**Women of LGO Presents: Jan Klein on Leadership May 23, 2012**

How has the program changed in the way it teaches leadership over the years?

There have been four phases. During the first few years, Don Davis led the way. He was the LFM leadership program. In response to a request for a greater leadership emphasis, Bob Thomas developed the Universe Within and introduced the leadership development framework of tools, practice, and reflection that we still use today.  In the third phase, LFM leadership became more of a typical academic course with a greater focus on the academic side of leadership theory. Finally, about ten years ago, Tom Kochan and I realized that leadership should be integrated into the fabric of the LFM/LGO curriculum rather than a stand-alone course. That’s when we developed the two-year leadership journey that starts during the summer, takes advantage of the internship as a leadership practice field and ends during the final semester.

How have the models for leadership changed in the last 10 years?

What we have found is that no single model is optimal.  Leadership is personal and situational.   With that said, there are core competencies which the four capabilities framework, or what some of you knew as the Sloan leadership model, outlines: sense making, relating, visioning, and inventing.  You can read more about that model on the Sloan web page.

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How do you see the models changing in the next 10 years?

Given that the program has changed and there is more focus on global supply change roles, I think you will see a more strategic approach. Leigh Hafrey will be assuming my role and I expect him to incorporate a more classical view of leadership with more material from great thinkers and philosophers, including great works of literature.  Also, he has developed the ethics module for the MBA program and I am sure that he will bring more of a focus on business ethics.

What is your definition of leadership?

I have tried not to define it over the years!  If I had to say my definition is "enabling others to do great things!"

What leadership qualities do you think are most important to become a world-class leader?

First and foremost…passion!   Passion ignites others to follow!

Second…caring for others.

Do you see differences in the way women and men lead? If so, what are those differences?

Yes and no!   One needs to be careful about stereotypes.  There will always be a statistical distribution.   Then, there is the issue of expectations.   The leadership differences are more pronounced in certain industries and generations.   One thing I have seen is that women tend to reject traditional norms about career paths and narrow definitions of leadership based on legacy perspectives.

What has been the highlight of your study of leadership at MIT?

The alumni utilization study because it gave me the opportunity to interview alums and track their careers.   The study looked at factors for becoming a successful change integrator.

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What is the work that still needs to be done to teach leadership at the world-class level?

We need to continue to enhance the global leadership aspects of the program.  In the early days of LFM, we were actually pretty domestic.   Today, we are becoming more global.  We need to continue to teach and gain appreciation for virtual, global leadership.

What do you feel are the best ways to advance one's leadership capabilities?

First, get outside your comfort zone.  Take on challenging new assignments…even if you don't know how to do it all from the outset.   Second, schedule reflection as a key part of every day.   Third, regularly assess your impact on others and keep honing your skills such that your impact on others is very positive.

What about mentorships? How important are mentorships as a means of advancing one's leadership?

I am a strong advocate of mentorships and yet mentorship can be a double-edged sword.  Don't have just 1-2 mentors, have many mentors at different levels to bounce ideas off of…mentorships help provide that.   But recognize that it is your career and not your mentor’s. Some mentors expect you to live up to their personal career desires and that might not fit yours.

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What one piece of advice would you share with current students and alumnae of LGO regarding their leadership journey?

Find your passion and be yourself!  If you don't know what you are passionate about, have long conversations with significant others, friends & family.  Have them ask you questions.  When you hear your voice getting excited and your pace of speaking picking-up…that is likely something you are passionate about.  Sometimes we need to let go of things and surrender…perhaps it is time for a career change!

What is your favorite leadership quote?

It’s a long one and more about transformational leadership, both personal and organizational. It’s from James Baldwin, a civil rights leader from the 1960’s who happened to be black, gay and lived much of his life in Paris.

*Any real change implies the breakup of the world as one has always known it, the loss of all that gave one an identity, the end of safety. And at such a moment, unable to see and not daring to imagine what the future will now bring forth, one clings to what one knew, or thought one knew; to what one possessed or dreamed that one possessed. Yet, it is only when a man is able, without bitterness or self-pity, to surrender a dream he has long cherished or a privilege he has long possessed that he is set free--he has set himself free--for higher dreams, for greater privileges.*