

## Raphael Pollock, MD, PhD, tells a story about Leading Others

Dr. Pollock served as Chair of the Dept. of Surgical Oncology from 1994-2010 and Head of the Division of Surgery from 1997-2012. In an interview conducted in 2012 he talks about learning how to take his time and respond productively to departmental situations.



### *How a Chair Responds*

You don't always have to have the answer. You may be the chair, but that doesn't mean you have to come up with the answer right then and there. It's a very effective thing to say, "You know, I hadn't thought about it from that point of view. I'm not totally sure I agree with you on this yet. I'm going to take forty-eight hours and chew on this and think about it." Then I'm going to come back to the group or the individual and, "I'll tell you what I think so we can pick up the thread of the dialog." That's very different than feeling that somehow you are being challenged, even though that's what was going on, and feeling like you have to respond immediately—you know—show of force. "Listen, buddy, I'm the top dog here. I make that decision. No, you're not going to pee in my swimming pool. This is not your call. This is my call." So that type of behavior, which is sort of like posturing in response to posturing. I think that I was pretty effective in putting that aside and learning how to build cohesion and consensus.

## About This Content

This interview clip was taken from an in-depth interview conducted for the Making Cancer History Voices Oral History Project. This ongoing project currently contains almost 400 interview hours with MD Anderson institution builders.

The transcript has been edited from the original.

The content is available for all uses.

**To explore the full interview go to:** <http://mdanderson.libguides.com/PollockR>

### About the speaker:

Raphael Pollock, MD (left MDA 2013)

Interviewed: 2012

Primary app't: Department of Surgical Oncology.

Research: surgical techniques, surgical stress, natural killer cells, molecular approaches to soft tissue sarcoma; angiogenesis, chemoresistance, novel therapeutics

Admin: Chair, Department of Surgical Oncology (1994 – 2010); Head, Division of Surgery (1997 – 2012).

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### To request an uncompressed audio file, photographs, or for information about the interview and photo collections, contact:

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