

# piepiper of change

**Barbara Waugh, co-founder of World e-Inclusion, is a down-to-earth mixture of wise woman, social crusader, corporate operative—and perhaps most importantly—listener and catalyst of dreams.**

**By Deborah D. Hudson**

**A**RMED WITH A SENSE OF individual responsibility forged in the crucible of more than two decades of social activism—along with a Ph.D. in organizational psychology—Barbara Waugh is a rare find. She's a dreamer with an action plan.

Firmly convinced that legions of agents, capable of world moral leadership, lay smoldering in the "belly of the beast"—a global corporation—Barbara embarked on a quest to ferret them out and fire them up.

Since her 1984 entry into Hewlett-Packard as staffing manager in the Santa Clara Division, she has been a tireless advocate of positive change. At HP Labs, she was actually given the title, "Worldwide Change Manager."

"What better place to wage my battle than in one of the most powerful agents for change on the planet—a giant company in a world where companies, even more than nations, shape the future?" Barbara asks. From the moment she made the shift from the world of nonprofits, she committed herself to the dream of helping HP raise the bar on corporate citizenship.

Barbara has kicked up a lot of dust during her 17-year search-and-rescue mission through the cubicles of corporate America. Her actions and encouragement changed HP history. She shepherded projects to transform HP Labs into the world's best industrial



**ON THE MOVE** Barbara turns an ordinary jaunt through HP Labs into an impromptu technical conference with HP Engineer Chandrakant Patel (middle) and a timely connection with Mary Bollman (below), HP executive assistant.



research lab; acted as midwife for the Grassroots Basic Research program; ramped up Senior Scientist Sid Liebes' idea to build the one-mile "Walk Thru Time"; and championed policy changes benefiting thousands of HP employees.



**DREAM WEAVER AT WORK** "Barbara sees this bigger picture," says Eugenie Prime (background). "Knowing her has made me a better person."

Her own walk through time is a testament to the transformative power that is unleashed when an original thinker commits heart and soul to fostering greatness in the people of a one-of-a-kind corporation.

Change, in fact, is a lifelong specialty for the pixyish powerhouse. Slipping the bonds of her conservative Southern upbringing early, Barbara launched out solo for Europe at age 17. There she traveled and attended universities in Germany, France and Spain before returning to graduate school in the United States.

Graduate studies at a Midwestern university took on less carefree dimensions when she and a group of other female students filed a long-overdue class action suit against the university for sex and race discrimination. Major improvements in academic life for women students ensued and Barbara, the activist, blossomed.

She was active in the civil rights, peace and women's movements, collected two masters and her Ph.D. degree and eventually became director of the Women's Center for the nine schools of the Graduate Theological Union (GTU) in Berkeley, California.

It was at GTU that she met her future life partner, Stacy Cusulos—the person whom after 25 years together, Barbara calls "the co-creator of all that matters in my life." She and Stacy are the parents of two adopted children, Alexis, 13, and Jordan, 11.

The unusual mix of disciplines she chose—comparative literature, divinity and psychol-

ogy—all contribute to the way Barbara sees her role. Not as leader by rank, but rather as leader by reflection. "My role is to create mirrors that show the whole what the parts are doing—through coffee talks and small meetings, through building networks and through bringing people together who have similar or complementary ideas," she says.

Laurie Mittelstadt, HP Labs design engineer and one of Barbara's favorite "shoulder-to-shoulder" partners, recalls her first collaboration with Barbara and the resulting Technical Women's Conference (TWC) in 1991. "Darlene Solomon, now a lab manager in Agilent Labs, suggested I talk with Barb about support for the conference. I was skeptical at first, thinking 'God, save me from another HR manager,' but I was quickly bowled over by her. Not only did she understand the need for a TWC within HP, but she also upped the ante to include global feminism. It turned out that the conference could not have happened without her and was much more organizationally, strategically and philosophically sound because of her inputs."

Barbara's basic tool for sparking change is forging connections between people. She is a master at attracting people capable of unique, ingenious solutions—positive deviants—and connecting them with others to harness their dreams.

Eugenie Prime, manager of HP's Corporate Libraries, bears witness to this ability to assess people and see their connections with others. "I remember going upstairs, talking to her and feeling this amazing connection. I used to think 'I'm special,' but then I found out—she listens and connects with everyone'

"Barbara is always open to possibilities that

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Barbara Waugh sees HP as a living organism—more like a garden in need of cultivation than a machine made up of interchangeable parts. Here are a few of the principles she calls her "gardening tools" for corporate revolutionaries. A full explanation of these tools and their use is included in her book *The Soul in the Computer: Story of a Corporate Revolutionary* scheduled for release this fall.

#### / Radical stand—put a stake in the ground

I Remember who you work for—operate for the greater good

Commit—commitment overcomes doubt

P Keep the faith

Be the change you want to see

#### Radical moves—recruit co-conspirators

Tap the strength of your relationships

Start a conversation—and listen!

Build your cadre

#### Radical tools

I Scale up/scale down—

change your perspective

Amplify positive deviance—look for what is going right and shine the light there

Turn "enemies" into allies—find something to appreciate

Reframe the context of what you're doing—context is a choice

P Play with whoever shows up

Tweak don't toss

I Hold up a mirror



» you never thought of. She listens to people's dreams and ideas and then enables them. She exemplifies the positive deviance that she's always talking about. I see Barbara as a sort of Pied Piper. People are drawn to her and she just keeps making the most perfect connections."

Joel Birnbaum, senior technical advisor to the CEO and Barbara's boss for nine years, has high praise for her style. "Barbara practices a kind of organizational *jujitsu* where

tremendous change. She encourages the understanding of each person's role in the HP reinvention journey.

"There are two huge overarching paradigms for understanding organizational transformation and change," she says. "One is O.D., Organization Development. That's where you get this vision—which is kind of an advanced plan with some inspirational language wrapped around it. You lay it out and you execute to it. Everyone falls in line and each level of planning cascades down from the one above it.

"Then there's another paradigm—organization as community. Here you use the tools of community organizing, which are about tribe making and going through experiences that have something at risk and the bonding that happens. A company that has constituted itself as community is a very different kind of company than an organization full of interchangeable parts. It's a living systems model."

Barbara believes that transformation at HP doesn't have to be an "either/or" proposition. "Maybe sometimes it's appropriate for the hierarchy



Barbara shares a light-hearted moment at home with (from left) son, Jordan, daughter, Alexis, and life partner, Stacy Cusulos. "They give me a million times more than I could ever give them."

leverage of grassroots beliefs and talents can produce dramatic results, amplified because people from all parts and levels of a group are able to contribute to a goal or vision that they have helped to shape."

Barbara is passionate about her mission. Finding the positive deviants, holding up the mirror and listening to people's dreams of what "HP for the World" means hold special relevance for these times of

to kick in. But I think it is truer to the HP community if we stop thinking of ourselves as interchangeable parts and start inviting the whole person to work. Not just the interchangeable engineer or scientist or administrator, but all of our talents, wisdom and insight need to show up every day.

"We all need to ask ourselves what contributions the world needs that we are uniquely positioned to offer. Not what can we do for HP or for our division, but what can we do for the world through HP and through our division, and through our technology, infrastructure and appliances?" Barbara continues, "We are all responsible for inventing the new HP. Once each of us assumes that responsibility, the cynicism and doubt will disappear. There won't be time for it. We'll all be too busy."

Read about positive deviance at <http://hpnow.corp.hp.com/thoughts/othervoices/2000/000921.htm>. Find more about World e-Inclusion at <http://www.hp.com/e-inclusion>. •