

Richard Gilman  
1914-1991  
PROFESSOR OF MANAGEMENT, EMERITUS

B.S., Yale University; M.B.A., D.B.A., Quantitative Business Administration,  
University of Southern California, September 1, 1973  
California State University, Fullerton From September 1, 1972 To June 30,  
1990  
Birth: July 10, 1914; Death: February 10, 1991

Dr. Richard Gilman was a member of the Management Department at California State University Fullerton for 18 years. He was a unique and scholarly gentleman, dedicated to his profession until the last stage of his life. He was a role model for many of us on the faculty as well as for students, demonstrating by his life that one can become successful through determination and hard work. He was a many-faceted man, an entrepreneur turned scholar and teacher, whose other interests in life included reading, the appreciation of classical music on a professional level, and travel. He was also a loving father and husband, and a trusted and loyal friend to many.

Dick was born in New York into a prominent family of wealth and education. His father was a well-known lawyer and published author. His privileged upbringing included prepping at Choate School in Connecticut, from which he graduated cum laude, and university education at Yale, from which he graduated in 1934 with a major in Industrial Administration. Following that, as was common among the offspring of prominent families in the New England tradition, he was sent to France where he worked in a bank for two years and became fluent in French and German. No doubt Dick's immense intellectual and cultural sophistication were greatly enhanced by his European experience.

World War II aroused in him a sense of patriotism, and as a member of the American military forces, he was involved in the battles of the Pacific theater as a bomber pilot. At the war's end he emerged as a Commander in the Navy. Usually, war veterans have an ample supply of war stories to tell, but from Dick, I never heard one heroic, self-important story. There was only one reference to his war experience that I can recall: when he mentioned that a World War II seaplane was providing passenger service between Los Angeles and Catalina Island, he said he would never be a passenger on one of those planes because he had become familiar with their structural defects during World War II.

After the war, Dick became an entrepreneur, and established Precision Equipment Co. in Torrance, California. This business existed between 1948 and 1963. After this venture, he joined Louis A. Allen & Associates as a consulting Associate, serving from 1963 to 1965, and then joined TRW as a materials manager for the Space Vehicle Division. At this point in his life, Dick distinguished himself from the crowd by embarking on an academic

career when he was well beyond 50 years of age, and while still continuing to work for a living during the day. While most people were busy anticipating a comfortable retirement, Dick was pursuing an advanced degree, and in 1971 and 1973, he earned an MBA and DBA, respectively from USC. He received his doctorate at the age of 59! His life was testimony to the fact that anyone who is dedicated enough to a goal can accomplish it at any age.

Dick began his teaching career at CSULA as an Assistant Professor in 1970, and moved to CSUF in 1972, where he was promoted to full professor with tenure in 1978. He worked diligently and with dedication, giving all that he had to the betterment of students, the Management Department, and the School of Business until he was incapacitated due to illness and retired in June 1990. During the 18 years of his tenure at CSUF, he was well liked, and a trusted friend to many of his colleagues.

During his tenure with the CSUF Management Department, his teaching and research activities were focused on the areas of business policy and management information systems. For many years he served as course coordinator for the undergraduate capstone course in business policy, and in this position, he was a tireless advocate for rigor. Dr. Gilman was also one of the principal faculty members associated with the development of management information systems programs in the School of Business. He is particularly remembered even today for his unwavering dedication to the evolution and improvement of this program.

Due to his combination of academic expertise and rich business experience, Dr. Gilman actively consulted with many companies, including some among Fortune 500, during his 18 years on the Business School Faculty. His dedication to scholarship resulted in his last publication, which was accepted by *Management Decisions*, "Mergers and Takeovers." This article was accepted for publication in 1990, right before his retirement, and in the midst of his brave struggle against the cancer that took his life. What is more amazing, he had, even at this stage in his life, just enrolled in an advanced Spanish class at a local junior college.

Indeed, his life can be summarized as one of extraordinary accomplishment which few of us could even begin to imitate. Yet he always preserved his character as a warm, generous and caring person who took secretaries out for lunch whenever he discovered one of their birthdays, or when it was Secretary's Week. In recalling his friendship with Dick, Farouk Abdelwahed, current Chair of the Management Department, had this to say: "I miss him very much, and often want to have a friend who can listen with warmth like Dick."

When Dick retired, I threw a party in his honor, inviting his management department colleagues and former colleagues who had already retired. Almost everyone showed up, and it was a wonderful occasion. Dick left early, along with his wife, Thelma, because he was tired, and my wife and I walked them out their car. Before he got in Dick turned to me and said, "Tai, you have teased me for years about when I was going to die. Well, let me tell you, it's not over yet! I'm going to get well and come back to see you,

and work with you again." At the end of our long and close friendship, filled with years of camaraderie and teasing, that was the last statement I heard him make. When he died, he left his lovely wife Thelma, three sons, one step-daughter and one stepson. I lost a friend, and so did many of our colleagues.

Submitted by  
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Professor of Management  
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