

**INTERVIEW
WITH
DEBORAH ANCONA
March 11, 2015
Sloan Oral History Interview**

D: Deborah

B: Bob McKersie

G: George Roth

G: Our suggestion of where to begin is at the beginning, which is your knowledge of MIT, the Sloan School here, what you heard about it before you came, how you came, and how you got started. It will also be helpful to hear about your undergraduate studies and then your PhD, which I know a little bit about.

D: That takes us back even further. I did my undergraduate work at the University of Pennsylvania. That was an interesting time. Life is a little haphazard, I think, despite our plans. I come from a medical family. I went to Penn as a pre-med and physics major. That lasted my first year. I hated physics! But I made it through. Then pre-med, the second year I was in chemistry.

G: When you say “made it through physics,” do you mean freshman physics?

D: Freshman physics for physics majors. This was not your physics for everyone, this was physics for physics majors. I lasted my freshman year. My sophomore year I was taking chemistry. I tell stories to my Leadership classes about being in that chemistry class, hating chemistry. I walked out and never went into an actual science class again, despite all the family expectations to be a doctor. I changed majors 7 times, and then got very interested in psychology. I was a research assistant for Marty Seligman, who was studying “learned helplessness” and depression. I started doing all these really cool psychology experiments, running them for him. I started my career, if you will, in terms of the social sciences, in terms of learning research and what research was about, at the hands of an expert. Marty was charismatic. We used to have these amazing research meetings where everybody would come – the mice runners, the people runners, and the field workers. We’d have these incredible guest speakers

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coming, and he'd pose these problems – undergrads, graduate students, faculty – we'd all sit around and discuss possible answers. It was just an amazing experience to work for Marty and to be part of that.

I became a psychology major. I got interested in management because I took a course at Wharton, which was applied psychology. I spent an extra year at Penn because even though I had all these majors, I graduated early, but wanted to stay because my friends were all there... I stayed and got a masters in counseling psychology at Penn. I got this degree, but the real reason I stayed the extra year at Penn was to spend another year working with Marty doing this research. That was really a conversion period for me. I thought, "Yes, this is what I want to do."

Then I went immediately into a PhD program at Columbia and was recruited very heavily there. They had a new program, so they were not as established.

G: This was a PhD at Columbia in...?

D: In Management of Organizations, which is their organizational behavior. The "new kids on the block" were Noel Tichy, David Nadler, Michael Tushman – they were all brand new professors at that time. David – who just died, by the way, 64 years old, of cancer – was a very big influence in my life, as was Richard Hackman. A very sad thing for the field.

B: What year did you enter Columbia?

D: In 1977. I graduated from Penn, went to Columbia, and had an amazing experience. Working with David, with his death it has really come home to me what a big influence he had on who I became as a scholar and as a researcher and, quite frankly, as someone who uses that material. I came into Columbia and immediately started doing fieldwork, like Day One, we were working on one of these – you might remember these? – Quality of Worklife projects?

B: Oh yes....

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D: They were everywhere – the TVA....

B: It was money from the federal government.

D: Money from the federal government to study all these quality of worklife projects, and whether they worked or not. We were the evaluators at what was called Parkside Hospital.

B: Somebody else had been there as the change agent?

D: Right. We were the evaluators. I came into that PhD program and went immediately into this hospital, doing observational work. We did all kinds of quantitative data analysis. We did nursing audits. I got to sit in on a lot of the labor-management meetings. That was a big issue there. I observed the night shift. I watched people throwing blood out the window. We watched all the interventions with the nurses in terms of teaching them conflict management and communication skills.

G: Why did they throw blood out the window?

D: Because workers were so demotivated. It was too far to go for clinical services. It was really frightening. The night shift was actually fascinating. “Who was going to get the flowers when this patient died? We don’t like the nurses on” It was eye-opening what goes on in organizations.

Anyway, we wrote a book right at the beginning. My socialization as a PhD student was a little bit different than most people’s. We wrote a book. Then David was in the middle of starting his consulting firm, which turned out to be Delta, and then Delta Mercer, and then everything else. I took a lot of courses at Columbia. We had so many required courses. You had to get like a mini-MBA-- that was bad!! But you do what you have to do.

Then David got this project to study teams – I wanted to study teams. Teams were my area, and no one was studying teams at the time. But David got this project at Mountain Bell, looking at sales teams, and asking were these teams effective? I had a great time.... I flew out to Denver, Salt Lake City, and Albuquerque. They were the three hubs of Mountain Bell. I joined a

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sales team. I spent about 2 months as a member of the sales team, going with them on customer visits and seeing how they operated. We created a survey of teams, so I was doing all this reading on teams and team effectiveness while also writing up my field notes. We used to – I'll never forget, David and I would get in the car and go to Yale to see Richard Hackman – who was the teams person. Richard came into my life, actually, as a mentor. It was great for me. I was 24 years old, jetting around, sitting in on all these meetings, briefing top management. I used to do the briefings for the top management group at Mountain Bell as to what I term “sense-making” now – what we were finding, and what were some of the trends and what did we think were the things that were determining performance.... They had created these new sales teams, which were geographically based — with this pyramid by geography and by the size of the sales group. We sent out these surveys, and we looked at what created sales team effectiveness (as measure by incremental sales revenue).

It was terrible, because everything I had learned and read about was insignificant. Nothing! Nothing, in all of this stuff on what made teams effective mattered in terms of predicting sales revenue. You could predict satisfaction, you could predict self-rated performance, but you could not predict actual net-incremental sales revenue, which was the metric they used for these sales teams. David was incredibly gifted, and he was like “Okay, we need to figure this out. Something matters....” David was great with me; he was not dictatorial, he was like “Come do this, and we'll figure it out.”

That was the beginnings of what this whole external perspective, the X-teams, came to be. I knew from sitting with those teams, and living with them, that the better teams were externally connected to the top of the organization, to customers, and to other groups in the organization. And we had a lot of stories about exactly what team members were doing. I was one of the few people to have such compelling field data – we did all this analysis.

I published non-results. My dissertation was an ASQ publication when we had zero results, and we published zero results because they thought we had measured it accurately. I guess it began for me, my own voice as a researcher, which was to say, “The empirical data doesn't support the theory, and here is the proof of that. And here's what we think is actually going on.” That was what got me going on my whole career of external boundary spanning, and what does it look like, and what really makes teams effective?

Then I was finished with grad school....

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B: What year did you finish your PhD?

D: I actually didn't finish until 1982, but I left in 1981 because I got a really bad case of mono at the end, so I lost many months of work because I just couldn't do anything. I was so sick!

I got a job offer from the University of Illinois, which was the best department ever, with Gerry Salancik – there are all these great scholars – Joe Porac. It was just an incredible group.

I got a job offer from Tuck. I would have gone to Illinois, actually, but they kept asking me whether or not I was going to get depressed if I went there from New York. It was like, “I don't know, how many times are you going to ask me whether or not I'm going to hate it there??” [laughs] I ended up going to Tuck.

Tuck was a great experience for me. They had a lot of resources. I learned how to teach. I had someone, John Hennessey – he was the dean for a while – John would sit in my class, every single class. It was really a little frightening. And what's his name? I've repressed his name..... Yes, Len Greenhalgh, the negotiations guy, who I will not say anything about. But it was not a good experience.

Anyway, they sat in my class every day and while this was stressful I actually learned how to teach. I got a lot of feedback. And then there were all these resources. It was great. Sue Ashford and Jim Walsh came after I came, and we were a total unit. We read each other's papers; we developed a new core course. Things at Tuck were good... and I got things published.

But it was very lonely being there. I was single, and the person who became my husband, Henry, was in Boston. I started a very concentrated search here in Boston, and really looked at all kinds of opportunities. Because of having been with David, I looked at consulting firms and academic institutions. MIT was attractive, but there wasn't really a job opening. Then I came here, just to talk to Ed Schein about a possible job, and then I was REALLY sure I didn't want to be here because I think I had an appointment at 2:00 and he didn't show up until 4:00. He was at a PhD defense. I was like “What kind of place IS this?? You don't even keep an appointment with somebody.”

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Anyway, there was no job. I just said, "Look, I can teach a teams course. I can teach an interpersonal behavior course, and I can teach a core course in OB-- that was my teaching at Tuck, and I want to be in Boston. If there's anything that comes up, let me know." Figuring under no circumstances was that going to happen.

Then I get a phone call that they didn't have anyone to teach, and they wanted me to come. I did not have a job offer, I came here as a Visitor from Tuck, in my first year, 1985.

G: How did you get Tuck to release you?

B: You just took a leave?

D: Yes, I just took a leave. And they knew that I was probably going to take off. I came here and.... I don't know.... There are issues anywhere you go, but what I really liked about this place is the freedom and encouragement of new ideas. This is just what I had with Marty Seligman and David Nadler. I was very fortunate. Some people say they never had any mentors, and I did have mentors and people who looked after me in many ways. David left Columbia to start his consulting firm, and then Michael Tushman became my advisor, and then Richard Hackman. All of those people gave me incredible freedom, to think, to go outside theoretical boundaries, to collect empirical data and try to say what role that played in whatever you were studying. That if you went up against standard ways of thinking that was a good thing.

I really like that about this place. MIT Sloan was very much phenomenon-based, it was very data-driven. What if the theory said X? If your data said Y and you were carefully collecting the data that you had, then you had a responsibility to get up and say, "There's something wrong with this theory and we need to re-think it." There was a great deal of independence here.

And similarly, on the teaching end, at least then, you could pretty much teach what you wanted. It became much more structured later.

B: Who are your mentors or your supportive colleagues here as you came?

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D: Interestingly enough, not that many. I didn't have a lot of support when I came here. I had my old mentors. I did not have mentors here, I would say.

B: Was Richard Hackman here at the time? Had he come up yet?

D: Not right at that time, but he came up shortly after. So, throughout my entire career, Richard had always been somebody that was happy to discuss teams, ideas, data, and theory. I also talked a little bit with Tom Allen. Tom studied teams to some extent, and boundary spanning work. I was mostly with my old mentors. There was not a lot of mentorship, I have to say, when I came here. But there was a lot of freedom. And a lot of thinking. People discussed ideas, and that was very compelling to me.

B: And then you shifted from a Visiting arrangement quite quickly, then, after the first year?

D: I don't remember if there were 2 slots or 3 slots. I think there were 3 slots. One was a macro, which I was not; one was a micro, which I was not; and one was this "open" slot, whatever. I applied to that position for the second year I was here, and I got the job. That was very nice.

G: Did they do a whole search and bring others in?

D: Oh yes, they did a full search. I was actually quite surprised that I ended up getting the job because I know a whole lot of other people applied.

It's interesting. During my time at MIT, there were a number of fortuitous things that happened. When I was applying for the job here I had just published my dissertation in ASQ. I had an AMJ paper on this other project I was doing about external boundary spanning and teams in the Vermont Department of Education. And I had another paper that had hit on group decision making based on data that we had collected at Tuck. The time that I was looking was a period where boom! boom! boom! I had a lot of publications hit. That was fortuitous.

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I gave a research seminar, and I had Tom Allen give me some advice, and he said, “I don’t care what you do, but you better have a lot of data! You want a lot of data in there, you want numbers. Don’t do any of this qualitative work,” because I do both qualitative and quantitative. He was like “Get those numbers out there and really present them, and do your stuff that way.” So I did. Giving that seminar prior to the decision being made was a very good move because that went well.

So in I came. Ed Schein was the head of the group, and Lotte was there, and John Van Maanen. I don’t know what you want to hear about this. I have said that it was great being here, and I enjoyed it. But there was a clique. Ed and Lotte and John all worked together on careers, etc., so the rest of us were kind of out of it in some ways. The group was a little more social than it is now. I remember Michael Scott Morton used to have these dinner parties. I guess he was area head.

G: Or was John Little still area head when you came?

D: Maybe it was John Little, and then Michael. But Michael Scott Morton would have these dinner parties. We had some community building in that people – and even Ed Roberts had some events at his house. Now I don’t think anybody has much of anything going on. But there was some community building. Ed used to do all this process observation, so we’d sit around and we’d talk all about how this organization had all these problems associated with it. But we never did anything. It was very process, consultative, and articulating and modeling all the things that were such an amazing part of what Ed Schein knows how to do So, I went along, and this place was fine. I had freedom and in both research and teaching

B: What courses did you teach?

D: That’s a good question. I think I taught Interpersonal Behavior....

B: Did you teach it in the core course?

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D: I was VERY active in re-doing that course. I led the committee that re-did that course. I must have taught it – I don't know if I taught it when I first came in. I think when I first came in in 1985, the reason they brought me in was because they needed a Teams and Interpersonal Behavior course. In fact, the year I came in, I remember very distinctly, it was the last year that Nitin Nohria was here. I taught a PhD course in teams, and I remember very distinctly that some of the older PhD students asked "Who is this person that you just hired from the Tuck School???" But they came around, "Ohhh, OK. Actually she does know something and this is interesting material..."

Being a female, there were a lot of questions and issues that were there, which is why it was so important to do that seminar, and do it with "prove your quantitative skills," "prove this," "prove that," kind of thing – or at least that's how I perceived part of what was going on.

I taught a PhD course in Teams, which I developed, and I'm pretty sure I did an Interpersonal Behavior course. That was an elective that they needed taught; that's why I got in here in the first place. I also taught a Teams elective. I don't think I ran into the core until several years in.

G: And you developed one of the PhD seminar courses, the macro course, 15.341? or 342? I remember I took it. I remember, it was the second year, and my daughter had been born. I didn't have a babysitter so I had to bring her along one time and she crawled over and took the phone off the hook and it made a big beeping noise. I think this was before you had kids!

D: I'm sure that was before I had kids, because when I came here I was not married. Yes, my time at MIT includes getting married, having 4 children, and bringing them up. I'm less clear about which years I started teaching what. But I started out teaching doctoral courses and these electives, and then I eventually got into the core course.

B: Why don't you say a little bit about your leadership for revamping the core course?

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D: That didn't happen until a little bit later. I guess it was 20 years ago. I remember, we had the meeting with the publisher, and my father being diagnosed with cancer. It happened simultaneously. I left the meeting and I just went to New York and dealt with that. He died 20 years ago, and we were in negotiations already with the publishers.

I'm trying to think. I came in 1985, I was full-time in 1986. I had tenure in 1992. Then I think it was right after I got tenure that they asked me to chair all these administrative things. 1992, I had 2 kids. I got tenure, and they put me in charge of one of these "Perspectives" courses.

The School had decided that the way we were going to curricularly move ahead was we were going to have three perspectives: Behavioral Science perspective, Economics perspective, and the DMD perspective. I was in charge of the Behavioral Science Group, so that was about 1992 that that happened. That was a great experience.

I think some of my greatest experiences here at Sloan have been building teams of people who created things, and that was one. It was John Van Maanen and Tom Kochan, two people with very different theoretical perspectives. And we had Maureen Scully and Eleanor Westney. We were tasked with re-doing 15.311 – that was a Perspective course. We got together and we battled, etc. etc., and finally it was like we could not get agreement. Here's Tom, and he's like "there's a political perspective, and we have to do that perspective." And John was like "Culture, culture, culture," and Eleanor was about strategic design, etc. Finally I said, "You know what? Three Lenses! We cannot put these together, but maybe that's what this perspective is, it's Three Lenses." So the Three Lenses were born, and we are still teaching them today.. I think that's quite an incredible thing that we did – that course became the Three Lenses course, and it continues to be that now.

The question is: how do we chunk it and label it and work with it? And our chunking/labeling/working was this idea of the Three Lenses. That's what makes MIT be MIT. That's what I think of about this place that gives it soul and creativity and *Mens et Manus* and all of that together – the three lenses are deeply researched orientations. There is an incredible history of politics and political theory and power and negotiation, and that's part of organizational life. It is conflictual, and there are different groups, and they have different degrees of power, and it's a negotiated set of agreements that make up organizational life. And there are cultures that are artifacts and values and deeply held assumptions, and that's also part

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of what organizations are. AND, there is a whole strategic design area. There are rich theoretical pieces to each of those. Here we had people who were deeply entrenched in those worlds, and we pulled it together in a creative way that brought research and practice together. I think that's the best that this place is, when you do that, when you get different people from different mindsets somehow together.

We did that. We launched it, it was reasonably successful. It's more successful now than when we did it, because more people have contributed and improved upon our work. The three lenses are even color coded now. But we got a lot of traction out of our initial ideas..

Then we wrote the book *Managing for the Future*, which became a pretty big-selling textbook, not only at MIT but at various other universities around the world, and it is still used in many countries. We then did a second edition. It should have a third edition, but the publishers got bought out and bought out, so we don't even know who is in charge of it any more. But it still exists.

Meanwhile, I was continuing to do the work on teams. Then the next segment of time, I became area head. I was the youngest area head, because I was an area head before I was full professor.

B: You came after Michael Scott Morton? What was the sequence?

D: No. Michael was not the person before me.

B: Tom Kochan was in there at some point, wasn't he?

D: Maybe I succeeded Tom. I don't know. I don't remember.

I was area head, and I was a very activist area head. We did all these interviews about "who are we?" and what was our identity. We talked about – I don't remember exactly what came out of that. But we solidified our BPS identity, which at the time was very fragmented, with 7 groups thrown together. We weren't really solidified when I became area head. I don't remember who was on that committee, but it was a great committee that went out and said, "Here are some of the things that we stand for," and "Here is what makes us a group."

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Tenure was obviously a big deal too. Four of us were up for tenure. I remember working super-hard to get all the papers put together, and the binder, etc. etc. The Dean was Lester at the time. He had a meeting with each of the four of us, every 15 minutes at the end of the day, to tell us what the answer was. I was #4 of the four of us. We were all sitting together. We had worked together. It actually was very nice. We shared “what does your statement look like? How do you put this together?” etc. etc. Anyway, it was a pretty traumatic day because #1 went: No. #2 went: No. #3 went: No. We were sitting in the room and everybody was like “Well, Deborah, go face the music.” The assumption was it was going to be “no” for me too. I went into the office with Lester, and he goes “Congratulations!”

And I was totally unprepared, “Ohhh, well, what happened....?” I was so set that it was going to be “no” that I didn’t quite process that the answer was yes. I don’t know, whatever, I lucked out.

Tenure came, and then being area head, and the Perspective piece, and the *Managing for the Future* book. That was a pretty crazy time. I had 2 young children. My father died very unexpectedly.

But anyway, we had these very collaborative meetings and products, which I’ve always liked about this place. It’s the MIT way of there’s a problem, put a group together to solve the problem, come up with ideas, test them out, and keep going.

Then I came up for full. I don’t exactly know what story I’m telling here..... I remember coming up for full and I felt sort of bad coming up for full because I felt I wasn’t as ready as I might have been, and I didn’t know if I wanted to do that. Dick was the dean then, and we had a discussion beforehand, and he suggested I come up. I said, “No one ever writes anything about their personal life in their personal statement, and I think that’s really not useful because I had 3 kids from the time I had tenure to the time I was coming up for full. How can you possibly have major productivity?”

G: That’s productivity by any measure!

D: It wasn’t the publication productivity that one might have liked, but I wrote about having the kids anyway, despite the fact that they told me not to. I thought it was important to make the point. That passed. I was now full.

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After I was full the next really huge change came. Dick Schmalensee was dean, and he said, “You know, we need Leadership.” Bob Thomas had been teaching Leadership in the LFM program but then he left. I said “Well, I do Teams, I’m not really doing Leadership, I don’t really know Leadership...”

Dick pushed a bit, “Come on....”

I said OK. I created a course. I did a bunch of reading and came up with this course. That went reasonably well.

Then they said “We want you to do a program.” And again, true to form – and I don’t know if this is MIT form or my form – but I decided “We need to have Theory, and this Leadership literature is all over the map.” One from situational, two from charismatic, three from.... it was all over the map. I created this committee: Wanda Orlikowski, Tom Malone, Peter Senge, and myself. That was another fantastic experience for me. The four of us spent a year reading all the theory on leadership and interviewing people about their leadership experiences. Everyone was great. And Peter, who could have been condescending, was delightful – his ego was not in that room. He could have dominated and said “This is all about learning organizations,” and he absolutely did not do that. It was really a bottom-up process of brainstorming and learning what was out there. We evolved the Four Capabilities, which again, still gets taught here in all of our programs. We developed that model.

Then we all went through Peter’s Leadership and Mastery course to learn how workshops are done, and we created our own workshop, which we have given to, I don’t know how many – hundreds, thousands – of people., from undergrads to MBAs to Sloan Fellows, to executives all around the world.. I think it’s had a big impact, and that became the core of the Leadership program here.

B: Why don’t you say a few words about the Four Capabilities, so we will have it on the record.

D: Our goal in this committee was to keep the model simple. We looked at all these other leadership models and they were pretty unbelievable with up to 64 capabilities. There’s nothing wrong with that, except that our goal was to be parsimonious. We wanted to keep it really small because the idea – in keeping with MIT, and this is why I really like MIT – we

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wanted to really be able to teach the model in an hour, to be able to have people understand it and then to be able to use it immediately. Then we wanted to do a lot of action learning work, so people could go back to work on Monday morning and use the model in their work. The whole idea was to embed the model into people's DNA of action. .

We developed the Four Capabilities. First was sense-making, pulling on Karl Weick's work, which was, and still is quite controversial because most leadership models don't include sense-making. Karl has written books and articles, and David Obstfeld, Kathy Sutcliffe, and all those people have written a lot in the area of sense-making. Wanda's work was included as well and she was a big proponent of having sensemaking in the model. It has not permeated into the leadership literature but we heard stories of people's leadership, and they report sense-making. If you listen to John Reed, he did sense-making before he created the back office, before he made changes to the retail bank, and when he was CEO and dealing with the debt crisis and the real estate crisis – huge amounts of sense-making was going on. We included sense-making in our model, which is understanding the context in which you are operating.

Karl breaks sensemaking into separate components, which we have done as well. One is Exploration: collecting lots of data, bringing together very different perspectives, getting qualitative/quantitative data, shifting your own mental model so you can see newly emergent patterns in the environment.. Then Mapping the data you have, finding patterns, synthesizing the information that has been found. Cartography and map-making is a big part of sense-making a la Karl. The third part is acting in the system to understand it. Those are the three components of sense-making, or how you understand your context.

Relating: we borrowed a lot of work from Schön and Argyris, inquiry and advocacy. And because I did the X Team work, external boundary spanning is part of relating. We all brought our own voices into the model-making, as well as reading other people.

Inventing: A lot of that was Tom's work. We didn't talk about execution, although that is part of inventing, because we wanted a creative twist. Inventing new structures and processes to get toward the vision.

Visioning: Peter's thing. Not THE VISION, but constant visioning – “Where are we going? How are we creating the image of the future? What can we co-create together?”

Those were the four. Where are we now? Where are we going? How do we build trust and a team? How do we define and move toward the vision? Those are the Four

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Capabilities. Later we added Leadership Signature in the middle. The 4-CAPS are what you do, Leadership Signature is who you are. That brings integrity, and ethics, and other things into the mix.

We created that model, then the workshop. I had the worst nerves of anxiety the first time we did the workshop because I remember there were 18 different exercises. It was a very creative period. We created a lot on our own.

That became part of the Leadership Center. For better or worse, after we had the Leadership Program, Dick asked me to create a Center, he said we needed a Center. I have to say, that was probably one of the worst decisions that I made here, because Dick asked me and I said yes, and that was really a mistake. We were the only center that was started with no resources. The fact that we are still here is quite unbelievable. There are many things that I learned, and for a variety of reasons, I redefined myself. We needed to teach executives then, and I didn't know how to do that. I was a straight academic, and then I was not. The transformation, for me, I don't know if it was for the better or not for the better. I learned how to teach executives. I had a great time, actually. Another peak experience for me at that time came with Don Lessard. Being part of Don's group in BP, we created the BP program, Executive Ed program.

G: Was this the Operations Academy?

D: No. This was the Projects Academy. This pre-dates the Operations Academy. When we created the Projects Academy, Tom Malone and I did the first 12 cadres of that BP program, and that again, for me, was a peak experience because we had Engineering faculty, Strategy faculty, OSG faculty, and it was very cool to figure out "how can we try to change this organization to create cadres and build those cadres and develop leadership." It helped us to develop the Leadership model, the workshop, X Teams. At that point, X Teams weren't X Teams. It was 25 articles on boundary spanning in teams. Then it became X Teams. Henrik Bresman and I wrote the X Team book. Henrik was my doctoral student, and he was doing his PhD on looking at these teams in the pharmaceutical industry. He developed this whole idea of vicarious learning, which we put into the X Team book. He published an Org Science article on

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it, and we put that data into the book. 2007 was when we actually published that. But we started working on it before.

I got enmeshed in the Leadership Center, which meant this great thing with BP, and I really enjoyed that. I actually enjoyed teaching executives. It was fun.. We wrote the X Team book, translating the theory we had developed into practice. Then we wrote, “In Praise of the Incomplete Leader,” which was also in 2007, and a HBR article. All of this became part of my transition into writing and teaching for a managerial audience and focusing on improving practice.

This transition was okay but running the Center became a not-so-great thing for me because we had no money. I had to go raise money. We had to create an advisory group and then figure out how to attract members and choreograph meetings. . Then we had to ask them for money. I quickly realized that this is not what I want to be doing with my life.” It was not a good period for me, I have to say, to be doing that. It took me a while to finally say, “You know what, guys? I’m not doing any more fund raising.” I should have done that a lot earlier, because when I finally said that we got all these resources. I should have just done it at the beginning! Live and learn....

B: Well, you paid your dues, so to speak.

D: And who knows? I have had a much bigger impact on practice, which has always been important to me – I thought about that at David’s funeral. David had an incredible impact on practice, and I will never have the kind of impact that he had, but I am his student, and I actually feel very proud of the work that I have done influencing managers. The reason we wrote the X Team book, and the reason we’ve done so much work with it is because the field has not changed its model of teams, even now. Best-selling texts are all internally focused, and we have created all these great teams, and they’ve done fantastic things. BP, OCP, Li & Fung, Merrill Lynch and Bose are using X Teams. That’s very rewarding and it would not have happened without the Leadership Center.

Also, Michelle Williams was here, and we created the 360 instrument for the 4-Cap model, which we use here. Most of our students take it and get feedback. We have a whole cadre of coaches that we’ve created as part of the Leadership Center. It just expanded.

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B: That's where she is, she's gone to Cornell.

D: She brought it to Cornell. And now Henrik just got tenure at INSEAD and he became the head of the Leadership Center at INSEAD.

B: You have a whole diaspora.

D: Exactly. Now INSEAD, both Singapore and Fontainebleau, started using and coaching the 4-Cap model. Henrik is on sabbatical next year, so we are going to update the model and the 360. We're doing data analysis right now, which is actually pretty interesting. We're going to create an updated X Team survey and X Team simulation as well.

In general I feel pretty good that the School is still teaching these models that I played a critical role in creating— I didn't do them by myself, we had teams of people doing it – but I played a pretty critical role. Right now, the good news is that because we've gotten all these resources back for the Leadership Center in the past several years, and my kids have grown up, I'm back in the research zone. We are doing research with the 360 instrument; we are collecting data right now on X Teams; and we are writing an article on leadership at all levels of the firm. . We have the individual model, the team model, and now we're at the organizational level of distributed leadership.

And that's what this place is about: this deep understanding about particular phenomena. Researchers and practitioners talk about distributed leadership all the time. But what does it look like on the ground? We don't really know that much about how it is enacted in real organizations.. That's what I hope is the next chapter.

B: When you say "we", who is involved? Are there PhD students? Or research affiliates?

D: Yes, we had a research affiliate, Elaine Backman, who was at the Leadership Center, so that was another plus for the Leadership Center. And Kate Isaacs, who is a PhD

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student, who is co-author on this article that we're writing, which I actually think is going to be two articles. They say we can do it in one, and I don't think so, but we'll see.

That brings us to where we currently are.

B: Let me connect it back to what we used to call Leaders for Manufacturing. I know you were on the ROTC Committee at one point because of the Leadership Center? We ought to get some of that on the record.

D: We had a big discussion about the Leadership Center. Is it the Sloan Leadership Center, or is it the MIT Leadership Center? Dick felt very strongly that we would be the MIT Leadership Center. But how do we serve MIT is the big question.

We think of ourselves as serving MIT in a number of ways. One is that we are the R&D engine of ideas and models and theories and resources about leadership. That has played out in a number of ways. One is all of that our work went into the Leader to Leader program run by HR at MIT.

B: That comes out of the Human Resource department.

D: That's right. We trained all those people. A number of us – Ed Schein John Van Maanen, and I taught the Three Lenses, 4-Caps, and X Teams, and then the HR folks took over. It's actually been very exciting because they created their own cases that had to do with an educational environment, which we had never looked at, and their own exercises. They've had multiple iterations of that program..

We've also trained a number of faculty from other areas: Aero & Astro, from Real Estate. We also have trained individual faculty members and staff who wanted to teach leadership, so they came and went through a lot of our courses. We do that still. A guy from the LGO program just came in and he wanted to teach and do some case creation as well. We created the Robin Chase case last year for MBA orientation. And now one of the LGO students wants to teach it. We brief anyone who wants to come and get trained.. He's going to teach Robin Chase, and the 4-Cap model to the undergrads.

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And there is the Gordon Leadership Program in Engineering. We exported the 4-Cap model to them as well as some of our other models, exercises and cases.

We also educate. Over IAP we run this 3-day leadership program based on the 4-Cap model. It used to be that it was only MBAs and Sloan Fellows who went to that but now we have graduate students from all over MIT. Then we have E-Lab, G-Lab, S-Lab and Leadership lab, which use some of our team models.

G: It's great that you make this connection because it seemed to me – does Leadership Lab kind of “seed” other labs that followed? Or were they totally independent?

D: They happened separately. Now we have opened that up to the leadership of the graduate students. So we are teaching leadership to the graduate student leadership and we have quite a few Graduate Student Council leaders. And we've actually expanded beyond that.

We've created a huge number of electives. Now LGO is being taught by Lee Hafrey and we have 15 electives that we run in the MBA program. We've created SIP. We've created quite an impact on the curriculum here at the Sloan School. This year is a little different, but we've run about 50 leadership workshops a year since SIP was created.

We created SIP, so that was another committee where we re-did the curriculum. That was Andy Lo, Rob Freund, Duncan Simester, and myself. Another great committee. We cut the core down, and we did major curriculum review. Part of that was we cut the core, I don't know how we did this. Usually redoing the curriculum is next to impossible and we did it with almost no flesh wounds! We did our homework.

B: It's a miracle.

D: We met with people beforehand, and got buy-in. We cut the core, and we created SIP. The Leadership Center then took most of that that over. I used to run it all by myself but now it has been taken over by Tracy Purinton, the Director of the MIT Leadership Program and other groups.

G: Well, you transferred it into the system.

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D: That's right, it is up and running. We have all these electives. We have all these lectures, and a coaching cadre. We are coaching all of the EMBA's, all of the SFs, and half of the MBA students. All of them get leadership coaching based on the 4-Cap model and survey. At least that's where we start, and then people go off on their own. They can choose from all kinds of electives, from Leadership Signature, to organizational design. There is leadership lab, with Peter Senge and Wanda Orlikowski and Otto Scharmer has a course on U theory. Daena has a course on innovation. We hired Pat Bentley, who was an executive coach and she both teaches and helps to run the coaching program. We have developed training materials as well. There's an electronic leadership development tool that Tracy Purinton developed. Now we just hired Hal Gregersen, so the Leadership Center has an external face. Hal goes around the world giving these talks for the MIT Leadership Center. He also blogs in *Business Week*, *Fortune*, *Forbes*, etc., which is good.

G: We always ask people, as they look back, the thing that they are proudest of in terms of your career here at MIT. I think in many ways you have talked about it in terms of the teams that you've been a part of. Your energy shifted every time you talked about that.

D: Yes. I think those were, for me, the best times intellectually, motivationally. And I'm pretty proud of the fact that we have left the legacy of these models that others – the whole OSG Group, Kate Kellogg, and Roberto Fernandez are all teaching the Three Lenses. We gave them that. The good news is that it didn't stop with us. They continue to innovate and change and improve the things we did. That would be it: Three Lenses, 4-Caps, X Teams, Distributed Leadership and theory from around the world. I hope there's another chapter to come.

B: I have to ask you a question related to a career for women. Some of your early publications carried your maiden name, and now most of your publications carry your married name. I'm sure it's an issue that women face as they unfold their career.

D: Yes. That was a really big decision for me. A lot of my female colleagues were all angry at me for doing that.

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B: Was it Gladstein?

D: Yes, it was Gladstein. In fact, I don't get adequate citation counts because I have two names. Yes, but anyway, that's neither here nor there. I think if I had been further along in my career I would not have made that decision. But because it was still relatively early, I made that decision. Besides, now I have a last name that starts with A, which is great for publications! And everyone in our family has the same last name. So that is a plus as well.

B: It's a big decision, at least in this culture. I know there are other parts of the world where men take on their mother's name.

G: The only person I have ever known who did that was Joel Cutcher-Gershenfeld.

B: Right, he took on his wife's maiden name. Anyway, this has been a great journey that you've taken us through. What you've brought to the School is a terrific contribution. I was aware of all the things that have blossomed from what you've done. I've been aware of what you've been doing within the School, but not the reach.

D: I think most of it has been pretty positive. I don't know if I went off course for some period of time, but maybe that's part of life. Live and learn.

B: Anything else that you would like to put on the record?

The other piece is, for me right now, I have the total privilege of being part of the MIT Haiti Initiative. That has also been incredibly powerful for me. I feel badly that I've spent 30 years here and I know very few people outside of Sloan. One of my things to do in the next bit of time is to spread out and meet more people. One foray into that has been the MIT Haiti Initiative, where I have become very good friends with Michelle DeGraaf, who is a professor in the Linguistics Department. MIT has done great things in Haiti. We have changed the STEM

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curriculum to be in the Creole language, and brought new modes of teaching. We helped them after the earthquake to reestablish a better educational system, which is pretty amazing. The former prime minister is coming here again, and we have a lot of connections to him.

I went there last June to do this leadership workshop for the entire government of Haiti. We had the whole government there, all the ministers and the prime minister. We went to the president's house. It was a real high for me, as was the work with the Dalai Lama. It was a total privilege to go to India to meet him and then to run a program with him at MIT.

As I think about moving ahead, I am happy to report that being at the Sloan School, for me, is not going to be just about work in the for-profit arena, but increasingly for global warming issues, and how to use distributed leadership for important problems of our time. We started that, and there's a lot more to go.

B: Thank you!

END OF INTERVIEW