

In tribute to Michael Radnor (from his co-worker for 30 years, and his daughter)

A truly unique individual, Mike Radnor studied Mechanical and Production Engineering at the Imperial College in London, and, although at the time the British educational system did not combine a classical education with a scientific one, he was able to simultaneously pursue a second degree from the London School of Economics studying on the cross-town bus. Later, he went on to be awarded a doctorate in Industrial Engineering and Management Sciences from the Northwestern University. The focus of his doctorate was technology innovation and R&D Management. Although he was already married with one small child and another on the way, he completed what his advisor deemed excellent work in just six months. But the professor refused to accept it right away stating that he should wait another six before resubmitting to meet 'normal expectations'. He joined the faculty of Northwestern University in 1964, and shortly thereafter was offered tenure. As one of the original professors of what became the Kellogg School of Management (where he taught for the next 50 years) he founded and initially chaired the school's Department of Organizational Behavior (1968–1975). Professor Radnor consulted with many large and small firms in the USA and with many international agencies. During his tenure at the Northwestern University, he raised over \$50 million in research grants. He also advised scores of graduate and doctoral students. But who was he?

This is probably best answered by focusing on his fascinations. In college one of these was the history of innovation, and how some of the most important innovations happened when two old technologies that seemed to have no connection were brought together to create something new. His nickname at the Kellogg School was the networking king, because he believed that greater value could be achieved if you knew who to go to with your questions, and involved them in your projects, rather than by working independently. As such, in a time well before social media existed, he was always utilising his extensive personal networks as a form of intellectual crowd sourcing, believing that the essence to success in innovation lay in being able to effectively build teams of individuals with disparate knowledge bases and developing strong communications both up and down value chains, as well as across.

To that end, in 1972 he started and ran for many years, the Center for the Interdisciplinary Study of Science and Technology at Northwestern, one of the very first of its kind in the country, with the goal of breaking down the ivory towers that he saw and disliked between departments. In addition to its other pursuits, the centre hosted an 18-year regular brown bag lunch program that stimulated professors from various departments and others to share knowledge and cross-pollinate. He later went on to direct other applied research centres at the Northwestern University, each focused on this central concept of bringing together divergent teams.

Reflecting his entrepreneurial spirit and ability to leverage his networks, although he knew nothing about the topic himself, when he learned that after communism Polish bankers had no idea how to establish a critical clearinghouse and to run their banks using Western models, he pulled together a team of some of the best local experts from both academia and industry, procured US government funding and direct support from the

banks, and setup training programs. These ultimately supported over 800 bank managers (and also resulted in substantial purchases from US firms).

Finally, reflecting his strong orientation to *apply* the theoretical, some 15 years ago, he became the Co-Founder and Chair of what became the Global Advanced Technology Innovation Consortium (GATIC), which brought together an international mix of senior managers from industry and university faculty to discuss the development and application of technology tools and models for managing highly volatile and uncertain emerging and converging technology domains. In 2013, Professor Radnor teamed with UK-based Emerald Publishing House in conducting workshops to explore a new format for academic journals that would be interactive and stimulate and integrate active participation from universities and a number of firms. Including ‘proactive abstracts’ that considered cross-sector application of materials, the intention was to break new ground in the innovation management field by increasing cross-disciplinary research while stimulating practice and action. And, while he was still working as a full time faculty, at the time of his sudden death at 81 years young, he was helping to organise an international conference on the interplay of cutting-edge science and art. Recent Nobel Prize winners were expected to participate.