

KAREN A. STEPHENSON, Ph.D.



Dr. Karen Stephenson began as a quantum chemist and ended as a classically trained Harvard anthropologist using every bit of her education. She wandered through Saharan deserts and the green and leafy jungles of Mesoamerica before stumbling into corporate jungles where she was last sighted. In 2013, she was appointed the H. Smith Richardson Fellow by the Center for Creative Leadership. She was the first Katherine Houghton Hepburn Fellow, an honor bestowed by Bryn Mawr for her groundbreaking work in the social sciences. She was hailed in *Business 2.0* as “The Organization Woman” and distinguished as only one of four women in *Random House’s Guide to Management Gurus*. Malcolm Gladwell featured her in *The New Yorker* for her innovative research on the workplace and corporate office. With over two decades of teaching at UCLA and Harvard, she now lectures at Yale University and Erasmus University in the Netherlands.

Education

- Ph.D.** Harvard University, Graduate School of Arts & Sciences, Cambridge, MA
Anthropology (1990)
- M.A.** University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT
Mathematical Modeling in Anthropology (1984), with Distinction
- B.A.** Austin College, Sherman, TX
Double Major in Chemistry & Art, Minor in Physics (1974), Honors & Summa Cum Laude

Professional Experience

President and CEO, NetForm, Inc., New York, NY – 1996 – Present.

- **Complex Partnerships**
- **United Kingdom PPPs (Public-Private Partnerships), 1998-present.**
Sponsored by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 20 pilots have been conducted, published and presented back to 9 regions across Great Britain. The success of NetForm’s approach and the sustained change led to NetForm becoming the preferred government partner in measurement (references & articles on request).
- **The Story of Philadelphia: Economic Decline & Renewal, 2005-present.**
NetForm identified “hidden connectors”; key leadership competencies were defined; curriculum developed and deployed in a “social experiment” designed to accelerate the rate of collaboration and measure its direct impact on urban renewal. This study spawned similar efforts in urban areas in North America (Lexington, Louisville, Tucson, Portland).
- **United States of America (Army, Navy, Coast Guard, DoD & NIH), 1996-present**
Government cultures can be diagnosed and their transformation accelerated through the targeting of key culture carriers identified from NetForm Analysis™. Clients include Army (the entire supply chain logistics), Department of Navy Fleet and CIO office, and within selected offices in the intelligence agencies and medical offices/labs of the NIH.

- **Sustainable Cultural Transformation and Supporting Metrics**
- **CO-PI on the NSF I-Cubed grant (innovation through institutional integration).** Six I-Cubed grantees are studied over a 5-year period to learn how IHEs sustainably transform. Social network analysis is triangulated with site visits (interviews) and document reviews.
- **Joint Ventures, IBM (1991-1995), Steelcase (1998-2001), JP Morgan (2000-2002)**
As a class of activities, joint ventures with IBM, Steelcase and JP Morgan on cultural-re-engineering, workplace optimization and social capital metrics (respectively) helped to push the practice and application of social network analysis as a form of cultural diagnosis.
- **UCLA Medical School, 1995-96**
I was commissioned to develop a set of social capital metrics by which collaborative efforts could be measured, monitored and rewarded. This analytical approach was later adapted for the private sector (Schwab, Merrill Lynch, JP Morgan and smaller regional banks).
- **Los Angeles Police Department, 1995-96**
After the Rodney King Riots of 1992, a citywide self-examination ensued, ending with the 1996 report critical of the cultural drift that instigated the riots. My analysis (as part of the report) targeted areas for cultural transformation, which were subsequently adapted in other police departments in other countries. (References & report available on request).

Professor of Management:

- **Erasmus University, Rotterdam Graduate School of Management, The Netherlands, 2005 – Present**
RSM's business education includes network management as part of the core curricula at the graduate level in both MBA and Executive MBA degree programs.
- **Harvard University, Graduate School of Design, Cambridge, MA, 2000-2005**
Developed the core course for "translating" between the practice of anthropological diagnosis and architectural design. This led to the IIDA award.
- **UCLA, Anderson Graduate School of Management, 1990-2000**
Developed SNA as a *core* course requirement in the MBA curriculum. President of the Human Resources Roundtable. Customized analyses and executive education programs were developed for IBM, TRW, Northrop Grumman and Hughes Aircraft.

Awards/Honors

- 2013: H. Richardson Fellow for the Center of Creative Leadership.
- 2007: IIDA Star Award by the International Interior Design Association for contributions in the advancement of design in the workplace.
- 2007: 1 of only 4 female leaders recognized in Random House's Guide to Management Gurus (2 of which were deceased).
- 2006: Awarded the First Katherine Houghton Hepburn Fellow from Bryn Mawr for groundbreaking work in the social sciences.
- 2001: Invitational Keynote on Innovation for the AAAS (American Association for the Advancement of Science).
- 2001: NetForm, Inc wins the CIO Award for most innovative IT firm.
- 1995: Award of Excellence for article "Macro and Micro Implications of Social Network Analysis: (International Journal of Manpower).
- 1990-1995, 1998-2000 Appointed Visiting Scholar by IBM for work in social networks.
- 1988-1990: Twice nominated for the Harvard Junior Fellow for quantitative methods in the social sciences.