, animations, I now have videos about neon, xenon and krypton. And I chose to do them in French for the moment because I believe no one – not even myself – should have to put up with my English in the French accent!

### How do you film, concretely?

Generally, I shoot myself talking to a young researcher. I'm passing knowledge and it's a conversation. This interpersonal, emotional aspect is a motivation for me and I think it shows. Once, I even postponed going to the hairdresser because I wanted to keep consistency through the different shots! Pleasure is key. And this has given me ideas for the technical experts' community that I lead within Air Liquide, I think such amateur filmmaking can bring pleasure, visibility, pride, creation and creativity, tolerance towards imperfection...

### Imperfection?

Definitely. Do you think I like to see and hear myself? But at some point you need to let go, unless you have a Hollywood team... Something else: I never write what I will say, I just talk to myself again and again about neon or krypton – in the car, in the shower, while having a coffee... Because my objective is not to have a perfect speech, but to make it understandable and enjoyable. Imperfection is also about doing things the way you want them to be done. Who said a video must be this long or that short? People can stop in the middle, come back later, watch it three times... Don't put too many constraints.

### What will be left in 10 years?

Uh, uh, ok, let's make this very clear, I don't think I'm doing something revolutionary. But if you look at the content: what I explain in my videos – the way gases are produced – has not changed much over the past 30 years, but could change over the 10 to come. This is why I add equations, writings, drawings...: I want everyone, not only engineers, to get the rationale behind what is described. I want them to learn with their hands and heads rather than with their computer. And if you analyze the way I do this: as I said, it's perfect as soon as it's presentable... So, yes, I hope that my videos will still be interesting in 10 years. I hope that such capitalization of the past will, by its content or by its philosophy, serve innovation.

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