

DEBORAH ANCONA

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Seley Distinguished Professor of Management

Founder of the MIT Leadership Center

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Cambridge, MA 02142

Education

B.A., Psychology, University of Pennsylvania

M.S., Psychology, University of Pennsylvania

Ph.D., Management, Columbia University

Boards

Penn Graduate School of Education; MIT Hillel

Academic Employment

Assistant Professor, 1982-1986
Tuck School of Management

Assistant Professor, 1986-1990
MIT Sloan School of Management

Associate Professor, 1990-1992
MIT Sloan School of Management

Visiting Associate Professor, 1990-1992
Harvard Business School

Tenured Associate Professor, 1992-1998
MIT Sloan School of Management

Seley Distinguished Professor of Management, 1998-Present
MIT Sloan School of Management

Director of the MIT Leadership Center 2003-2018

Visiting Scholar, 2010-2011
Center for Public Leadership,
Harvard University

Books

Ancona, D., *Family Ghosts at Work*, contract signed with Harper Collins.

Ancona, D., and Bresman, H. *x-teams: how to build teams that lead, innovate, and succeed*. Harvard Business School Press, 2007. Translated into Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Russian, 2009. Second Edition, August, 2023.

Ancona, D., Kochan, T., Maureen, S., Van Maanen, J., and Westney, E. *Managing for the Future: Organizational Behavior and Processes*. South-Western College Publishing, 1996, 1999 (2nd Ed.), 2005 (3rd Ed.).

Hanlon, M., Nadler, D., and Gladstein, D. *Attempting Work Reform: The Case of Parkside Hospital*, New York: Wiley, Inc., 1985.

Selected Academic Articles

Ancona, D., Bresman, H., Mortensen, M., "Shifting Team Research after COVID-19: Evolutionary and Revolutionary Change." *Journal of Management Studies*, Oct., 2020. doi: 10.1111/JOMS. 12651

Ancona, D. "Sensemaking: Framing and Acting in the Unknown." *The Handbook for Teaching Leadership: Knowing, Doing, and Being*. S. Snook, N. Nohria, R. Khurana (eds.), Sage, 2011.

Ancona, D., Bresman, H. and Caldwell, D. "The X-Factor: Six Steps to Leading High-Performing Teams." *Organizational Dynamics*, Elsevier Press, 2009.

Ancona, D., Okhuysen, G., and Perlow, L. "Taking Time to Integrate Temporal Research." *Academy of Management Review*, October 2001, 26: 512-529.

Ancona, D., Goodman, P., Lawrence, B., and Tushman, M. "Time: A New Research Lens." *Academy of Management Review*, October 2001, 26: 645-663.

Ancona, D. and Chong, C. "Entrainment: Pace, Cycle, and Rhythm in Organizational Behavior," *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 1996, 18: 251-284.

Ancona, D. and Caldwell, D. "Bridging the Boundary: External Activity and Performance in Organizational Teams," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, December 1992, 37: 634-665.

Ancona, D. and Caldwell, D. "Demography and Design: Predictors of New Product Team Performance." *Organization Science*, 1992, 3(3): 321-341.

Ancona, D. and Reilly, N. "Group Decision Making Under Threat: The Tycoon Game." *Academy of Management Journal*, 1985, 28: 613-627.

Ancona, D. "Groups in Context: A Model of Task Group Effectiveness." *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 1984, 29: 499-517.

Selected Blogs/Posts

Ancona, D. xNEWS, 2024—Bimonthly newsletter on LinkedIn.

Ancona, D. and Isaacs K. "How to Give Your Team the Right Amount of Autonomy," HBR.org, July, 2019.

Ancona, D. and Gregersen, H. "The Power of Leaders Who Focus on Solving Problems" HBR.org, April 20, 2018.

Ancona, D. and Gregersen, H. "What Kind of Leadership Works Best at Your Company?" HBR.org, March 19, 2018.

Ancona, D. "A year for leadership in America." *The Hill*, January 2018.

Selected Practitioner Articles

Ancona, D., and Bresman, H., "Turn Your Teams Inside Out." Sloan Management Review, Winter, 2023.

Ancona, D., and Perkins, D., "Family Ghosts in the Executive Suite." Harvard Business Review, Winter, 2022.

Ancona, D., and Perkins, D., "How to banish 'bad family ghosts' from the executive suite." Latin Trade, Third Quarter, 2022.

Ancona, D., Williams, M., Gerlach, G., "The Overlooked Key to Leading Through Chaos: Sensemaking" Sloan Management Review, Fall 2020, Vol. 62, No.1, 33-40

Ancona, D. "Five Rules for Leading in a Digital World." Sloan Management Review, Winter, 2020.

Ancona, D., Backman, E., and isaacs, K. "Nimble Leadership: Walking the Line Between Creativity and Chaos" Harvard Business Review, July/August, 2019.

Ancona, D. and Bresman H. "The Five Key Capabilities of Effective Leadership." Insead Knowledge, November 14, 2018.

Ancona, D. "The Secret Ingredient for Great Leadership: Sensemaking." Latin Trade, Third Quarter 2018.

Ancona, D. and Gregersen, H. "How to Cultivate Leadership that is Honed to Solve Problems." Strategy & Business, February 2018.

Ancona, D. and Gregersen, H. "MBAs can front a revolution in collaborative leadership." Financial Times, December 2017

Ancona, D., Malone, T.W., Orlikowski, W.J., and Senge, P.M. "In Praise of the Incomplete Leader." Harvard Business Review, 2018, 2011 (2007), Vol. 85, No. 2.

Ancona, D., Backman, E. "Distributed Leadership: Going from Pyramids to Networks." Leadership Excellence, Vol. 27, No. 1, January 2010.

Ancona, D., Bresman, H., & Kaufer, K. "The Comparative Advantage of X-Teams." Sloan Management Review, Spring 2002, Vol. 43, No.3, pp.33-39.

Consulted to:

Boehringer Ingelheim; Bose; Bristol-Myers Squibb; The Broad; Hearst Medical; Li & Fung; OCP; Scarborough Health Network; Takeda R&D and Oncology.

Selected Presentations

"Analyzing family ghosts in the executive suite using qualitative analysis," at the New Directions in Leadership Research, INSEAD, June, 2024.

"Leadership in an Age of Uncertainty: Walking the Line Between Creativity and Chaos," USA Leadership Summit, June 2022.

"Succeeding In a World of Uncertainty," International Development Bank, 2020.

"5 Rules for Leading In a Digital World," YPO, August 2020.

"5 Rules for Leaders to Succeed in a World of Uncertainty," The European House-Ambrosetti, July 2020.

"Thriving in Uncertainty: 5 Core Leadership Activities to Create more Nimble Organizations," American Chamber of Commerce in China, May 2020.

"5 Rules for Leaders to Succeed In a World of Uncertainty," Digital Now, December 2020.

LEF CIO Summit. Keynote address on Nimble Leadership. April, 2019.

"The hidden role of sensemaking in leadership," Keynote address: ESMT OB-Conference, Berlin, Germany, June 2018.

"Leading Dynamic Capabilities in DNA Organizations," New Directions for Leadership Research, INSEAD, Fontainebleau, France, June 2017.

"Beyond Bureaucracy: The Changing Role of Leadership," FIU Center for Leadership, Miami, FL, February 2016.

"Dynamic Capabilities with Complex Adaptive Systems," Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Vancouver, British Columbia, August 2015.

Innovation Lab, New York, NY, NYU, April 2014.

Podcasts:

1--Our podcast based on an HBR paper, "The 3 Types of Leaders in Innovative Companies", was chosen to be included in the 2024 Top 30 articles published in HBR over the last 100 years. Based on, "Nimble Leadership, Walking the Line Between Creativity & Chaos" by Ancona, Backman, & Isaacs.

2--Podcast: The Anxious Achiever, guest April, 2024. Think your family background doesn't affect you at work? Think again.

3--Podcast: Managing with Heart & MInd, guest August, 2024. Family Ghosts at Work, and High Performance Teams.

4--World Class Leaders Show, guest, August, 2024. The Ultimate Secrets to Building High Performance Teams.

5--Strategy Skills Podcast, guest, August 2024. How Family Ghosts End Up in the Executive Suite.