Gordon Robinson

After twenty years as a senior analyst, advisor and executive in the civil services of various Canadian provinces and territories, I have recently started my own consulting firm focussing on providing management advice to public sector organizations particularly in the areas of information and communications technology policy, energy policy and improving the management effectiveness of governments and their agencies. At present I am part of a consulting team developing a job evaluation system for the Government of Barbados.

After completing a B.Sc. in Honours Mathematics in 1976, I continued my mathematical studies at Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar, where I earned an M.Sc. (by research)(1979) for my work in the area of matroids and computational complexity.

Over my career I have worked for a variety of public Sector organizations across Western and Northern Canada. These have ranged from central policy and financial agencies to commercial Crown corporations such as Manitoba Hydro. I have also taught mathematics to first year students at the University of Regina.

In some cases I have developed and maintained financial models or analytical tools on computers. However, mostly my jobs have not involved much direct use of mathematics. Rather, my mathematical knowledge has given me a clear understanding of the tools which could be used to tackle a problem. This is particularly true at the senior executive level where I was primarily involved with directing and overseeing the work of other technical specialists.

family and fun

I have been married to June Dewar (Robinson) for twenty years. We met at the Regina University Debate Union. We have two teenaged children. Among my hobbies and activities at present are judging men's gymnastics, cycling and actively participating in Scottish Country dancing with my wife.

The study of mathematics requires a discipline and a rigour that can be carried over into many situations to achieve a solid understanding and develop sound and logical solutions to problems.

While I was Special Assistant to the President of Manitoba Hydro, I championed a project by our research centre to build specialized parallel processing hardware and software to model the electric power system in real time. Based on my mathematical background, I could appreciate the promise of this approach to a problem which had previously only been possible on analog computers which were very expensive and inflexible. I was successful in convincing Manitoba Hydro to purchase the first full sized version of this system for $2 million. As a result a company was established this has gone on to sell these simulators around the world.

Of course mathematics is not all work!

For example, Scottish Country dancing consists of patterns which are really like transformations in finite groups. I also still enjoy working on any mathematical problem or puzzle I encounter.