

## ACKOFF 100 Panel discussion

Russ Ackoff: The Vincent Van Gogh of Management? Under-appreciated during his lifetime but recognized after his death as a leader and prophet. What evidence do we have?

**Moderator**  
**Vince Barabba**



In an extraordinary career as political campaign survey researcher, business market researcher, intelligence gatherer, and knowledge developer, **Vince Barabba** has helped Governors, Congressmen and US Presidents – as well as the Boards of several of America’s leading corporations – take some critically important decisions.

Vince twice served as director of the U.S. Bureau of the Census—the only person appointed to that position by U.S. Presidents of different political parties - Presidents Nixon, Ford and Carter to be Census Bureau Director; and Reagan and GHW Bush to be the U.S. Representative to the Population Commission of the United Nations.

Co-founder and chairman of Market Insight Corporation, Vince serves as a Commissioner of the California Citizen Redistricting Commission, and he is chairman of The State of the USA, a nonprofit corporation providing quality information to the American public on key changing societal, economic, and environmental conditions. He was, until 2003, General Manager of Corporate Strategy and Knowledge Development at General Motors, where he conceived and devised OnStar and MyProductAdvisor.

**Panelist**  
**Bill Bellows**



Following a 26-year career that spanned ownership of Rocketdyne by Rockwell International, Boeing, United Technologies, and Aerojet, and after serving for 12 years on the board of the Deming Institute, in October 2016, **Bill Bellows** became the Institute’s Deputy Director. In this role, he worked in collaboration with the Institute's leadership and partners to guide our worldwide efforts. Bill also served as chairman of the Deming Medal Committee for the American Society of Quality, member of the editorial board and columnist for the UK’s *Lean Management Journal*, and was the founding president of the In2:InThinking Network, a position he held from 2001 through 2016.

While integrating the management methods of W. Edwards Deming with Genichi Taguchi’s “Quality by Design” system and Russ Ackoff’s systems thinking, coupled with Edward de Bono’s thinking tools, he pioneered the development and application of ideas that include Mixed Model Management, Macro System Models, Micro System Models, Purposeful Resource Leadership, Category & Continuum Thinking, and Investment Thinking.

Bill has just retired from his many previous roles and is now teaching in the MS program at Cal State Northridge and undergraduate and graduate programs for Southern Utah University.

**Panelist**  
**Derek Cabrera**



**Derek Cabrera** is a systems scientist, Professor, and social entrepreneur and is internationally known for his work in systems thinking, systems leadership, and systems modeling. He teaches systems thinking and organizational leadership and design at Cornell University, is senior scientist at Cabrera Research Lab, and Co-Founder and Chief Science Officer of Plectica.

He is author of eight books, co-editor of the *Routledge Handbook of Systems Thinking* and is credited with discovering the underlying rules of systems thinking.

He was previously a Research Fellow at the Santa Fe Institute (SFI) for the Study of Complex Systems and National Science Foundation IGERT Fellow in Nonlinear Systems in the Department of Theoretical and Applied Mechanics at Cornell University. He serves on the United States Military Academy at West Point's Systems Engineering Advisory Board. His contributions to the field of systems thinking have been integrated into NSF, NIH, and USDA-NIFA programs, K-12, higher education, NGOs, federal agencies, corporations, and business schools.

**Panelist**  
**Laura Cabrera**



**Laura Cabrera** teaches Systems Thinking and Modeling and Systems Leadership at Cornell University at the Institute for Policy Affairs. She is also senior researcher at the Cabrera Research Lab and Chief Research Officer of Plectica. She is also acting Executive Director of ThinkWater, a USDA-funded initiative designed to implement systems thinking nationwide in water-based research, extension, and education.

She was a senior researcher at Cornell University's Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research and has more than fifteen years of research and teaching experience focusing on families and social policy. She previously conducted research at the National Academy of Sciences Institute of Medicine, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the U.S. Department of Justice, and has authored five books. She is a member of the United States Military Academy at West Point's Systems Engineering Advisory Board. She specializes in translating cutting-edge research from the learning sciences for broad application--whether in corporations, schools, nonprofits, government agencies, or for parents interested in the psychosocial development of their children.

**Panelist**  
**Jamshid Gharajedaghi**



**Jamshid Gharajedaghi**, Managing Partner and CEO of INTERACT, is one of the original contributors to the development of the third generation of systems thinking, where iterative, interactive design forms the core of Systems Methodology. He has more than 25 years' experience in the application of systems methodology. His work has taken him into corporations and government agencies worldwide.

Formerly Adjunct Professor of Systems Sciences and the Director of the Busch Center at The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania (1979-1986), he began his career with IBM's World Trade Corporation where he served as a Senior Systems Engineer (1963-1969). He left IBM to become CEO of the Industrial Management Institute (IMI) and was a member of board of trustees for Azad University, Iran. From 1999 until his retirement this year, he was Adjunct Professor of Systems thinking at the Villanova University School of Business.

**Panelist**  
**Venard Scott Koerwer**



Venard **Scott Koerwer** is VP of Strategy, Planning and Communication, Vice Dean for Graduate studies, and Professor of Organizational Systems and Innovation at Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine in Scranton, PA.

Scott has developed and implemented programs and educational partnerships in Africa, Asia, Europe, the U.K., the Middle East and the U.S. He previously served as the 21st president of Newberry College and a faculty member of the business department; deputy dean and clinical professor of management at The Darla Moore School of Business, University of South Carolina; associate dean of professional (graduate and executive) programs and services at the Robert H. Smith School of Business, University of Maryland (working with Ackoff who was a Senior Fellow); and as a director in the Executive Education Division of the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.

A lifelong teacher and learner, Scott is also earning additional doctorates from Thomas Jefferson University as member of the Doctor of Management in Strategic Leadership and Doctor of Philosophy in Complex Systems Leadership communities.

**Panelist  
Gerald Midgley**



**Gerald Midgley** is Professor of Systems Thinking in the Business School at the University of Hull and holds Adjunct Professorships at the University of Queensland, Australia; Mälardalen University, Sweden; the University of Canterbury, New Zealand; and Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. Gerald was Director of the Centre for Systems Studies at Hull from 1997 to 2003 and from 2010 to 2014.

Gerald has had more than 300 papers published on systems thinking, action research and stakeholder engagement, and has been involved in a wide variety of public sector, community development and resource management projects. He is the editor of *Systems Thinking* the four-volume set from Sage Publications (2003) recently in print again after being unavailable. This set brings together classic and contemporary writings that cross the entire breadth of the systems field from 1913 to 2003 and was assembled with advice from an international advisory board of systems thinking luminaries.

Gerald's interests are in philosophy, methodology and practice, and in their interrelationships. With Mike Jackson, Bob Flood and Werner Ulrich he originated Critical Systems Thinking.

**Panelist  
Nick Pudar**



**Nick Pudar** is Managing Director of StackView Advisory a consultancy focused on addressing complex business strategies through applied systems design and analysis. He is also Senior Lecturer at MIT teaching System Dynamics simulation modeling targeted at designing new businesses and business process innovations.

Previously, Nick was Director of Corporate Strategy for General Motors; and Vice President of Business Development and Planning at Onstar Corporation. He worked his way to these roles starting as a co-op student at GM of Canada's Windsor Transmission Plant and then a member of the Stamping Plant Modernization team in the Chevrolet-Pontiac-Canada Group.

Nick also serves on the board of directors for the Mobility Open Blockchain Initiative, a nonprofit organization promoting standards and accelerating adoption of blockchain, distributed ledger, and related technologies.