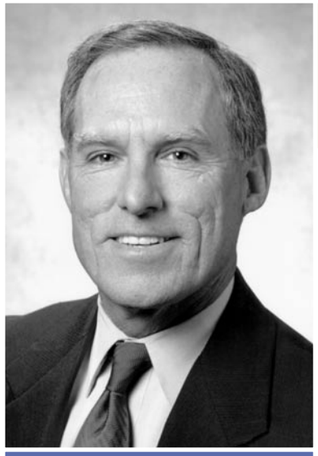


Richard H. Grabham

Vice President, Global Polypropylene
ExxonMobil Chemical Co.
BSChE '70

For his demonstrated leadership of a world-class polymers business and his passion for sharing his career perspectives with students

A Good Thing

"My mom latched onto the idea that I should go into engineering. She thought it would be good for me," says Richard Grabham, reflecting on a 30-year career in chemical engineering. "I was always interested in chemistry, but I had this wild idea that I could make it in baseball. I played all four years at Purdue. Engineering was my backup in case I failed."

An active student who lettered in baseball, played intramural sports, and was a leader in his fraternity, Phi Kappa Psi, Grabham says that his biggest issues at Purdue were conflicts over time: "The pressure of my college days was the result of absenteeism due to baseball. Some professors were more forgiving. Others, I sometimes felt, were my enemies.

"In those days we had to take 18 or 19 hours per semester to graduate in four years. The thought of not graduating in four years never occurred to me. I had to pay off all of these student loans. Then, I managed this relationship with my high school sweetheart who was at IU, and who I married and has been my wife for 33 years. That was important to me," he adds. "Just getting through in four years was an accomplishment, and I wanted to have good grades to get plenty of job offers."

Going Global

Now the vice president of ExxonMobil's Global Polypropylene Business Unit, Grabham has helped pioneer the global plastics market for both polyethylene and polypropylene.

"When I went to work for ExxonMobil, we had one plastics plant with a 200,000-ton annual capacity," says Grabham. "Today, we have 9 million tons worldwide. We are the largest manufacturer of polyolefins in the world."

Grabham was part of a group that transformed Al Jubail, Saudi Arabia, from a tiny fishing village in 1985 to one of the world's largest chemical sites. "That was a period when Saudi Arabia was starting its chemical industry. We were one of fifteen or twenty companies helping them get started from ground zero. They had no infrastructure. It was very gratifying to be part of that startup."

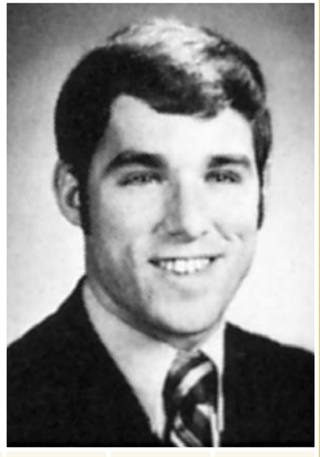
Grabham gets immense satisfaction in his role as a manager and leader of cross-functional teams. "Leading cross-functional groups is challenging as well as satisfying. I'm kind of a natural leader," he reflects. "Maybe it was from athletics, but in a team I always seem to earn the respect of the group and help set the direction. I have the ability to see the mission and get everyone aligned with the same goals. I also believe that you lead by contributing, not by virtue of the position you're in. I was part of many cross-functional teams during expansion of the polyolefin businesses of ExxonMobil. In the end it takes somebody who believes in the business, believes in our ability to succeed, and then backs it up by delivering good performance.

Spreading the Wealth

Grabham is actively involved with the Houston Children's Museum, which, along with the Indianapolis Children's Museum, is one of two top-rated children's museums in the country. "I didn't get involved when my children were young," he says. "We're contributors of sweat equity, financial contributions, and advice on how to run a business. We provide funding and support on how to use it to train and develop young people. We want to spark curiosity. Our theme is 'A Lifetime of Learning.' We want children as young as grade school to get that philosophy."

Like the museum, Purdue also benefits from Grabham's leadership. He was part of the group that developed the strategic plan for the School of Chemical Engineering and helped raise the funding for the new Forney School of Chemical Engineering.

"Funding is a great challenge for Purdue," says Grabham. "They have a low level of funding from the state, relative to other institutions like it around the country. It's a great challenge to get the private funding. But I'm always impressed with the energy, enthusiasm, and curiosity of students at Purdue. That's what I see and feel when I go back to campus."



2002–	Vice President, Global Polypropylene, ExxonMobil Chemicals
1999–2003	Vice Chairman, Non-durables Sector, America Plastics Council Executive Committee
1998–2002	Product Executive, Worldwide Polypropylene, ExxonMobil Chemical; Named Outstanding Chemical Engineering Graduate, Purdue, 1999
1997–2003	New Directions Advisory Council for Chemical Engineering, School of Chemical Engineering, Purdue; Advisory Board of the Children's Museum of Houston
1995–98	General Manager, Lubricants and Petroleum Specialties Division, Exxon USA
1993–95	General Manager, Polypropylene Americas, Exxon Chemical Co.
1990–93	Director, General Sales, Polyolefin Sales, Americas, Exxon Chemical
1988–90	Industry Sector Manager, Performance Packaging, Exxon Chemical
1985–88	Director, Manufacturing, Al Jubail Petrochemical Company, Al Jubail, Saudi Arabia
1982–85	Operations Manager, Baton Rouge, Exxon Chemical
1980–82	Technical Head, Low Density Polyethylene, Antwerp, Belgium, Exxon
1973–80	Project and Process Engineer, Baton Rouge Plastics Division, Exxon

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