

## **Joseph E. McGrath Award Presentation**

**July 23, 2010**

**Presented by Laurie R. Weingart, President, INGRoup**

The “Joseph E. McGrath Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Study of Groups” has three fundamental criteria. First, you gotta be a groups researcher. Second, your work has to have had a major impact on other groups researchers, and has stood the test of time. And third, this being an interdisciplinary association, your work should not only have influenced your home discipline, but other disciplines as well.

The winner of the inaugural Joseph E. McGrath Award has satisfied each of these criteria in a way that few others have.

The nominators wrote,

“I can think of no more appropriate recipient of the award than Joe's most accomplished student, and the scholar whose work has shaped the field of groups research most profoundly for the last forty and more years.”

“His research bridges the boundary between academic rigor and practical application like few others, as evidenced by its enduring quality in a field in which little consensus exists.”

“For 45 years he has studied what happens when groups of people get together to do important things – how teams work to save lives in hospitals, how pilots work to keep the skies safe for daily transportation, how teams make the aesthetic aspects of life transcendental by producing music that is truly creative, and how U.S. intelligence teams must understand culture and group behavior to achieve their mission of security.”

And finally,

“I know that he is most proud of his contributions to graduate education. Above all, he has strived to nurture and grow people into the people they should be instead of clones of him. It is a joy to watch him perform the many daily acts that help his colleagues and students, and to do so selflessly and with genuine and deep interest in the work of others.”

Please join me in congratulating J. Richard Hackman as the first recipient of the Joseph E. McGrath award.

Richard earned his PhD in social psychology from the University of Illinois in 1966, spent 22 years on the faculty at Yale University, then moved to Harvard University in 1986. During his career he’s published over 100 articles and book chapters and 10 books. His first journal article was published in 1967 and was coauthored with Joe McGrath.

Hackman went on to define the area of work design with Ed Lawler and with Gary Oldham with their seminal papers on job characteristics. During that same time period, Hackman published a paper with Charles Morris on group performance that would set the stage for a generation of subsequent research by others (including myself). In that work, Hackman identified three conditions of team effectiveness that recognized that the effectiveness of groups should not be limited to focusing on what they produce, but also on socioemotional outcomes such as satisfaction, cohesion, and team member learning and personal growth. This work changed the value proposition for the role of groups in organizations and shaped much of the current group research today.

Since then Hackman has become known for examining teams in their work context – including orchestras, airline cockpits, and production lines – to better understand the role of leadership in teams. He developed multi-level theories using the concept of bracketing - recognizing that a phenomena at one level of aggregation (say groups) is influenced what happens one level up (for example, in the organizational unit) and down (for example, individual characteristics).

But Professor Hackman has had significant impact on group research in other ways as well. As one of his letter writers pointed out, “His list of students reads

like a who's who in group's research." Several of his former students were amongst his nominators for the award and their gratitude to him was clear.

His impact on the field reaches far and wide. While he has published primarily in the fields of social psychology, organizational behavior, and industrial psychology, his work is cited in all social science fields. A quick search on google scholar identifies 5 of his publications that have been cited thousands of times and 6 more that have been cited over 500 times.

But those are just numbers; let me demonstrate his influence with a little exercise. First, I'd like everyone who was a student of Richard's to stand up.

- Student
- Collaborator
- Student of a student
- Student of a student of a student
- directly influenced by his work
- Cited Hackman's work (at this point the entire room was standing)

Look around and you'll understand why the committee chose J. Richard Hackman for the inaugural Joseph E. McGrath Lifetime Achievement Award. Please join me in congratulating Richard for this award.