

Matt Fuller, CPG, LEG
Founding Principal



A young and ambitious engineering geologist volunteered for his first international assignment in Honduras in 1989, and that was all it took; he was hooked. Since then Matt has logged close to two million air-miles (1.95 million of them in economy class!) visiting six of the seven continents. As a Founding Principal of Tierra Group International, Ltd., Matt leads Tierra Group professional project Teams developing solutions to customers' problems.



After earning a degree in economic geology, Matt started his career as an exploration geologist searching for ore bodies in the western United States. When the economy took a tumble in the early 1980s and mineral exploration programs were suspended or eliminated, Matt went to work for a geotechnical construction company gaining experience in engineering geology. His career evolved into consulting with a focus in the geotechnical design of mine tailings storage facilities, waste dumps, heap leach pads, and the study of geologic hazards – how natural hazards like landslides, debris flows, rock fall, and seismic hazards affect the development of natural resources. This career direction has served him well, although Matt jokes that he may have missed his calling noting that former Colorado State University classmate and current Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper, opened a microbrewery and made a fortune making beer when a career in geology didn't pan out for him.

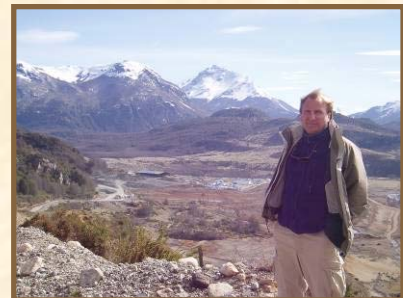
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Hands-on project involvement is what it's all about", says Matt, "I've seen way too many solid professionals become 'executives' and then allow their ego's to distract them from the core of our business, which is customer service."
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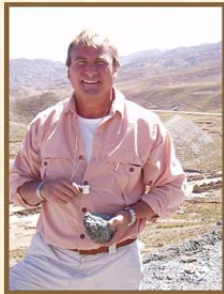
Through the course of his career, Matt was fortunate enough to meet and work with Pete Kowalewski, P.E., "one of the best water resources engineers, and finest persons of character and integrity, in the industry", Matt says. After nearly 25 years working with engineering companies ranging in size from "Mom-n-Pop Shops" to Wall Street owned corporations, Matt and Pete recognized that the most effective and rewarding means of providing high quality *customer service*, is with a smaller 'Team Oriented' group of professionals. Therein lay the motivation for forming Tierra Group.

Matt attributes his business acumen to the morning paper route he had from age 10 to 11. After his first week of delivering the Indianapolis Star, he learned the value of sales and collections the hard way when he showed up empty handed to meet the paper distributor he was working for who expected payment for the newspapers that Matt had delivered. Aghast and embarrassed, Matt



had to run back to the neighborhood and knock on his customers' doors to quickly collect the money. (Something he still has to do, occasionally, today!)

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"I always think of myself, and Tierra Group, as employees of our customer's company, not as a consultant when approaching our work. Their success is our success. When you put your ego and personal ambitions aside and lay it all on the line for a customer, that's when trust gets earned and relationships established. We earn success by making commitments, and delivering on them



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they like working on projects that never get built," he says. That's not the case with Matt. He doesn't just do work for the sake of doing work, rather for the sake of progress.

Still to this day, Matt and his Team, are providing innovative, sustainable advice and designs to the owners of the El Mochito Mine in Honduras, where Matt began his international career in 1989. "It's been an incredible ride", says Matt, "I am confident Tierra Group's next generation Team will carry it forward even better than we have to date."

Somewhere in between his project work, Matt can always find time for a round or two of golf. He started playing at a young age with his dad, and a few years ago, decided "I'm getting too old to climb higher mountains or run faster marathons, but I looked at golf as a sport where I could improve my game." And once again, Matt's reinvention worked. "Since then my handicap has come down," he says.

Even from his early lessons in business and sales, Matt has known that honesty and commitment are the key elements to building good business relationships.

Innovation is another key selling point for Matt. He developed a computer application to build three-dimensional animations used to visually present a technical idea to a non-technical audience. Customers, regulators or the general public can visualize a mine design and make judgments on the impact of the project on the surrounding area. Matt authored and presented a professional paper on the application of using technical animations to demonstrate the impact of mining projects throughout Central America.

Matt's technical innovation was also evident during the Santa Rosa Tailings Dam Expansion in Nicaragua. With a client up against the rainy season and escalating costs from a previous consultant's design, Matt's team developed a unique design using mechanically stabilized earth technology to create a near-vertical upstream raise significantly reducing the time and cost of construction.

Matt also has an astute sense for working on projects that are real and worth doing. "I've heard engineers say

