Preface to the 2nd edition

The internationalization of science has led to the use of English as the general language of communication – a structurally simple language, with an enormous vocabulary.

Laboratory English seems to be a language of its own – at times quite incomprehensible to outsiders. “Laboratory slang” consists of neologisms, colloquialisms, contractions, acronyms, and brandnames. Foreigners arriving in an English-speaking laboratory may be quite puzzled with fleas, pigs, fuge, fridge, policemen, bogies, dollies, elbows, daisy-chains, PCR, fleakers, gunk – and all that “gooey stuff”.

Those who intend to work in laboratories around the world are well advised to continuously improve their language skills in scientific English with the assistance of a native-speaking scientist along with consulting scientific style manuals and dictionaries! ... and there is a wealth of technical laboratory terms to be discovered by the non-native-speaker, if only for the reason of survival in the lab: safety precautions and proper behavior in case of emergencies require instant response and efficient communication.

The idea for writing this book arose from my involvement as a consultant to a “San Francisco Academy” for a dozen young German students from Heidelberg. For our language preparatory course I needed to decide on a list of “essential terminology” – as no adequate book was available on the German market at the time. This “Laboratory Dictionary” now seems to have filled the gap and – in its expanded and improved present 2nd edition – provides the basic and up-to-date vocabulary to continue to assist its users in improving their laboratory language skills.

The “Laboratory Dictionary” is based on extensive comparative linguistic studies of original literature in technology, engineering and analytical methods as well as vast amounts of supplier catalogs in both languages – resulting in this 2nd edition, now with 25,000 general and specialized terms from all walks of laboratory life, emphasizing:

- Facility engineering (electricity, plumbing, ventilation)
- Equipment & supplies
- Glassware, tools, apparatus
- Servicing, maintenance, repair
- Ordering, shipment, delivery
- Analytics (methods & procedures)
- Chemicals (general reactants)
- Safety (precautions & emergencies)

The new German orthography rules have been taken into account according to Wahrig Deutsches Wörterbuch, 7th edn., the English orthography following American spelling according to Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 11th edn.

We hope this dictionary may serve you as a useful tool for working in the laboratory, in your research, in writing publications, preparing presentations, and for translations.
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