

Appendix IV: Selection of interview transcripts

A – Interview with Rui Albuquerque, Production Supervisor

Hewlett Packard, 9 October 2003 (Brendan Behan Meeting Room, Building 1, 11.00 a.m.)

Present: Rui and Mark

Rui: Okay, my name is Rui Albuquerque, eh, I was born in Lisbon, Portugal in 1959 and I came to Ireland in 1984, in January 1984, so I have been in Ireland now nearly 20 years now. It has been a great

experience, eh, throughout this 20 years, eh, when I came to Ireland first, the job situation was very precarious but eh, I was able to get, em, into the company Packard Electric at the time and...eh...

Mark: And what was the nature of that, Rui?

RA: So the nature of the job was we assembled the looms for the Opel cars, the electric harnesses and was very labour intensive, em, so going back 20 years ago, so the industry in Ireland would be very labour intensive and I suppose in the last few years when we started to attract the IT companies, and the, eh, you know, computer industries, you know we have seen a shift more to machine operating...

MC: And what was your role at that time in, in Packard Electric?

RA: So, I started as an operator and I got then a promotion two years on, eh, as a supervisor and I have been a supervisor since...so

MC: And that is your present role here at HP?

RA: That is my present role in HP, so I came into HP as a production supervisor, so, I have gone through a few different companies and I have noticed that companies that have labour intensive activities, eh, tend to disappear because of, em, our high rate of wage compared to, you know, eastern countries – namely - India, China, Malaysia, you know wherever

MC: Would this also include Eastern Europe? Is that also a factor these days or is it further, farther afield?

RA: I think, em, from my experience it is further afield...one of the reasons that my first job closed was, em, you know we started a plant in India where people got 33 pounds a month which was very low, low wage, you know in Ireland we were on nearly 200 a week. So that was a big difference. So we see, I have noticed, Ireland has devoted a lot of effort into educating our young generation and that is how we are doing so well, I, this type of industry that we have here at the moment, you know, our level of knowledge and development technology

MC: And how long have you been here at HP?

RA: I am here 3 and a half years

MC: Okay, okay, and do you live locally, Rui?

RA: I live 30 miles away, it is a 40 minute drive away, handy enough...but it is worth it, HP, you know I see it as one of the leaders, eh, one of the companies that is the leader in, em, having an open policy, as regards each individual. So each individual is a contributor, eh, and that is one of the, I think, advantage to give the upper hand to HP, em, plus people feel that they are part of the company, they just don't feel they work...

MC: So they build an idea of a family, almost, eh, a community, (R: Yes), so it would almost be, (R: Yes), a community in itself? (R: Yes), And do you travel a lot with your work Rui?

RA: No

MC: In terms of, a lot would be on site here?

RA: Yes, myself personally, I haven't travelled yet but, eh, there is constant travelling 'em you know, in business, in other people, for example, we are setting up a new product so there has been a few people gone to the States for training and getting all the package to bring over then to Ireland

MC: And do a lot of people then come here? Em, on site, would a lot of people, I get the sense that there is a lot of people from all over the world coming to Leixlip, they sort of come to seminars, to get tours of the plant, because I know you are a, one of the global distribution sites

RA: So we get a lot of people, em, and also, eh, because we have very good results, em...in some of the areas that we need to work on, em, so people from other plants, you know, come in to see which way we operate, so you know they can transfer our operation...operation, eh, systems into theirs okay, so it's kind of, we just don't do it here, whatever good we do here, we'll spread (M:sure, okay) and vice a versa

MC: Because I know there are a number of sites, locations around the world, I think, and so would you get people from, from where would they come? The people that come that you are obviously sharing information with

RA: So...they have come from, could come from, em, Singapore, eh, Puerto Rico, the States, so that is mainly the three areas that we get visitors from

MC: Okay, em, and yeah, so you have touched upon it absolutely briefly, was, in terms of, well, what way do you think the ICT industry in Ireland has changed in the last decade?

RA: Well I think because, as I said earlier, because there was great investment on peoples education...I think it has attracted, em, a lot of these companies into the country, eh, and because we have...delivered upon the objectives...eh...you know, set by the big international companies, I think that keeps attracting, you know, more and more people and, we don't have, kind of a, a lack of knowledge and of manpower that, em...they can say well that it is probably not attractive because they are exhausting their limitations, you know we keep investing on the education and you know, even within HP, eh, we have a lot of courses, that we facilitate people that are interested on taking i.e. technician course or IMI courses for supervision, so we have constant, constant development as well within the company not just ...national level

MC: But on a very local, on the floor, shall we say, level, and can you talk about, a little bit, the nature of work, earlier you mentioned about 'em, when we weren't recording, was the nature of the management structure, how you think that has changed? You mentioned a little bit about what you thought was very healthy

RA: So, em, going back from the time that I started, eh, there was very strong unionised companies, eh, and that kind of kept a distance between management and workers, I have noticed that within the new companies forming, the old ones closing and the new forming, that there is more of a eh, interaction between management and workers and every persons opinion is valued and taken into consideration for the equation, of course, you know some of the corporation decisions are made at the corporate level but anything...any level can influence, you know, their voice is heard and eh taken into, and we actually reward people that, you know, that come up with ideas no matter what their function within the company

MC: And can I ask, in terms of the type of reward, would you, would it be financial, would it be monetary, would it be, what sort of format would, say, type of rewards take?

RA: So we have a huge, em, amount of different types of, eh, rewards, so, em, we have every, if I am not mistaken, every three months, we have what we call *The Ace Award* so its...its em, its like a certificate of achievement, and we have coffee talks, our Managing Director here, Lionel Normally, presents these awards, you know, with a full audience, you know, these people are appreciated by, there is another

rewards, with vouchers or bonuses, and there is also the informal reward of a supervisor or manager and calling that person aside and thanking them, you know which will go a long way as well

MC: Okay so it is tied in with that communication you spoke of earlier

RA: Yes

MC: Yeah, would you consider yourself part of this change in how has this change, for example, affected your work conditions, which I know you have talked a little bit about...and motivation and your areas of expertise...but how would you consider yourself part of this change?

RA: So one of the things that, em, I have noticed...is that, eh, as time, eh, progressed I found myself, em, wanting to learn more about other subjects that...before, you know, I knew what I knew for what I needed to do...these type of companies that we have now in Ireland, you know, encourages you to develop, you know, because there is a constant development of ideas, improvements here, improvements there, quality, you know, costs, whatever...it actually encourages you to study or to develop and you know...that is one of the things...you know, so what I did for it...so I...I am part of that and I encourage other people to do, so I tend to kind of that work directly with me, to develop themselves, eh, I give them the tools...encourage them, facilitate them...you know, time off or whatever

MC: Great, can I ask do you think the changes in this industry have shaped or influenced the way people in Ireland view this country and also how outsiders think about contemporary Ireland? Also considering your 20 years experience involved in this, you would have (R: Yes) witnessed a lot

RA: So, when I came here first, eh, I was saying to you earlier before we start taping, I felt just...I integrated very easily...eh...now the percentage of foreign people in Ireland 20 years ago was not as high as now...eh...I think we have seen in the last 2 to 3 a big influx of foreign, foreign workers and, eh, I think there was a kind of a shock for the nation, you know...so people don't...you know, all of a sudden they have thousands upon thousands coming in so I think people got a bit, you know, afraid or whatever...em...but I have never noticed, you know...em...prejudice or nothing like that, you know, 2 years on being in Ireland, you know, I got a supervisor promotion and you know, I have been a supervisor ever since so me being foreign has never been an issue

MC: And how do you think it has shaped contemporary Ireland, these changes?

RA: Well I think it has...em...helped because, eh, people from different cultures have different views of the world, of life and...eh...even ways of doing things and you know yourself, if you don't diverse, you know, you'll never go much further so, for as little as a contribution of somebody might be, you know, it has an influence and...eh...I think its all good...but in Ireland, you know, here in HP, we encourage diversity so...we wouldn't have that...eh...you know, the mentality that foreigners are, you know, just seen as HP employee

MC: Do you think that ties in with the fact that HP is, you know, is based all around the world so, I suppose, it must reflect on the fact that it is based all around the world, do you think that's part of the reason that it encourages such diversity?

RA: So it could be one of the factors, em, but, eh, I think the basic policies of, of...eh...HP...as they call it... *The Rules of the Garage*, you know is, is to take each individual as they are for their contribution with, for the company independently...what religion, sex, colour or background they have...okay

MC: Okay, yeah, you mentioned *The Rules of the Garage*, is it like a set of principles?

RA: Yes, now don't ask me to name them all off hand (*laughter*) ...eh...but eh...

MC: Can you give me a general idea of, of what those principles? You have mentioned obviously one

RA: Okay, so I tell you one so...*share your tools*...so nothing should be locked, em, *work as a team*, you know, because, you know, these would be very big descriptions, you know, I can't, but these would be something like that, you know...so it is really to say we work as a team and have respect for each other...and that so

MC: In your own area of work, Rui, what future changes or work practices would you like to see in place? And what components of your work environment would you like to remain the same?

RA: Em...so that is a very complex question, so, first of all, I like to work with people, directly with people, so I wouldn't like to change that...so that would be something that I would always like to have...eh...direct contact with people...(long pause)...to change, it is...it is a bit...it is a bit more difficult to answer, what would I change...(another long pause)...em...its em...(pause continues)

MC: Yeah...emm

RA: I can't think of anything now

MC: I suppose even in the 20 years since you first started working here at Hew...Packard or in Packard Electric and then, say, to where you are now, I mean there's obviously been a huge, massive change...in those...practices...so, maybe it ties into sort of, you know, another question would be, sort of, how do you see the future of the ICT industry in Ireland?

RA: Well I think we have...

MC: Maybe that ties in a little bit with that

RA: Alright, so I think we have great potential, eh, to maintain and increase probably the amount of...companies that we have in Ireland, one of the things that would be great for Ireland to actually get would be development...em...development of new products generation, (M: research?), research, generation of new products...eh, so that would actually be...and actually that's one of the DIMO, DIMO which is Ireland here, one of our aspirations is to kind of

MC: DIMO, is that the name of?

RA: DIMO, yeah, its one of the aspirations here, its kind of, to research and development within Ireland as well

MC: Is DIMO an abbreviation? I haven't heard this word before; that is why I am wondering

RA: It's an abbreviation but don't ask me what it is...I can't (*laughter*)

MC: But is it literally D-M-O...DMO? (*DIMO* is abbreviation for *Dublin Inkjet Manufacturing Operation*)

RA: Yes, yes

MC: Okay, okay...and...but is, is one...because I know you have one of the largest cleanrooms in Europe is based here (R: Yeah, yeah) so obviously research and development is a huge ...yeah?

RA: Sorry, it is...I can't think of the D...but it is *Ireland Manufacture Operations*

MC: But it is that, that that would be key to Ireland's future in terms of the ICT would be development and research, (R: Yeah, yeah), okay...okay...and the possibilities for that do you think, in your own opinion?

RA: Well, we already have a group working, eh, towards that, you know, so, I don't know how much of a stake we can take within HP of that or not...so...

MC: I have a final question for you, actually Rui, was just in terms of obviously coming from Portugal, eh, how does it feel or maybe you have covered that already but just in terms of how things are in Portugal can maybe compared to Ireland? I presume there is also movement to maybe to, obviously to, increase investment in a country like Portugal to build up the economy, I am sure tourism is obviously a huge component of (R: yes, yes) the economy there also but is there also movements in ICT in, in Portugal, for instance? Are you aware of that?

RA: Eh, I am not really aware that, they're really...not that they are not interested but I think because the labour is so cheap in Portugal, I think they still maintain a lot of the labour intensive companies...em...and then as you said the tourist industry is, is a big focus for Portugal...I don't know...em...you know, I don't really, I have contact with Portugal but I don't really kind of, be living there to have that, eh, close knowledge

MC: So you are not aware if there is any, sort of, ICT activity going on in Portugal?

RA: No, no, well not, well there probably is but I would say it's at a very smaller scale comparing to...Ireland...so they still be, kind of, more into the car assembly and you know, things like that

MC: So, a lot of manufacturing?

RA: Yes...yeah

MC: And lastly...why do you think Ireland has been so successful? I know you mentioned, about...

RA: About education?

MC: Education, but are there other reasons why Ireland has been leading to this amount of people moving here?

RA: Well, okay, I don't know if I am right in saying this, (M: in your opinion), but I think, in my opinion because, eh, Ireland has such close ties with the States, and most of the IT companies in Ireland are American...em...so I think that, that plays a part...also they were going to have to be somewhere, so, to be in Europe, you know... Ireland, so Ireland would be, you know, a way for them, for any company to be within Europe because of all of these European...you know, the world trade agreements and all that, so, also I think as far as I know the Corporate Taxes, you know, they've, Ireland gave great concessions to international companies, eh so I think that's...

MC: It's a combination then? Also location in terms of it's, do you think the fact that it is an island is a negative aspect to it?

RA: Could be a deterrent because, you know, transport costs but I think if you have everything else right and...if you have the right frame of mind within management and the team for cost reduction so you know you are going to suffer on transport but if you can work your way that you can reduce on other costs, you know, by making improvements on production, you know, qualities...and all that...I think, you know...it pays to...if you can get your...satisfied customer...it pays, you know, the extra few cents or whatever

MC: Again...another final question was on a personal level, do you see yourself staying in Ireland? I know you have been here 20 years...do you see yourself remaining in Ireland?

RA: Oh...I probably die in Ireland (*laughter*) yeah, no, my daughters are Irish and, you know, I like Ireland, so, I would prefer the Portugese weather, you know, but you can't have everything, you know...but I like it here...Ireland has been good to me...I don't think I would have had the standard of living in Portugal that I have in Ireland...and...I find the people nice too, you know...I feel myself an Irishman...you know, I don't see myself as a foreign person, you know...so

MC: Because there is, and this is another, and feel free if you don't feel like answering it, that is okay...there is, now a huge, dare I say it, trade, of contract labour now coming to Ireland...I know, working in the North and working, and that relationship between Portugal and Ireland is, it's kind of what it always has been, this historical link but in terms of, more recently, labour-wise, that there is...do you have any opinion on that? Or what people think about that? Like there seems to be now in some of the manufacturing plants in Northern Ireland and in the South, not in ICT, but the use of, dare I say it, contract labour from Portugal and I know it is not the well or best paid, (R: Yes, yes), do you have a sense for that in Portugal? Do you?

RA: Well you see Portugal always had a very high percentage of emigration and, that basically because...the main developed areas are the main cities, you know, countrywide, you know, the development was very poor and there was no kind of...em...region...regionalisation of factories to go over to smaller...populated areas, so...that meant that Portugese people would emigrate and they always have...we actually have seen a lot more now coming to Ireland, mainly before would be Spain, France, England, Germany and States, now we see a lot more coming into Ireland...em...(pause)...I don't know...if its...because people now are in the EEC and they have, you know, the EU...and they have the facility of travelling so they can actually, okay Ireland is booming, so lets go to Ireland...you know

MC: As the Irish would have gone in the past...they would have gone to other countries

RA: So before, you know, before Portugal joined the EU, you know, actually before I came to Ireland...you needed to find a job and then you needed a green card and a work permit and all this so there was a lot of restraints...nowadays it is kind of easy for people to travel and, you know, it is human nature, you go where you can get the best but I think the 99% of the people would be emigrating just to get a few bob and return back to Portugal so that wouldn't be my case

MC: And when did the EU, when did Portugal join the EU? Just as a matter of interest, can you recall?

RA: I don't really know the exact date...but it would have been on the early Nineties

MC: Okay

RA: Okay

MC: Thank you very much Rui

RA: You are very welcome

B – Interview with Una Halligan, Director of the Government and Public Affairs,

Hewlett-Packard, 1 June 2004, (Cafeteria, 11.30 a.m.)

Present: Una and Mark

Mark Curran: Una, if you don't mind, starting at the beginning, your name and title?

Una Halligan: Starting at the beginning', (laughter), absolutely, my name is Una Halligan and I am the Government and Public Affairs Director for Hewlett-Packard here in Ireland

MC: And can I ask how long you have been working for HP?

UH: Basically, since HP came to Ireland with the Inkjet Manufacturing, just over 8 years ago, 8 and a half years ago now

MC: And before that?

UH: Prior to that I worked with IBEC, the Irish Business Employers Confederation, I was an Executive Negotiator with them, I came to HP, initially, to start off working on their PR and Community Relations and then that grew into PR, Community Relations and Government Affairs and now it's more, I do some PR but mostly Government Affairs, Philanthropy, Community Relations and PR for the manufacturing side

MC: Can I ask you, if you don't mind, to tell me a little more about the Government Affairs side?

UH: Yes, I will...yes so Government Affairs is very much, a lobbying, basically if we look at what the objective is, if we look at why HP came to Ireland in the first place...we came...low Corporation Tax, highly skilled workforce and, em, stable economy, national pay agreements, making sure you don't have huge inflation, so my job is to really make sure, going forward that HP works in that same kind of a climate...so that I work with IBEC, with the American Chamber of Commerce, with ICT Ireland, groups like that and very directly, also with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, so basically if we have got issues around whether it's R and D (*Research and Development*) whether it's tax and investments and that kind of stuff, these are the areas that we would lobby on...lobby at Brussels level, I actually report into Brussels and lobby at the local level as well

MC: So also on an EU level as well?

UN: So EU as well...actually a lot of the stuff...in fact...doing business in Ireland is actually relatively...I won't say relatively easy...but...it's...it's a very good environment in which to do business in, it's a very open economy...there is a real sense of 'Government of Can Do', of wanting to make you successful...and obviously we have 4,200 employees here in Ireland at the moment...1,800 in the manufacturing side here (coughs)...and we are growing that investment, (MC: okay), we are growing it on the R and D side...up the value chain...and we are doing some, em, collaborations with Science Foundation Ireland and Universities...that's the area I get involved in...an basically it is to try and make sure that we protect the investment we have and that we grow it and the only way you can do that is making sure that the climate continues to be competitive and Industry/Business - Friendly...so that would take up the vast part of the job I do

MC: And is that difficult? At the moment, there is...I was just reading in the Financial Times around ideas, for instance...even ideas around an EU-wide Corporate Tax level, these sort of things...inspired from France and Germany

UH: It's a big issue...yeah it's an issue...well having said that...it's an issue for *Ireland Inc.* it's not an issue for HP because Ireland are saying we are going to hold this...over our dead bodies...em...certainly this Government would hold it, I would also think Fine Gael would hold it...I would have concerns that Labour, because Pat Rabbitte has said publicly that he thinks we should go that route...I think it would be a big problem and I will tell you why...this Inkjet Manufacturing site we have here in Ireland is one of three worldwide...the other two are in Puerto Rico and Singapore...they have no Corporation Tax...therefore, you are already starting with a handicap...you might think 10% going up to 12 and a half%, the lowest in Europe but it is not the lowest in the World...and they also have very smart people...therefore, if we won't do business in that kind of a...world economy...Ireland is a small country...you still have the logistics of getting the product from here into the European or Worldwide distribution from an island so therefore you've already got infrastructural costs...you've also...would also have...em...salary costs, wage costs would be higher here than Puerto Rico or Singapore...having said that we do business very well here and we are very successful here...the people and the calibre of people would be extremely high...and we would have no problem continuing to do business here...and as I said grow that business in various ways but obviously if you put handicaps and blockages to that...and that would be the biggest one...Corporation Tax would be a particularly...eh, eh...big one...but as I say...the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and in fairness both Charlie McGreevy (present Minister of Finance) and Mary Harney (present Tanaiste)...would all be in favour...and the Taoiseach...in keeping that low rate of Corporate Tax...so...from that perspective it's pushing an open door, but, of course, when we have all this kind of talk in Europe...our U.S., we are a U.S. company...they see that...so they see the wider picture...and they kinda' say, well, is this a real threat? And I...obviously... we can only lobby...well, we can lobby everywhere...but our main lobbying is in Ireland...going over to Germany to lobby on a Corporation Tax in Ireland, you are

not going to get too far...therefore, from that perspective...some of the lobbying is very local, some of it then, we need to raise issues into the European level

MC: Then can I ask, in the context of all that, is the whole, you read Government reports...the whole move towards R and D and this idea of Specialisation to ensure longevity, so here we are in the context of a manufacturing plant...how does that sit? How does that fit?

UH: It fits very well, basically what happened here is basically...a typical example of a manufacturing site anyway, first of all the manufacturing...you'd know a bit about this as you've seen it...the manufacturing site here is very *high-tech*, so we have a huge number of engineers here, what we have done here is...we've sent the *low-end* manufacturing...so the first product -lines that came in here are now down with contract manufacturers in Galway and Waterford and what we did was...we took the *Low-End technology*...that became routine, became just, as I say, Low-End, we took it to contract manufacturers and the High-End IP end, International Property end...comes back in here, (MC: Okay), so we now, now we have got worldwide responsibility for the new product line that is coming out and we are also do a huge amount of product technology, eh, development here so we have now gone from the Low-End up to the High-End and we are going to the next level again and looking at this site as being that...because it is the only European site taking a lot of that R and D work and that technology development is coming on site

MC: On this site as well? (Una: On this site as well) So it co-exists?

UH: Yes it is actually happening

MC: So can I ask as well, in the context of an expansionist Europe...and new accession countries...I am sure you have come across this question

UH: Yeah...it is not an issue for us now, really it isn't...this install base here is huge...the amount of investment in this country here is huge, we're very happy with what where we are doing it at the moment, we also...importantly too and I wouldn't underestimate it...okay you're right, em people in the other, in the East European countries and I think probably more China rather than actually East European...I'd see more threats coming from there, there are certainly are threats but we would see as being, good for...where Ireland was 20 years ago...China maybe even further, now they are closing the gap but the first thing we do have here are the huge advantages...we are English-speaking, we work for an American Multinational Company which is predominantly English-speaking...therefore we would have a '24 hour, 7 day a week, 365' day...you'd often find some of our engineers would pick up the phone to somebody in Singapore about an issue rather than wake up somebody or an operator or technician rather than wake up somebody who is in bed at 4 o'clock when they can get them, so, it's a global company, English-speaking is important, also...we spend a lot of, a lot of, money on developing our people, they are bright people, they are smart people, they're young...technically very qualified workforce...so we actually don't see a threat, I am not saying in 10 years time it won't be threat but I think in 10 years time you'll probably see a very different HP in Ireland

MC: Okay, so it is a process of evolving

UH: Yes it's evolving and keeping ahead, keeping ahead...I think that's true...and that's going to be true of all...of all manufacturing sites and not even manufacturing sites...but of anybody...even service providers...because in a global world...em, with a global economy...you can do all of your support from the other side of the world, it doesn't make any difference

MC: And your R and D in India? And stuff like that?

UH: We do, we have labs in India, we do, em, and you know, they do very well but we're big, we have a lot of products, a lot of areas, inkjet is one small part of it but it happens to be lucky for Ireland the part that is in Ireland and to actually move that, that technology transfer would be huge and we have bedded down so many of the processes here now that we're, would feel ourselves to be very substantial leaders in the inkjet technology world for HP

MC: So part of that local/global landscape isn't it?

UH: Yes it is, it is, that's right

MC: Em, can I ask a more general question, how do you think the nature of your work has changed in the previous decade?

UH: Mine has changed completely, in terms of, when I came here there was nobody doing Government Affairs and partly too because the MD at the time was an American and he didn't understand a lot of the legislation side of stuff, I'd come from IBEC...I had both the EU background and the local legislation, so I started in fact in getting involved in social policy issues...the 'working time director' which was a typical example of something that was coming down the tubes at that time, nobody, cause the HR community didn't have that background...nobody had it so I started the social policy stuff for it and then that grew and then I got very involved...actually, I lead the relationship with the IDA (*Industrial Development Authority*)...so the IDA/Forfas and that area, then I was appointed by Mary Harney on a number of boards in relation to innovation, in relation to education/skills awareness and stuff like that, so it actually evolved very much from a PR where I kinda' took a watching brief to very little PR now, just literally for the site here, I have always done the Community Relations and the Philanthropy, and that is a big part of the job that I enjoy very much because it puts a lot of money into Philanthropy

MC: Is that then the local? The Philanthropy, can you talk a little about the Philanthropy?

UH: It's local and it's, it's local, Leixlip and Celbridge are very lucky, they've got Intel here before us and ourselves, there isn't a child, I'd say, in this community that doesn't have PC...therefore we do, we do, we've just recently sponsored two big projects in the local community, one is the Leixlip Parish Centre and the other one is up in Captain's Hill, a Parish Centre up there...that both Intel and I have given funding to, HP have given funding to but the biggest thing that we have done actually...or to me the most strategically biggest, maybe not in money terms, but certainly strategically the best thing that we have done is the Digital Community Centres in the Inner City in Dublin, so, about 4 years ago, got involved again through other areas that I was involved in, with *the Digital Hub* in around the Media Labs...but also HP are also huge partners of media, of MIT (*Massachusetts Institute of Technology*) in Boston and Media Lab here, Media Lab Europe is part of that, so we are also partners of that and we gave them a big grant, donation of equipment when they came here but around the time that they came here, 4 or 5, maybe 6 years ago now, would have started, 5 years ago anyway, I was involved literally with just looking at some schools in that area under the Dublin Inner City Schools Computerisation Project...called DISC with the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) and Dr. Tommy Cooke who looks at their Outreach Programmes, we get started by putting some equipment into some Inner City schools and one of the things I was looking at, was the whole...redevelopment of the Digital Hub and the whole idea that here we are going to have a really high-tech community, 9 acres that the Government was going to invest in and I said why don't we try and target this area so the people in this area, the indigenous population are the ones getting the jobs, the IT jobs, not sweeping the floors and making the sandwiches, these guys and girls will actually get real jobs, so we started doing a lot of work in the schools and through that we actually decided to do Digital Community Centres in their area...so we put the first 3 as a pilot into Fatima Mansions, St. Theresa's Gardens and Bridgeford Street flats, we actually got Dublin County Council to give us apartments cleaned out, we put the equipment in, we worked with the DIT to put the, the trainers in, train the trainers, Microsoft came on board, Eircom came on board...the Dublin Inner City Partnership came on board...anyway to cut a long story short, we now have 11 of them up and running, HP have done 11 of them, we have provided them with a full-time Project Manager to actually go out and get the people to come in and do it, we have I think 13 graduates to date who are working, so the idea of having jobs paid off and we're looking at how we can, probably rather than expand it right now, how we can...I think my, my...and I am actually going to San Francisco at the end of this month (June 2004) to talk to HP about this...because we have these projects around the world but this is a particular one, this one, just kind of grew really and it has been very, very successful so they have asked me to present on it next week but, em, so my, my actual thoughts on it are, rather than expand on it, we should dig down with it, we should try to get, get more value into it, we should attract more people within those areas...upskill within each of those areas so now that the people that have gone off and done the Microsoft Academy certification, they, that is accepted as a module in the DIT if

they want to go to college and the other one that I want to look at is the schools, how many kids can get into third level? So that's the kind of, if we use those 11 communities, that would be the way forward, that would be a huge part of the work that we have done in the last few years

MC: Okay, okay...it seems a real outcome

UH: Yes it is, it is

MC: Em...well this may seem self-evident but I will ask it anyway but do you see yourself as part of this change? I presume obviously you would

UH: Yes I would, I would consider myself a driver of the change really...because I'm fairly good at, at seeing things that need to be done and getting up and doing them, I don't like doing, once you get something and you do it and actually a lot of it comes about from projects that we started with and networking with people where you get an idea and one, another one we did was the Back To Work Scheme for the long-term unemployed...and we kind of took that in a number of various areas and brought that to a next level too, so, I think it's...yeah, I would, I would see myself as somebody driving

MC: And where do you see, I mean, Ireland...in this? I mean how do you think Ireland is perceived abroad, for instance, you go to America a lot?

UH: Oh...very dynamic, in fact, I had a colleague of mine from Nabia, who does Government Affairs in Israel and she came here to shadow me for two days because she is just literally new to the job and she, looking at the model we have here, and even when she arrived in Dublin Airport, she said...

... 'I can't believe this city, this city is alive, it's so buzz, the atmosphere' and I had her staying just on the Stephen's Green and she, she, just couldn't believe it, now I suppose when you know, when you are coming from Israel, it's not quite the same...apples for oranges but I mean I think there is a very strong perception and not just perception, perception really is reality...that this is a dynamic country, a very good country to do business in, the average age of our employees is 27, very young, very dynamic, want to make things happen, want to, want to leave their mark, want to make a difference, so that makes a huge difference to have a...an employee base like that

MC: And so obviously, again may be self-evident but work practices have changed, the work environment, the material...sort of environment that people work in has changed

UH: Emm...yes and no, I'd say HP has always had a very, very laid back approach to managing people, very much empowering...and it has been managed by showing and talking, we're not big into legislation and nobody clocks in and stuff like that, so does work practices to a large extent haven't, I suppose what has changed and in my case I'd see it more than most is...em, because when you come here as a *start-up company*, you kind of, everybody is making the job, you literally...you literally...make up your, the job as you go along, no two days are the same and you just kind of go with the flow and something happens and suddenly you are going in this direction...that doesn't work and you go in that direction...that has...that pace has slipped down which is better, therefore you're probably doing, whereas you might be doing loads of things and some of them pay off now you are probably focusing on the things that really do work and I know that would be very true of the manufacturing site as well, whereas you would be starting off and trying to get it up and running...ship the product...for god's sake, get the product out, you know, it has to be, obviously quality right, everything had to be right but now we can up that another level so therefore your work practices would change because of that...but I think it is more *bedding down* rather than, I don't think the culture has changed, no I wouldn't say the culture has changed

MC: Well I was going to say, you will read literature that will use terms like *post-industrial landscape* and other ideas including that Ireland, well, the South of Ireland never experienced the Industrial Revolution (UH: yeah, no we didn't, no) so this is such a, we are now officially *the most globalised economy in the world*, it is...

UH: Yes but as well as that...when that happens, the people and because...their age group is...actually shows this to a large extent as well, it's synonymous with it...because they didn't come with baggage, they didn't come with *trade union* background...I'm not anti-union...but they didn't come with *this is the way it's always been done*...they came with *I've never done this before...but couldn't we do it this way*...you know and they are kind of looking for new ways of doing it and that's why I say by empowering...if you have too many rules and regulations and you have a lot of people, people will follow the rules and regulations because...quite frankly, I've always said...you work to your manager, your manager is your boss, if your manager manages you well, that's it, it doesn't matter what HP says, if your boss is actually going to be, do it my way, that is your experience of HP but if your manager is trained and we spend a lot of time training managers to make sure that they get the best out of people, by allowing them to be flexible, adaptable and, eh, resourceful, so I think that, that is the difference but I think it would probably, it probably is, and I think probably HP came to Ireland at a very good time, or even a few years before that because I'd say Intel would tell you the same thing...and they would have been here a few years earlier, came at a very good time when you had very young graduates who didn't have any bad habits and em, were able to actually bring their enthusiasm, their flexibility and really *devour* it, I kind of, you know, there was a *wow factor* for them too

MC: And can I ask, in the context as Intel is just up the road, you know was that by design? As you are struck immediately by these two large facilities?

UH: I suppose not really, well yes, by the design only in that HP wanted to be near Dublin, we had to be near land-ports and sea-ports because we ship out product, we ship in raw material...we fly in, we ship in all that good stuff, therefore we had to be near the ports, we also decided to be near Dublin as opposed to any other port like Limerick or, or Galway or whatever, logistically, we would have to be on the East coast...I suppose anyway for, because all of our product, most of our product goes to Amsterdam and that's our distribution centre for the products here, therefore the East coast would have made sense but it was also important being close to Dublin because about a third, slightly less than a third, about 28/30% of our employees are back in continuous education, therefore going back to university, going back to colleges, again if you are down in Ballydehob, that's not there, as well as that if you have a young population, and a lot of our other businesses and some of our people here too, apart from being young, they would be a multinational workforce...

...they wouldn't all be even EU, they want to live in a capital city, they want to go down Temple Bar, they want to be on Grafton Street, they don't want to be in Ballydehob so you know, nothing against Ballydehob (*laughter*) but quite frankly if you are trying to attract the top graduates, and as I say, a lot of them doing Masters, a lot of them back in college, a lot of them doing degree programmes...they want to be where the action is and that is Dublin

MC: And...okay...the future? Or what do you think?

UH: No, I have no problem discussing the future with you, I'd say you'll see a very different future for us, of course, I can only, it's all, obviously, manufacturing we are talking about and not HP in general as that's what your project is about

MC: But even with HP in Ireland, that sort of thing?

UH: Yeah, I'd see very definitely...em...digging, digging

MC: As you must get an overview? As someone in your position

UH: Yes I do have a very good overview, I see very definitely HP, getting more and more embedded, getting more and more involved as I say we are working with Science Foundation Ireland, we have a number of capability grants, R and D grants, from the IDA that we have, for the last couple, number of years, we're certainly showing HP, em, globally, that we are capable of doing it, ah, we are very lucky with our management and with Lionel here, our GM, who is very anxious to get more and more and more and more...fights for, and we can show that we can do it so I would be very optimistic that HP will be very successful here...in the long-term

MC: But in the context of, say, competition, in the context of...say...the fluctuation with the dollar, currencies, talking with people and savings they have to make and these can be wiped out with a single currency fluctuation?

UH: It goes up and down if you think about it...over the ten years, this is the first time that we have the, eh, in fact the Euro, it's the first time the Euro has been high, eh, so we really did very well, so we just look on that and you can't (MC: You look at the long-term) that goes up and down, that goes up and down

MC: Listen Una, thank you very much, that was very useful

C – Interview with Susan Cronin, Logistics Co-ordinator, Warehouse

Hewlett-Packard, 23 October 2003 (Samuel Beckett Meeting Room, Building 1, 15.30 p.m.)

Present: Susan and Mark

Mark: Can I ask you what your name is?

Susan: It's Susan Cronin

MC: And where were you born?

SC: The Rotunda Hospital in Dublin

MC: Okay...and do you still live in Dublin?

SC: Yes, for now

MC: And can I ask you Susan, eh, what your duties, responsibilities, eh, in your job at HP are?

SC: My duties are to export

MC: (interrupts)...sorry, maybe your title actually first, I am just thinking

SC: It's Logistics Co-ordinator, Traffic Co-ordinator; I would be responsible for shipping all our palettes of *FGI*

MC: *FGI*?

SC: 'Finished Goods Inventory'

MC: Okay, okay...and when you say shipped, where are they shipped?

SC: We would, we ship them to four destinations...one in Singapore, one in the U.S. and two in Europe

MC: Okay...great...and what is your previous work experience, where else...eh...have you worked?

SC: I have worked here for 7 years and while here (*coughs*) I am in my third job, role, so I am changing each time, gradually going where I want to go, prior to Hewlett-Packard, I was teaching sailing, canoeing and rock-climbing and all that kind of stuff

MC: Okay, that is quite a change?

SC: Yes indeed

MC: How come?

SC: Well I did my course for two years in college, as...to get instructorship on all of these outdoor activities and I worked for four years and then I just thought...the weather is not great, the money wasn't too good either and it was very seasonal so I just thought, hey, I need to go and get myself *a real job*, em, so I started off...and when I came to Hewlett-Packard and I started off as an operator on the production floor

MC: And, so what were the motivations, you'd say, for coming to HP? What were the reasons?

SC: Well, I had heard a lot about, like, Intel who had been in Ireland for so many years before Hewlett-Packard...and, it was just...I just thought it was a big industry as...permanent...stable job...it was good feedback I'd been hearing. I had knew...I had known a couple people at the time who had been worked here and, I just thought to make the change from what I was doing...I thought, yeah, I'll come into a big place where I know it's...it isn't going anywhere in the near future

MC: Did you know anyone else working here? Prior to coming to work in HP?

SC: I knew one person, really and that was it...so, eh...I just applied and that and...here we are

MC: Okay...em, and what way do you think the ICT industry has changed in the last decade? Can you illustrate with any examples? If you can but how do you think it has changed?

SC: (*softly*) What's ICT?

MC: 'Information and Communications Technology'

SC: Okay, okay, right, well, I don't really know, I just know that in here, what we do is we're making inkjet cartridges and when I started here 7 years ago we were making a product, one type and now 7 years on, that product is no longer...it's obsolete, people don't want to buy it anymore, we no longer make it and we've gone on to making 15 other different products that are now in demand and gradually you can see that they're, falling down by the wayside and every single month or every six months we are bringing in a new product and...it's constantly, constantly changing...yeah

MC: So there has been a huge, it's a constant mode of change and development...and re-invention, as it were?

SC: Yeah, I think Hewlett-Packard...I think they have a huge team out there working on what are we going to do next, they don't even know what it is, but they know that the inkjet business is not going to be around forever...people are going to be wanting new, smaller, better things, quicker, brighter more colourful...you know and they know it is not going to be around forever and I think they put a lot of work and effort and time and money...into looking out into the future

MC: That is quite interesting so, and it ties in with this, how do you see this as having changed Ireland? Or how we view Ireland? The role of the IT industry, how do you think that has changed Ireland? In your opinion

SC: It's offering so many different jobs and...higher...more, like, I...kind of, wouldn't have a very professional job in here but I can see that they're looking for, they'd often have posted up on the board and they're willing to give somebody a hundred and...no...one thousand five hundred pounds if they know somebody who is like, eh...really technical person in...I don't know what the job titles are but they are pretty high qualified people in the various IT software industries...so there's people out there...companies battling to get these guys just out of college, you know...they want them to work here, they want them to work in Intel and they are willing to pay good money to get these people, so there's a huge amount of jobs being created

MC: And so how do you think that has changed Ireland? How do you, what ways do you think it has changed Ireland? The fact, these companies operate in Ireland, like HP?

SC: I think people...see Ireland as a place, as we've all noticed, every time you get on a bus or everytime you walk down the street that there is a huge number of different nationalities where as 10, 15, 20 years ago if you seen one coloured person, it was...oh...you know, it was...where as today, it's just different and Ireland is attracting people like the UK would have in the 80's, if people want to come and work here...you know

MC: Do you think it has been beneficial to Ireland? Do you think it's been a, how do you think it has changed, I suppose?

SC: Well I'm a bit biased at the moment because I'm buying a house and I'm not impressed with the prices (*laughs*) yes it's definitely beneficial but on the other hand it's, things are just going up and up and up and...yeah...

MC: And how do you think the role of work has changed in Ireland? How do you think work has changed in Ireland? The workplace has changed in Ireland, say in the last 15 years?

SC: When I was growing up, my mother or none of my mother's friends would have worked...it wasn't very common for women to go out and work whereas, I think, nowadays there's enough jobs out there and women are in the workplace, equally...as men...probably got better jobs than men, whereas 10 years ago that wouldn't have been the case, so...am I answering that question?

MC: Yes, absolutely...I was going to ask you about that, what you thought of the role of women, say even in this environment?

SC: I think Hewlett-Packard, you only have to look at the, main CEO (*then Carly Fiorino*) and that's a lady, you know, and she's been listed as one, up in the top ten of the US business people in, actually in the world, so, she's a lady, you know and, that's great for the company and I think underneath Carol, she's a woman also...so the top two people in this company are women and, I don't think there is any prejudice at all, if I, if you were going for an interview against a guy, they totally, it's on your ability and...I think definitely in HP

MC: In terms of...would you have any opinion on how the role of work has changed in Ireland? Even say in that time, even from your mum's time or growing up...how industry has changed in Ireland? I mean what do you think of these big changes that have happened in the last 8-9 years? In your opinion

SC: What do I think of the changes that have happened?

MC: This big change in the economy, the culture

SC: I don't know, I'm sorry

MC: That's fine, absolutely okay, you have touched on some of this already, which leads into this, how do you see the future of the IT industry in Ireland?

SC: Emm...I can see it constantly changing, but as a plant being stable 'cause there's always goin' be something else to come in and take over, take it's place...aah...for production lines out there, they, they seem to always need less and less people to operate them there...every different production line we bring in, it has more capabilities within itself, whereas the first one, we probably needed 12 and now we only need 6 people to run it...so technology is constantly changing and machines and computers are doing more work all of the time and all the different software packages are constantly changing and you've got more tools to use on a PC so...life, work is being made a hell of a lot easier...I think

MC: Okay, but that obviously means and ties in with, in terms of your own learning, is that an ongoing process?

SC: Oh, constantly...oh, absolutely, we work, we use this software package, it's called SAP, and that's what we control all our inventories and it's linked production to accounts to finance and all that good stuff...and

it's just so in-depth...I use a tiny section, other departments use another small section and the whole tool is just phenomenally big...and...eh, constantly trying to learn more about it the whole time, you know, and you still only know a tiny, little proportion of it...and there's always new packages, like, even the *Microsoft Windows*, for example, it's constantly upgraded...(M: so you're constantly trained in those upgrades...)...yeah, we have courses in here and you can go on and learn, what, you know, new stuff that's coming out and stuff like that...so they have courses and anyone can go along and just put your name down, which is great, you know, it means we can all keep ourselves up to date with any changes that are coming about, and packages that we would have used, maybe *pencil and paper* 5 years ago...it's all gone now and it's...*pencil and paper* and *passed-down, handovers*, they're all gone and everything is just, it's all logged on the PC...if it's not on the PC, then it didn't happen, you know

MC: Okay, okay, Susan, yeah maybe, in just regards to that change, if I was to ask it this way, how do you think working in Ireland has changed since your mum and dad's generation to your generation?

SC: You want me to say something and I'm just not getting it (*laughter*)

MC: No (*laughing*) I mean, do you think there are more jobs? Not having to go away, those sort of things

SC: There's...there's a lot more jobs, I think...jobs in factories were very...manual, you know...to be a factory worker was a very manual job and the IT, what was a computer? I know, I...the first, I heard of a computer was in secondary school, you know...people, offices and schools didn't have PC's...in primary school, wouldn't never had PC's where as nowadays, every child in the country nearly has a PC and all homes have one and...you know, children at the age of 4 when they go into school use PC's...which is something that didn't happen in my day, you know

MC: And the last thing, and you've touched on already, that changing role for women, how do you think it has changed in Ireland? The fact that you are in a global company, in many ways, this is one of it's global sites...so in terms of that, how do you think it has changed for women or has it?

SC: Yeah, yeah...well I think Hewlett-Packard as a company, encourages women...they, they like to have a certain percentage of women as engineers, as technicians...so just as an example, we have, my manager would have been an ex-engineer so she's going down to colleges throughout the country and she's...selling Hewlett-Packard as a place to work to all these students that are just going to graduate, you know, and they're sending out a woman to that so that in itself is saying something for the women in the workplace, you know

MC: Okay, thank you very much

D – Interview with Ger Walsh, Health and Safety Supervisor, Warehouse

Hewlett Packard, 9 October 2003 (Beckett Meeting Room, Building 1, 14.45 p.m.)

Present: Ger, Mark and Representative of the Government and Public Affairs Department

Ger: My name is Ger Walsh and I was born in Dublin...my main duties in Hewlett-Packard are within the Logistics Department, I work for *Process Control* and *Materials Admin* mainly what that involves is...the actual operation itself...controlling the processes so that the *Warehouse* is working to the correct *process flow*, it involves writing them, auditing them...em any issues coming up through into the departments...

...it would be me going in, to have a look at those and see if we can solve them...also the other aspect of my job is...*Health and Safety*...from a *Health and Safety* point of view I am responsible for *Supply Chain*, so not only logistic but all parts of *Supply Chain* which would be...purchasing, planning...Tees (*note: Uncertain of spelling as I did not clarify*)...which is documentation, *Materials Engineering* and Logistics...so it's for all of *Supply Chain*...my main role there is...as, eh, a contact point within *Supply Chain* for *Health and Safety*...again carrying out safety audits, risk assessments...making sure any safety concerns are *closed out*...we have *contractors based, running the warehouse*, so it is making sure that they are following the correct safety practices and that they are closing down any safety concerns raised...it's

carrying out safety audits with the H and S Department here...they're my main functions, there are obviously other bits and pieces that come along with it...so I'm involved in...quite a few projects, so, the project work seems to be quite heavy at Hewlett-Packard

Mark: And how long have you been working at Hewlett-Packard?

GW: I have worked in Hewlett-Packard for 4 years in total...3 years of that was as a *contractor*, so, as the lads would say, I've sort of *gone over to the Dark Side*...now I've, I've the experience of the contractors but now I'm working for Hewlett-Packard, basically making sure the contractors are carrying out their work so sort of like *Poacher turned Gamekeeper*...type of position

MC: So there's both full-time and contract work happening at the same time

GW: There are full-time HP employees...within the Warehouse, there's probably about 50 or so contract people and maybe...very small...maybe 12 to 15 HP employees overseeing that contract as such...em...*previous work*...eh...previous work experience...this is the first time I worked in an IT-based company, previous to that...my first job role was...office admin within a sales office...original job, office admin...straight from school...thought that was the *bees knees*...thought that was the best job...one of the original yuppies...eh, thought this was the job for life...circumstances changed...lead to redundancy and I took a stop-gap job within warehousing...it was...cold storage

MC: Can I ask with the job? Was that down to the economic change or?

GW: It was...it was...it was down to the particular company and it was down to the economic changes...I was working as Sales Support so we had Reps out on the road and I was supporting them internally...they had invested a lot of money in R and D...some worked out, some didn't so they had to cut back on finances so they felt the most expendable part was Sales Support...because Reps could cover their own work internally...so it was through the company and financial situation more than anything else

MC: So this was your first job?

GW: First job, straight out of school and straight into this job within a couple of months...first job ever

MC: And did you know anybody working here at HP or how did that come about?

GW: The connection to this was, my first job was, oh, I don't know, it's...what am I now? 34 now so, 17 years ago, so that was 4 years, at 21, I was made redundant out of there and started working in the warehouse industry, first time ever in the warehouse industry, stop-gap job within the cold-storage industry, hard environment...hard environment

MC: In the physical-manual way?

GW: Physically and pressure-wise, it's...cold-storage or any sort of storage is pure distribution, so you get it in and get it out as quick as you can...you can be put under a lot of pressure, we had occasions where we'd be loading...*handballing*...now I was a *checker* within the organisation...we'd have lads handballing

MC: 'Handballing'? Can you explain?

GW: Manually loading trailers rather than palletised...they were manually loaded, boxes of frozen beef, averaging 25 kilos a box, we would have occasion were we'd be loading frozen meat for a container and you'd have 32 containers go out in a day...so there was a lot of pressure on the job 'cause you've got timelines to catch...through that...that position again was unfortunately another redundancy situation and that was purely em...economical situation

MC: Was that in the Dublin area?

GW: It was in the Dublin area, yet they had other companies based in Waterford and they were a large UK transport company that ran this, through the down slump in the beef market with the beef tribunal which caused a lot of problems with the finances, they decided to close down the Dublin operation and just keep the Warren Road (Waterford) open, so it was...it was a purely environmental, economic situation there, but through my working there...made some contacts in the cold storage industry and I moved throughout a few other cold storage spaces through that...the connection to *here*...is, my previous job to working here was in a *meat-processing plant*, I got to know one of the lads in the warehouse who was working with me at the time who had some friends working with the contractors that were working in Hewlett-Packard, he went for a job here, he got the job, meat-processing plant is again a completely different environment, again a lot of pressure on you, really the emphasis is not on safety but get the product out, I've had a couple of occasions where there have been near misses from a safety point of view and I was getting a bit fed up of it so, the chap, who was working here and asked him if there were any jobs going? So he got me an application form and I'm here ever since

MC: Okay

GW: So that was almost 4 years ago...as I say 3 years of my time here was spent as a contractor and 1 year now more or less as a HP employee

MC: Okay, yeah how do you think the IT industry has changed Ireland? You have got a lot of experience in sort of, different areas so obviously you'd have a sense of the economic climate in Ireland

GW: It has, obviously, brought a huge amount of work, first of all, but I think it's also brought a lot of *American-style thinking*, in particular, in regards to business, em, and you only see that when you are actually working in the industry, em, *the Americanisms*, the terminology that they use for business and it's not...*they don't consider anything just a job, it's a career*...so they encourage you to go forward and develop yourself, so, it's the first place I've discovered that sort of thing, now, as I say, in other warehouses I worked in, you would have to push for yourself to go do these things whereas it's the opposite way around, they encourage *you* to develop yourself, so I think in that way it's given the Irish, an employer market a very, very well-trained and capable and that's why you still see a lot of companies still coming here and they say because they are the best trained people in the world, I think the biggest way it has improved it, is for the better, now, unfortunately, I think it is going through a slump at the moment so, obviously the big bubble had to burst at some time, but I think, most of the big companies won't suffer...too greatly

MC: And how do you see yourself in this change?

GW: I think the biggest thing it has done for me is that it has given me and opportunity to, develop myself because I have previous experiences of other set-ups, I've seen how *not* to do things, em, again just relating to what I am doing now with the Health and Safety, one of the main reasons why I got the Health and Safety position was because of my *drive* to make sure everything is safe...because from previous experience in other warehouses, as I say, where safety is *not* an issue, I have had instances where racking has collapsed around me and could have killed me and, you come in here and they say...*well if it's not safe then you don't do it*...and you sort of say to yourself, *that doesn't sound right*, although it is right, it doesn't sound right and through that I developed in, more safety conscious and I, pushed safety within the warehouse so I think I am part of the change with regards to...my previous experience

MC: So it's not something that has gone on around you

GW: I think, no, what has happened here, this, eh, this type of company, American company, HP company, have taken my experiences and allowed me to develop based on, they've listened to what experience I've had and taken that into account when any changes have come in so, I think what they do is...
...they encourage you to develop yourself...I think, they nurture you, if you know what I mean, they will actually listen to you whereas if you were in another company, other companies I've worked in and you say

I don't think that should happen they say yeah, has to get on the truck I don't care...whereas here they actually take it into account and that sort of thing

MC: Yeah, okay, do you think the changes have shaped or influenced the way people in Ireland view this country and how outsiders think about contemporary Ireland?

GW: I think the traditional Irish person, obviously, likes the beer, the bit of craic, that's never going to change, I think it's true, we work hard, we play hard and I think, eh any Irish person will put 100% into whatever job they doing but they'll also put 100% into enjoying themselves so I don't think, I don't think there's been, I think we've always been the...I suppose...em...the sort of words you'd really put on it, as regards Europe, anything like that...we've always been the little person...not referring to *Leprechauns* but we've always been the smaller nation...*ah, yeah they're alright, they're over there...*but I think, through, not only industry, through sport, through everything...the world has suddenly realised it's a small country but...jaysus they've some amount of people there that they can offer such an amount of, and I think it's proven by the amount of American companies...now I know...I mean, obviously, the likes of the IDA have a huge input into that, I mean taxation grants and all of that, grand but it's the people, ultimately, that will keep the employers here, so I don't know, I think, as I say, the, eh, the eh, the impression outside of Ireland will always be *great craic, but they're some workers as well*

MC: So you think in that sort of sense, the role of Ireland has changed both in Europe and on a global scale

GW: I think we're more prominent, I think people have to stood up and listened now and have realised that, eh, we do have something to say, em, we're not behind the door in saying it either and I think now it's got to a stage where, because of the success of the market, the employment market, I think, it's now made us more prominent in...in Europe in particular

MC: And in your own areas of work, Ger, what do you see as changes in the future, in your work practices? Is there anything that you see that might change in the way we work or?

GW: I don't know...that's a tough one to answer, I think, I think there will always be changes, of course and I think one of the biggest drivers, in this economy, is going to be *cost-driven*...there is going to be cost-driven but one of the other things aside that, is the likes of safety legislation which will prevent costs being a major factor but I think you're going to see a lot more changes to...*looking at how much it's actually going to cost to do this rather than just do it...*and I think really, and you can see that in a lot of places that, I mean some of the strategies that we have would be cost reduction for the year, and they go look at this and see what they can do, I think it is, a lot of things are going to be cost-driven, we are an expensive country to live in, there are, the services are expensive, so I think that is going to be one of the biggest changes and things will always change, things are always going of change...whether they change drastically or not? I don't know...I don't know

MC: And yeah, how do you see the future of the IT industry in Ireland?

GW: I think it has gone through a rough time over the past few years, I think there have been a lot of...very highly publicised changes particularly with big American companies, with IT companies, I think though, it's mainly hit service companies rather than manufacturing companies, we...I mean, obviously, manufacturers have been hit fairly bad as well but I think it's going to slow down, I think it's going to level off, there had to have been a burst of demand out there, saturate the market, it's going end up drying up and it will just level off...I think it's going to turn a corner but it won't get much bigger, I think it's just going to sort of stabilise now and more or less stay as it is now and I don't think there's going to be any huge drops anymore

MC: And how, what do you think would be the importance of research now at this stage in...in, say, Irish economic development?

GW: I think, in as regards the actual economy itself now, yer man...employment and all that sort of thing...I think, at this stage now, the government have had a good run the past 6 – 7 years because it has

been really up there and it's been great...employment and everything...and they let it ride...they didn't put anything into the thoughts of infrastructure, into thoughts of taxation...I think, they're going to struggle now and I think, unfortunately, what's going to happen is...this government is going to go out and whoever comes in is going to have a hard time to encourage people to come in here as regards companies, em...I think because it has gone so well and the bubble has now, more or less, burst...it has to be looked at...you can't just stick a production plant in the middle of nowhere...again it would come back to cost...and I think it is going to have to be looked at, particularly, as I say with infrastructure, communications infrastructure, everything around that and really, it's probably now you see a lot of development going on roads...you've got hours of traffic jams and it's probably...*that bit too late*...it's going to really put pressure on I think...on the ordinary taxpayer and the government to get new people in here

MC: And just as I suppose as a final question, how do you think working has changed in Ireland since, say, your Mum and your Dads generation to say now? What do you think has been the change?

GW: The biggest change, I would say from my own experience, would be your family life has become as important, if not more important, as work, em, my Dad worked *hard* and he was away probably 2–3 days a week, it's, I think family life is, so the hours of work has changed and the emphasis is on, if you've got an issue at home...you sort that out first, it's more important than sitting in here so I think...I suppose social aspects of working have changed considerably in, compared to my fathers and mothers time, I would say that is probably the biggest change and it really is geared around quality of life and that would be the biggest change I would reckon I've seen

MC: Okay, alright, thanks a lot Ger, appreciate it

E – Interview with Lionel Alexander, Vice-President and General Manager of HP Ireland

Hewlett-Packard, Friday, 21 January 2005, (Meeting Room, Building 7, 15.00 p.m.)

Present: Lionel, Una Halligan (Director, Government and Public Affairs, HP Ireland) and Mark

Lionel: Got it? It's working now? (*had problems with the mini-disc recording device*)

Mark: Yeah we're working now I think, just test, that's grand, can I start by asking you your full name and title here?

LA: Okay, my name is Lionel Alexander; I'm the Vice-President and General Manager for HP Ireland Manufacturing

MC: Okay, and do you mind if I ask you how you came to this position, in terms of, previous work experience and how you've ended up in Leixlip (Una: In Ireland) County Kildare?

LA: Okay well it's a very...well I am actually 24 years with the company, first job, started off as an engineer but I think HP's, eh, opportunities being that it is such a big global company, I averaged a job in HP for four years and I moved...and I picked my career in paths based on the exposure I wanted and (coughs) I think I joined the inkjet part of the business back in '94

MC: Okay and was this in?

LA: Singapore, it was in Singapore

MC: So you started working for Hewlett-Packard in Singapore?

LA: I worked in Singapore...I started my job in Singapore then I spent, like, very short stints, like 6 months to a year in the U.S. then 6 months in Japan, a few places, in different job categories...and this was my first overseas posting which is long-term...so I joined the business in '94 and then soon after that they decided they wanted to start up another site and we were looking in Europe so I was partly involved in selecting the

first team of managers we were interviewing in Ireland and then started transferring some of the activities over here...and then in 2000, after my, eh, predecessor from the U.S. decided to go back to the U.S. they asked me If I'd be interested to come here...so it's been great

M: Okay and can I ask you, in terms of when you were looking in Europe...yeah, why Ireland?

LA: (*Laughs*) couple of reasons, (U: Some personal), some personal, my wife is Irish...so that's one reason

MC: So HP came here on account of, (U: (*Laughing*) absolutely)

LA: Yes...no (*coughs*) but the reason they came to Ireland was a couple of things...I think when we looked into Europe...we looked at quite a few countries...and em...Ireland was short-listed along with maybe, I think, two other countries...and when they went through...eh, you know, the various selection criteria's...very clear selection criteria which we went through to pick the site...em...definitely number one would have been...you know, the location is important...you know because we need the...the location, in terms of the infrastructure that you have...so number one I think Ireland came out for one thing the strong availability of talent...of people, I think, eh...it was starting to buzz with the growth of the *Celtic Tiger* and you started to have, not only have a strong rich available competency of talent but it also started to attract Irish people who left Ireland and were starting to come back...so huge talent...and for our kind of a business...technical competency is a key trial so...availability of highly educated technically competent folks is very, very important...second thing I think was also the, eh...the extremely attractive tax regime...most multinationals, I mean, wouldn't go anywhere unless it makes great financial reason so...the tax regime was, eh...the third thing, I think was, the relationships with the Government...it's very important, I think most multinationals, most companies, most businesses, you know, you can never predict where your business model goes...every year or every three years, four years so, so you need to be in an environment that is *flexible* enough that you can change your business model so can continue to be successful...in Ireland that is very feasible primarily because the government partnered very well with the multinationals

MC: So they're quite flexible?

LA: Very flexible, in support and understanding the challenges, some countries when you go, I think, they don't quite understand the challenges of...some of the big companies

MC: Could you, would you mind embellishing on some of that? When you say the challenges?

LA: I'll give you an example, I think (*coughs*) em, you could talk about, HP, fundamentally, started of as a 'test and measurement company', but today a huge part of our business is in the consumer world...and that's the most dynamic world to be because each and every one of us here in this room are consumers and you know your selection criteria, right...you want everything for free more or less, you don't want to pay for technology but yet...eh, you know...the customer perspective of, em, driving the business is very critical...so as customers start to go to *ease of use*...em, simplicity...you know, the business model changes...someone said this very well before and that is...if you go back to the early days right...eh, when man came to earth, for the first time, right...people could not understand anything, believe...believe a lot in *god*, god was the answer to everything right...in a way the way business has transformed today, the average consumer are looking for gods as they want things to be simple right...they don't understand, things are very complex...I mean, you look at a PDA connected to your, to your, you know...PC to your TV to your mobile...it's just too complicated, things have gotta' be simple...so when things gotta' be simple, the business gotta' be flexible...so today our business model looks great...next year...*it'll change*

MC: So in many ways, the technology that, sort of, lead to this globalisation force is also impacting *on* those globalising forces?

LA: Absolutely, it'll change, so the *customer profile demands* might change in a year and so we must change our business model...(M: 'okay')...now if you are in a country that is very rigid, eh, in that...it makes it very difficult to be flexible...and you lose your advantage, so that was very important

MC: So how does that impact, how you operate?

LA: So, eh...you know, I mean this site is a good story to talk about, eh, when, when most companies came to Ireland at the time of the Celtic Tiger *boom*...it was because you needed a presence in Europe, very important...some of them were highly manu...highly manufacturing in terms of organisation like we were...but back four or five years ago, it was also very clear that it was a matter of time before the *Euro* would strengthen against the *Dollar*...it was not *if* but...*when*, right...now we are in that phase and you can start to see the *competitiveness* of being in Ireland is not as compelling as it used to be...
...(U excuses herself from the room at this point)...because those advantages that you got from tax and everything was being eroded by *high labour costs*...so we embarked onto a transformation four years ago (2001) at this site because from my perspective I knew, (M: This was going to come down the road), it was and if we stood still and did nothing then the axe falls, right...because, suddenly...oh jeez, China looks really good now...so we transformed over the four years...so now, what we were, what was purely manufacturing...today...we are heavily into *Research and Development* (R & D)

MC: So it's to specialise in that regard

LA: Yeah, to marketing...but we also into manufacturing...but you select your manufacturing companies, you go into a, like, a high...a *high-mix, low-volume...multiple skews*...serving Europe, a specific country...is a different model...so to do that kind of transformation, you need government support...you need partnerships...you need government grants, you need to invest in technology, you need to create *IP* (*Intellectual Property*) that was the partnership

MC: Can I ask, in terms of your own experience, say coming from Singapore because it is one of the global locations...em, like how long have HP been in Singapore? I imagine there were similar sort of, eh, experiences, I presume, in say in Singapore as what is happening here?

LA: Yes, yes...Singapore has been in business almost 25 to 30 years, or probably coming up to 35...so much longer than been in Ireland...and I've told a lot of people my story...I've been in HP 24 years and I have been through many divisions...some have disappeared...*some don't exist anymore*...and the primary reason is because people decide not to embrace change...fight change right...change is not bad...I mean...the one thing people have to understand too is that when there is disruption, there is also *opportunities*...most people look at a disruption and say 'jeez, this is bad', *actually* it's good...you go find the opportunities to your disruption that best suits your competencies and so yes, Singapore went through that, em...you know, I mean, *my first job* in HP...when I first took up the job...em...in '82 when I first started as an engineer...after like zillionth interviews which was ...HP were very prudent about who they picked at that time...finally got the job you know...and within six months I lost my job...because the business I was...they hired me, decided they were going to move everything elsewhere...you know, for a young age, just starting...not a very pleasant experience...but it happened...so it kind of built in me at that time that...the worst thing you can do for your people is...if you choose to...just remain static

MC: So how did you respond to that one?

LA: Well, you see, when I lost the job, you know, I was *accessed* not actually lost...in other words, I was made, (M: redundant?), *available* to the rest of HP so, and I...because of my qualifications I got very quick...so I wasn't that bad off, (M: But an experience nonetheless), an experience...because it could have just as easily been, if no one had picked me, then they would have had to give me a package, so, it was an eye-opener that you, you know...what I, as an employee, I felt disappointed...I felt disappointed because how could things change so fast in an organisation which kind of speaks about the leadership, right, so my biggest frustration was not about, yes I knew I would be picked up, but I hoped I was picked up by an organisation with leadership...which is a little bit more far-sighted...right...without us having this cliff-face scenario, (M: Of course), so that was a little bit more...I think that was kind of...kind of engrained into me and then through my career...I seen a lot more of organisations which chose to use, do the wrong things...eh, start building competencies that are more driven by *ego* than me and...they don't exist...right...so that's probably

MC: So it's impacted how you...your relationship with the people you work with then?

LA: Absolutely...absolutely...it's a lot to do with the people here too and I think, you know...the one thing I've learned about the Irish apart from being married to one, you know very quickly...eh, you got to be a *straight-shooter*...you know, don't spend, (M: yeah), you know, I mean if you got bad news just look people in the eye and tell them that's bad but, you know, it's not the end...but do not try to, you know, cover it and flower it in a way that people start to see this as eh...integrity but they choose not to be honest...(U. re-enters the room)

MC: And can I, to be honest...we spoke, (L: sure), you know about it in that regard as well, there's been a lot of talk about the rate of Corporation Tax and the favourable conditions...how much does that impact...the role, and I know its not just Hewlett-Packard as you said, its all multinationals...
...we work in a global environment, I am aware of other locations from Singapore to Puerto Rico where there is *no* Corporation Tax and so we compete in those sort of environments...but how does that impact the operating here, in terms of...eh...if they suddenly turned around and there's a change of government here and they say 'well listen we want suddenly 20% or it's...

LA: Bad news...bad news...so, you know the...remember I alluded a little bit to manufacturing, right...eh, the way we have created our future has been...eh, you build your pillars of competencies on the foundations of manufacturing...right, so at the end of the day its like building a house, right...your foundations are manufacturing then you build the rest of the building that eventually becomes a phenomenal structure...but if you don't have that foundation...there's no reason...so a lot of people say, 'well you could always be an R & D centre' and I say, 'sure but it all depends on who puts the next grant on the table'...sure competency is there, right...and then he says 'well what about the learning curve?' (*refers to value chain of technology competency*), 'sure learning curve is there...but what if I tell my 20 Irish R&D engineers, 'guys I'll give you an expatriate package to go to Hungary?'...right...(M: yeah)...because at the end of the day what they give me in grants and what I pay you in expenditure, I'm still ahead...so I can, there are ways of closing the learning curve, right...so...while, if you're...invested into *high - capital activity* and manufacturing, it's not that easy, right...and then you try optimise that specifically with your other competencies...I've always kind of defined this into two areas of manufacturing, right...the one type of manufacturing I would call the *low - road strategy*...that, don't even try to hold onto it...that's going to go to India, that's going to go to China...that's going to go to Ukraine...don't even go there...sometimes I've...I've been to some meetings where I've heard people talk, 'oh how can we beat China? Not on *low - road*...you can never beat them...*high - road* which is where the consumer chooses to pay an *IP* (*note: Intellectual Property*), for your IP, pay a premium, that's where you want to be

MC: Sorry Lionel, can you explain about *IP* to me?

LA: *Intellectual property*...so for example if I have a packet, so if I produce...one good example of a high-road company is, eh...*Nike*...right, I mean you could buy Reeboks for 25% less but you buy Nike because you want to pay for that little emblem and that premium...that's the IP...right, that little emblem...but you don't mind paying 20 bucks for that, right...so...we need to go after businesses in Ireland that actually support that model...and those kind of businesses don't disappear, because the consumer decides...its...also another good example is...what do you call it? These little popping up grocery stores...right, if you look at it...how could a *Spar*(small convenience chain) or a *Superquinn* (supermarket chain) as it is, right...compete with the likes of the huge *Tescos* (another supermarket chain but cheaper) and all that, right...well *Spar* is very simple model...because sometimes when you go to Spar...if you are in Ireland, it's more expensive...but you're not going to tackle the traffic...(U: yeah and the car-parking...yeah)to go to a Tesco...and your bill might be about 10% more but you say, 'I'll pay that 10%'...(U: to save the hassle)...and that's the model...(U: like when you go for petrol, convenient)...yeah...so that's the model, right...you're going to go after customers just like that...because of ease of use...convenience, simplicity...they'll pay for that, right...and does kind of businesses will stay...those *low - roaders*, basically, there's is no IP...bottom line is what you decide to pay as consumer...that has to leave Ireland

MC: So, what do you, what would you...eh...how do you see it so Ireland ensures the longevity of this...of this, what has been, this...profound transformation?

LA: The first...the first step they've made which I'm really pleased about...which I think has been a major milestone because of people like Una and Des, the Controller, and all who have been talking to the *IDA* (Industrial Development Authority, Irish government body to promote economic development)...*don't tie investment to jobs*...right, do not always ask if I want to get a grant, 'how many jobs is this going to create?', the paradigm shift from *just job-creation to job-preservation* has to happen, that's a first step...and for job-preservation then you get the support to create business models that best support the competencies of the organisation...at the end of the day, no multinational has any emotional attachment to Ireland...or Singapore, or China or India...there's no...(M: real world?)...*it's business, right...and if there's no business reason to be in a country we will not...we will leave tomorrow*...but, Ireland has a lot to offer...if we get the business model right with our competencies, with our infrastructure...and the ability of the partnerships...you have a compelling model...so that has to happen, starting with the first...eh, eh...you know, the job creation thinking...is, is good...the second part of it really is to be very clear about...you know, for the information and communications sector we are in...it is good that the government also realise, don't throw in the towel just because you already have these companies here...and don't jump into the *biotech – pharmaceutical* and think that is the next wave...most countries did that...Singapore did that and went into recession...(M: 'okay')...specifically that...you have to remember how...(M: 'they went chasing one wave and then the next thinking it was the answer?')...exactly...and economic cycles change...and you're caught in this change...the repercussions are unbelievable...Singapore went through that because...they said...well the IT sector is great...we're going to invest in *Fabs* (large industrial complexes)...building D-ramps...and Fabs will always be here because who is going to take a Fab away, right...so...get off the ICT and went off to Fabs and went after pharmaceuticals...what happened...when the Asian currency crisis hit in Thailand when the Baht crashed...everything went down, right...there were no more demands for PCs or so after the year 2000...right because that was an artificial thing so eventually PCs became a commodity...because people weren't willing to pay for all that, you know...give me the cheapest thing...clones came in and D-ramps at that time which the ? were building...which were called *gold* ...became cheap commodities...and you didn't need to do that in Singapore...so Singapore Fabs were running at 10% capacity...pharmaceuticals didn't take off...and...they realised the folly of abandoning a stable...and nurturing a stable investment, right...and what they could build on...and that's what, that's what I think Ireland...the government here...with, with the ICT sector, are beginning to realise that...don't forget to nurture your current...eh...you know, support it, provide a means for investment and then create avenues for *cross-pollination*, right...because if you look at your pharmaceuticals sector...and you look at the ICT sector...you'd be amazed if you create those *grounds of pollination* what business opportunities can come out of that...because they are linked, right...and you can create a huge amount of opportunities...and last but not least...I think...eh, the ability for companies to work with tertiary institutions without any kind of, eh, control to IP is important...right...as multinationals, we...you know, we're not going to go and work and say, 'we want everything...you guys get nothing back'...(M: that was my next question) (laughter)...we wouldn't...you know but we'd want *propriety of IP*...to me it is not a question of finance...because, you know, propriety, right...so if I work with Una on a project and I say to Una, 'look, once this patent is made, I own this patent but I am willing to give you 35% royalties, because I want exclusivity and that's a business thing, right...and we need to create that environment...and...I don't know if you read about the *MediaLab* (a cooperative between MIT and the Irish government, based in the *Digital Hub*, a centre for innovation in technology in Dublin)...(U: yes, yes and that's why)...they're going to shut down, right...and that's why, it was in the Sunday Business Post (*Irish broadsheet*)...exactly for that, right and I mean...what's the guys name? Nick...(U: Nicholas Monlaponte), Nicholas Monlaponte in MIT...he doesn't want to step down from the high moral ground which they have with MIT in Massachusetts...doesn't work here right...so guess what happens...companies won't go in and invest...so you need to create that environment, that conducive environment...so those are the changes that I think are really important

MC: Okay, okay...and so...in many ways, I suppose that does tie in with in many ways...how you see the future of the ICT industry in Ireland? I mean it would be those sort of factors, yeah?

LA: ICT industry will...you know, it is going to become...it will still be a major...its going to change dramatically...em, and the one thing you got realise, you know, em...is technology is going to become more affordable...right...I mean, its going to go down, people want...ease...if you look at what the future holds, it is starting to happen...so...its also going to be a tough place to be...on those kind of business

MC: In terms of competitiveness?

LA: Competitiveness...and you know, market-share and but its not something you can't succeed in, you can, you just got to get better and I think, Kylie (?) said this at the last meeting when we had in EME, which I thought was very good, right, apart from, you can have passion, you can have confidence but you got to be predictable, of what is coming ahead of you, in anything you do, the ICT business or any business we do, if we are predictable about what is changing out there...and we start to keep defining our business model...which, by the way, is what is making the company successful today, its not technology...it's the business model, see, 15 – 20 years ago, it was technology which differentiated companies, right, who came out with the first IP...and you know, you remember that these, you may be too young (*laughter*) the 41C calculators, right...you remember the old HP calculators? I was in engineering school and if you had a 41C stuck to your belt...you made it! (*laughter*) you're a real engineer, right because that was technology...right, and we sold that because of the technology, we didn't even have to market it, I mean, with a 41C you didn't have to put an ad in the paper, engineers just (clicks fingers) engineering degree, 41C...today is not about technology, today companies that succeed are companies have the right business model...and if you have the right business model

MC: So you mean in terms of being flexible?

LA: Redefine the model of what the customer wants...right...eh, customers want different things in terms of...one common example, of course is Dell and *Dell Direct*, that's a business model...right...that direct model...has created...opportunity for PCs to work but the same direct model does not work for cars, you never buy a car from a PC...or you, you want to go see, to feel...so...where is the common ground? So if you want to sell a product, direct is important...but you also need to create an opportunity for customers who want to experience that change, right...and...an example of what some people have been talking about was...eh...shopping in a supermarket is an experience right...you go to shop, I mean, some people enjoy, some people hate it but some people who enjoy it for the ambiance of the supermarket...you go to the bread section, you get the smell of fresh bread, right...so...there were some guys in the research centre who were working saying, 'why don't we create that ambiance, right, for the customer to do that from the living-room or from their study, by actually creating the smell, so you go through a 3-D dimension model into a...you're actually in the mall...or in the shopping...centre, I mean, the supermarket, (U: in that department), area...and you can actually pick what you want...it automatically and you also get, because of the bread, flavours, smells, aromas being released...you feel you are in the bread section...right so that is one area but what it means is people are trying to change to make it easy...so business models are going to change dramatically that...what we as consumers want with ease...and if companies who have got that right, upfront...are the ones that are going to win

MC: And can I ask, it gets back to...I know I am conscious of time, (U: yeah because we have to get back to, go ahead), you said yourself, you were six months in your first job and then, being let go and then, do you think that's also part of...because, it seems to me, a lot of...a sense of this being innovative, being flexible...being responsive, that that is also the way in many ways, even from personal experience...that is the new way of working...our ideas of, you know, long-term, more permanent work, that this too is also going to change?

LA: It is...you know, eh...a couple of things, right, when in Asia, when I was in school, the idea of jobs was you must join the government...because it was great, right...I mean a job for life (U: a pension)...a pension...(U: used to be the same here, Lionel, it was the same here, 50s and 60s...absolutely the same) and you were engrained and you told your parents, 'I want to go into the private sector', 'why? Are you mad?' you know, so...that's changed and I think like everyone else, every individual in this world today...in any job that we have...and its becoming increasingly clear a couple of things need to happen...*one* is you got to be very flexible...*two*, got to keep educating yourself, right...I mean, with the changes that are happening out there...you know and *three*, I think most importantly that, you know...its

every...single...individuals responsibility not to end up becoming...you know, totally unaware, right, or ignorant in their jobs, right...because you can choose to do that and then you just don't become, you know, a *value-add* anymore, that's got to keep changing so, the continued education, even for engineers, what you graduated four years ago from college...its gone...and you got to keep educating yourself, if you're on the business part of it, keep understanding, understanding what...how business models are changing...what difference between successful companies and unsuccessful companies...and that's primary responsibility, for me personally, in my role, you know...my first year here, and Una will tell you, I was very much in the thick of things...right, I was more into the operational part, because we had to be really good at what we want...but then the second part of it, after a couple of years was...the self-realisation that...where do you see the site, right, in the future? and I would say, three years ago, someone asked me and I really didn't have an answer...I couldn't say where the site was going to be in 15-20 years from now...and it would be very easy to say, 'oh I see us in manufacturing for the next 40 years', you got to be realer than that...so the personal change for me as to be to educate myself and education is about also having the right linkages with people in the organisation, right...talking to them and understanding what their thoughts are...and then starting to formulate what you think the possibilities for people...especially your staff who work for you, right...to get them engaged in where we need to go in terms of change, to ensure the site is here 30, 40 years from now

MC: And one last question...so how...what's the...can you envisage what that site might look like in 30-40 years time?'

LA: I...the site will be doing manufacturing but not the kind of manufacturing you do in Asia, China, India...you know, we'll be specifically building multiple products, multiple skews...high-changeover...very quick response, exactly meeting what the customer wants and creating a valuable position for the customer...that when they want changes, right...that we provide those changes in the shortest period of time to suit their needs, right, because we're going to become very...the customer demands are going to change...

...I always think of the example of Gillette, right...Gillette is the greatest example, I mean, you know, how heck will they last in blades, right...but you think about what they did...I mean, a lot of their programmes they have aren't really major technology programmes, right...their advertising is fantastic...right, but the only problem is, they play with a selection of colours, right...ice-blue...it's a man thing, right...(U: I'll take your word for it) (*laughter*) yeah, but the way they put it "Mach 4, ice-blue", right...and then what they do is they just market, they took the fore-market and put an additive strip on the blade...right, so people who hated putting foam...just was easy for them...that was a major step...you kill one step already, so that was really clever, so what really happens really is that you start to go into *adjacent markets*, right, of your business and start providing so that 'Mach 3, Mach 4' sold very well worldwide, ease of use for customers, that's what the customer wanted...so this site, to me, is going to be providing those kind of solutions for the customer, we'll be doing a lot of R&D, right...specifically...and we will be very integrated in actually differentiating the solutions for the customers in each of the countries in Europe, right, and providing those instantly, (M: again, so very responsive), very responsively...you know...you may want...to have a customer in Belarus or somewhere who wants 50,000, eh, specific custom-made products from printers to cartridges for basically a specific school programme so its going to be designed specific to their need and then you have one development that will do the whole writing system with the printer to cartridges...and specific for that environment, right...and will take 2 months to 3 months from development to delivery

MC: Sorry, the final, final (LA: sure) how do you think the view of Ireland has changed? In terms of a global, how do you think Ireland is viewed, in terms of, is it viewed as, you know, a global player?

LA: I think that, you know, Ireland is, I would say today is viewed as a major powerhouse even much more than the UK, you wouldn't think of that. 15, 20 years ago...right, although the UK might not agree to this but actually it's a fact...it has shifted dramatically...and what exists in the UK today are really some...eh, industries that were very specific to the UK in, originated in the UK...but very little, huge massive investments in support of that so Ireland is viewed as a major player...I also believe, you know, that the government is also aware...which is why you see this delegation going to China (*A Trade Mission including the Irish Prime Minister were presently on a trip to China*)...(U: very important)...eh, its

because you can't fight the emerging countries...I mean, China already today takes 30% of the steel of the world, right, I mean and they're not even...(U: trying)...yeah...they're already eating 30% of the steel...you can see their GDP (Gross Domestic Product) growth, right...they're rich in cash, right...the U.S. government themselves knows China doesn't abide by WTO (*World Trade Organisation*) agreements, they're still not floating the Yuan against free currency...but you don't want to do that because if China floats its free economy, its free currency...Japan and Korea will go tail-spinning in its economy, so China is going to be big and it's going to be a huge market...India, right, its going to be huge and its going to be big and that transformation is happening, right, for those countries and I think Ireland...as, you know its good to see this happening...because its going to help the indigenous companies of Ireland start to create opportunities going in the future because if you cut yourself out and you choose not to engage...you will lose these opportunities to the...to the Polish, to the Hungarians and to other of these European countries

MC: Because some would say that it is a dependency, in some cases of China and India, but in many ways you have to embrace that

LA: Yes, because the Chinese would need a country in Europe, right, for their...so...EU is not going to be very...you know, there is...I mean, whatever you do, eventually, if it is in a balanced economy, the EU will put tariffs on all products coming out of China, so there'll need to be a kind of partnership with some European countries, right...to get around some of this tariff, you know it is going to happen, right...either you're there first or you miss the boat, it was good to see the Irish government taking that...yeah

MC: Aware of time, thanks very much for that Lionel. (U: get some photographs now?)

F – Interview with Mark Doran, Clean Room Operations Supervisor

Hewlett Packard, 28 November 2004 (Canteen 12.30 p.m.)

Present: Mark D., A Representative from Government and Public Relations Department and Mark C.

Mark C.: Can I get your name?

Mark D.: My name's Mark Doran

MC: And where were you born Mark?

MD: I was born in...eh...Dublin, in...in...Crumlin, in Dublin and then we moved to Nutgrove...in Rathfarnham (also in Dublin) when I was very young so, lived there most of me life and I'm living in Tallaght (suburb of Dublin) now...so...that's it briefly...brief spell, brief spell in Lucan (in County Dublin) as well as but...

MC: In between?

MD: Yeah, yeah

MC: And how long have you been working at HP?

MD: With HP almost 8 years, so, eh 7 and a half to 8 years...when did I start? More 7 and a half...started in July

MC: So were you out...was HP here or was it Blanchardstown at that stage?

MD: It was Blanchardstown...so there was two...basically two final assembly lines, high vas lines...and one package line there at the time...so...I started off as an Operator on a package line so that's...

MC: And it has worked into what you are doing now?

MD: Yeah well I have worked through from there now...I done a few, about a year and a half as an Operator...and about two years as an Operator and then moved onto Process Technicians job on...done that for...

MC: Which is up in the *Clean Room* area, am I right?

MD: Yeah so it's the Clean Room, worked in an area of the Clean Room called the *Barrier Area*...which is the first area...em...that wafers get processed in the Clean Room and em...I was a *Process Tech* there

MC: And how many areas are there in the Clean Room?

MD: In general? Well there is multiple, each steps of the process are broken down into areas for...you know...ease of management...process flow and that type of stuff you know...so you become kind of...eh...self-sustaining, self-managed kind of...entities within the Clean Room themselves

MC: So if there are any kind of problems, you can quickly identify the area?

MD: Yeah, yeah...exactly...but obviously there is a clear process flow there as well...systems can link up...em...more easily as well...cause they *allocate location codes* on each of the systems so it's a tracking system...you know...you've got a location code...so you're working in *Barrier*...you could be...I don't know, 7900...and you might have one or two different locations within there so...you can track work in progress as it goes through each area...and if there were *miss-processes* along the line...you can also track them through back to where they happen, you know...it's handy for all those types of reasons

MC: absolutely...and can I ask your role?

MD: *Just In Time (JIT)*...kind of stuff as well...sorry (MC: no, go ahead) I was just saying it's handy for Just In Time management...as well of material...so you're not having big build up of *WIP (wafer in progress)* anywhere...it's kind of moved to the next stage and they may pull from the proceeding area and

MC: So it's quite efficient?

MD: It's pretty efficient...we do tend to buffer material...probably more than we have to but...eh...you know it's a bit of an insurance policy there as well...so (MC: So you have to be aware of that?) yeah, it doesn't work perfectly by any stretch of the imagination so

MC: Like anywhere I suppose?

MD: Yeah, yeah

MC: And your role in that now? As you are no longer a Process Operator...

MD: Hmm, yeah I'm away from the process now, it's more people management...(coughs) so it's really...eh...I think you're given the...eh...you're given the...em...gambit of, eh you need to get the best out of people rather than you having to telling the people what to do...or you have to know what they do with *micro-management* the whole time...it's really...right, they have a set of objectives, I have to know what those objectives are and they need to reach and meet those objectives and once they do that, like, I don't need to know how they exactly how they do it and when they do it...have to have a general idea

MC: You delegate rather than sort of looking over their shoulder?

MD: Yeah exactly so...it isn't...it's not a micro-managed kind of process, it's...you trust people to do it and they get on and do it...if it's not done you have to investigate why it hasn't been done...and then there's an investigation and then you can try and rectify where the problems are but it's not...big on...you do this, this, this and this at that time...you'd say, I need this done

MC: So more the word 'Supervisor'?

MD: Exactly, I think it's more leadership they try to stress, supervisors' role as leadership (coughs)...I can't remember who said it, I think it was some...I think it was an army general in World War 2, could have been Patton or one of those guys...I can't remember exactly who it was but it was something along the lines of, if I can remember it now...eh, you can either...eh, tell a guy what to do and he'll do just that or you can tell a guy what you want done and he'll surprise you by doing a lot more, that's not exactly what he said but it's along those lines so, I think if you give people the challenge, and you give them the right tools to do it and you get rid of the kind of, roadblocks that are there for them to stop them doing it, they will generally do the job and do it better than if you go in and say I want this, this and this done at certain times and this is the way I want it done

HP Public Affairs Representative: Less authoritarian type of management...more

MD: Yeah, but I mean...having said that, I mean I've seen within even the small work group...I say small...it's relatively big but...we've 4 shifts, say 40 people per shift so we've 8 supervisors looking after about 160 people on the floor...as a production group...and even within those 8 supervisors, like...I've seen varying styles...some of them are more...authoritarian than others, you know...and some of them to be, kind of, too much the other way...so I don't know...there's a balance, you know

HP Public Affairs Representative: A happy medium

MD: You can't really, you know be too soft either, you know, a balance

MC: I could see that this morning

MD: Different characters, different individuals...so we do work a bit differently...but it tends to work, in general, reasonably well...reasonably well (*slight laugh*) room for improvement...there you go

MC: Can I ask before, were you...em...did you work in this industry before?

MD: No, not a great deal...I had production experience but em...so, I suppose I travelled a bit as well...I worked in Germany, I worked in...eh...England, em, doing various jobs really just to, kind of, make ends meet...em...I think the first kind of production factory that I worked in was when I left college, initially, I worked in an Industrial laundry which was an Irish company...and it was a pretty horrendous place to work and I can tell you stories in relation to safety and...em...you know just the way they treated people and the level of trust that you had for you was miles removed from here...but then you had the unions constantly pulling you one way and the management pulling against them...em...a lot of the workers were caught in the middle...so I don't think the unions did any favours for people either...so that's been removed from here
MC: And that works?

MD: It works to a level, yeah but I also think that senior management here at the moment and over the last couple of years have lost a lot of the trust and...and faith of the people on this site...em...they have a world-wide survey which according to the results that we've seen would indicate that around the world, it's pretty much as they were...as a deal of satisfaction but I think the Irish experience is...is way different...so, em...with pay freezes and everything else that's happened...and just the way things are communicated...eh...kind of, doesn't work very well for the Irish experience, because we're being told that the company is doing really well and for the section of the world we're in in particular is doing very well...we're actually working harder than we've ever had to work...our targets are continuously going up but the rewards for that are just...don't weigh up for what we're being asked to do

HP Public Affairs Representative: Rewards are just not there

MC: Didn't HP just announce a profit of around 864 million dollars?

MD: Yeah and, and the bonus we yielded from that was 1.3%...so for the best quarter...that's the last quarter is the best quarter they've...in history for this section of the business...but because the business as a whole has been pulled down in other areas...this is probably the worst bonus we've got since I started here...so

MC: So is part of being the Euro-zone as well in the fact that the Euro has been so strong against the Dollar?

MD: No, you see...I think, I 'm not sure whether that has

MC: Impacted?

MD: Impacted...now you can ask someone in, kind of, finance department and they'll probably tell you 'yeah'...I'm not too sure how that's impacted...the whole thing but...it's 1.3% worldwide...that's what the bonus would be, (MC: So across the board?), so it's across the board...they do everything across the board here...it's good in some ways but when you're in the section of the business that's busy...and you're kind of carrying other sections as it were or you seem to be...it's not great...so it works against you, (MC: I can understand), I mean it's just one of those things right now...so...yeah...you know

MC: Six of one and half a dozen...

MD: There is, there's a level of dissatisfaction from the ground level but...*corporate* kind of run things differently...they look at the *share price*

MC: So how do you think that has...kind of links in with, in general terms...how do you think this transformation that has been brought about by the IT industry, how it's changed Ireland?

MD: How it's changed Ireland? Well, I suppose from my own point of view...em...it gave...it gave me a bit of stability...it brought a lot of employment into the country and, we had the whole *Celtic Tiger* thing I suppose and that was...really driven by, I think by...a lot of the IT companies coming into the country in the first place...but I think there was a level there where we got carried away with ourselves...eh...I won't go into Government mis-management but I think that's also a lot to do with it as well but...em...the Celtic Tiger for me didn't really get off the ground because I was one of the people...okay so I had a job which was great...em...but a guy doing the job that I'm doing now ten years ago was a lot better off than...my partner works full-time, I know guys who are in a similar position to meself...eh...have got the same job title as me who don't really have a mortgage to pay and wives don't have to work or parents don't have to work...and they drive much better cars or you know...so I think...the way things have escalated on the housing market, the inflation we've had to experience...that's all kind of taken away from the fact that, yeah we've all got a job but things are a helluva lot more expensive...you know, so that would be one thing...but the IT...I mean it's nothing to...it's not the fault of HP, I mean they're providing us with a job...and best luck to them but just...it's unfortunate that the country we live in is a difficult place to live financially and to be competitive I think IT companies can't overpay obviously, the last few years have really hit that home...em...with pay freezes and redundancies...I suppose we haven't had to face redundancy so it's not too bad but...you know it's getting harder and harder to have a job like this in this country...you really need to be moving to the next level if you're going to make...to make a life for yourself

MC: Can I ask you about that, I mean I have asked a few people just in terms of the nature of Ireland being part of the global economy...it's a global player...in terms of and even ideas the IT industry can move...to India and the like...do people think...how does it concern people? Yourself? Does it concern you?

MD: There's definitely concerns, I think they're here for tax reasons on one level, there's an element of localisation as well...em...they can produce a lot here and not have to store it in warehouses and transport it around the world and into a European market...from India...so there are cost savings there as well so in that respect and the whole *intellectual property* that's being developed here...em...I think we're starting to develop some technologies here from an R and D standpoint...so that type of stuff is helping us as well so there's a whole number of reasons...why...you know it's good for them to be here...but there is also the worry that...inflation, inflation, inflation is...is making this job less and less attractive for people, I know

Operators who will never own a house...and they could work here 'till the day they die and they'll never be able to afford a house, so, I mean, is that a quality of life? I don't think it is, so sooner or later, these...we've got a young workforce here, they're very bright, sooner or later they've got to make a crunch decision and a lot of them will vote with their feet, you know...they'll just say, I can't afford to work here anymore, it's...it's as simple as that, so...I think what's going to happen is...HP are going to lose a lot of people to competitors if they don't start to financially reward people that are working here...but...*the catch 22 is that can they afford that or is it just cheaper for them to pack up and piss off to India*...that's the bottom line...so we don't know that yet, you know, if you were back here in 5 years time you'd probably see something

MC: I say it again, it's just a question and it is not just because of here but also Intel, SAP are faced with the same choices, same scenarios, and I suppose it is part of this global economy

MD: Yeah, yeah, I mean...and I think, I think what it does auger well is that you see the likes of Intel, who are, actually, expanding

HP Public Affairs Representative: Yeah, Feb 24 and all that, yeah

MD: Yeah and you have Wyatts, who've come in, from a HP standpoint, that could be costly so if we're talking about this site, I don't know how it's going to react because the pay freeze here is crippling them and if Intel are taking people and if...eh...Wyatts start taking people in abundance, we're going to have a hard time keeping up

MC: Wyatts? Is that another?

MD: They're...eh...they're...eh...going to Clondalkin (*County Dublin*) here, they're starting to *ramp up* and they're basically...they're, eh...pharmaceutical company but they'd be very high-tech

MC: This is the other area expanding at the moment

MD: Yeah, but they're taking a lot of technicians at the moment

HP Public Affairs Representative: Yeah, I've heard that alright, a lot have left HP to go working there

MD: Yeah, so that's, that's just from a HP, from, talking about this particular site

MC: Yeah, sure but, so how do you see the future of the IT industry in Ireland?

MD: In Ireland? Well, it's become less attractive, I think...because there's a short...there's a short-sightedness as well on the behalf of people going to college, students leaving school now looking for college places...they're looking at the IT sector as it stands and, you know, with the whole global economy, a lot of it seems to be thrown back onto, the NASDAQ (*NY Stock Exchange Index*) and the IT sector, right and it's probably the biggest players in the global economy, the way it's gone and share prices have crashed and, new technology haven't, you know, the internet really never caught on the way people expected it to, I think Y2K was the biggest marketing ploy of any, you know, greatest marketing ploy of that particular century because it made everyone go out and buy new PC's, new software...nothing happened in the end but people still bought all the stuff and the shareprices were going up, up and up and then it went *wEEP*... (whistling sound, hand gesture downwards)...and I think since then what's happened is...the faith in technology, the technology sector and the technology market is...the arse has dropped out it basically...
...so, I think, you know, people trying to get a place in college don't look at IT as, (HP Public Affairs Representative: Attractive?), yeah, attractive...don't see it as a long-term *go-er*, they just look at it and say, well...it's not going to happen in the short-term so I don't want to know about it, I'll do something else...I'll go for medicine, I'll go for...it's not a bad thing either...but

MC: Sure, sure...I suppose the pharmaceutical business too...so do you think now on this push to now make Ireland a, you know...a research base, around R and D and specialise or whatever like that

MD: Exactly but you need different aspects to doing that...I think, I think the biggest R and D expenditure from any particular companies around the world would be in technology-based, IT and communications and then probably pharmaceuticals as well...so, you know you need a balance of both...I don't think in Ireland we're getting enough people involved in the, in the IT sector and you know, the R and D that could go on there

MC: Can I ask you, where do you see yourself in all this? Among all this change that has had such a profound effect on this country

MD: Well I mean...I've changed...my career is basically, kind of, aligned with me expenditure, you know, it's not really, I'm not really that super-driven kind of guy that...maybe I ought to be but it's...or HP would like me to be...but anyway...em...so I got a house so I needed a better job before I wanted a house, I needed a better job, then I had a kid so I needed a better job and that's the way I've always...but it's good...I like to develop me career as well so it's not just down to that but it's part...partly down to the harsh realities and the cost of living and part I get bored in the same job after about 3 years anyway...so, I'm always looking, I suppose, to move on a level but I think this is...more or less where I want to be for now...I'm not looking to move directly out of this straight away because I mean I've got so much on outside of here that, (MC: It's enough), yeah...I mean, going to college right now is not an option as I've got a young kid so, maybe in a couple of years, yeah, that is one of the good things about this place, I mean it will give you the benefit of, of being able to go back and educate yourself...it may not be...you know, right, if you want to do Greek Mythology or History or something, they're not going to, they're not going to give you that opportunity

HP Public Affairs Representative: But the opportunity is there...if you want it

MD: The opportunity is there to do something, you know, if you're in a dead-end job and going nowhere which I think a lot of the Operators probably sometimes feel they are, they always have the opportunity to go and train to be a Tech or do a Supervisors course or whatever they need to do, some of them choose to do and some of them don't...and that's just down to how driven they are and, they are great in that respect, they give you that opportunity and I think, Intel would be the same and Wyatts might be the same, and that I think is great because that I'll raise the profile of this nation as, a viable, kind of, base for High-Tech companies in the future, so if even HP is gone, they'll think, well Jesus there's an educated workforce, they've been there, they've done that, let's start up there, so in that respect, they're probably laying a good foundation, I think there's, you can argue for and against every time...it's strange

MC: So how do you think the World views it, Ireland now?

MD: Well I don't think we're the *Land of Leprechauns* anymore anyway, I think, you'll always see that around St. Patrick's Day but...that's, I mean, that's the Americans for you, they like to, (MC: Marketing too for you?), yeah, exactly, but I think we're, eh, we're probably viewed more seriously than we used to be but I think we've a problem with how we view ourselves, so I mean there's a guy who wants to try and, and I don't know whether it's a viable, kind of...project but...eh, a guy who wants to start a massive theme park there on the Northside (*of Dublin*) and he's basically been laughed at, okay, so, he...there are a lot of reasons why it probably wouldn't work but...that's...once something like that is announced, that is what we instantly look at...*this is why it won't work*...we don't look...*can we do this?*...you know there's no confidence there to say *we could probably do this so why don't we try it* and but again...it's...

MC: And why do you think that is, Mark?

MD: I think we've made too many mistakes in the past and I think our, a lot of our planners and our politicians haven't been too well behaved in the last while either to give us the confidence...em

MC: Do you think history has a part to play in it?

MD: Maybe but I think over the last...the last 20, 25 years as we have developed and we have developed a lot, there's also a lot of mistakes made and I think that's what people tend to concentrate on instead of the achievements in some cases that have been made...we've come a long way as I say in the last 20, 25

years...but It's...as we've developed we've taken on new projects and made mistakes and people are...seem like they are afraid to make those mistakes again but I mean...it's part of life, you know...you make mistakes, you have to...like there's the Port Tunnel (*Dublin port tunnel project*) at the moment, it's too short, whatever...the Luas (*Dublin Tram System*) is a bit of a disaster but, like, at least we're trying to fecking do it, it's not like well we can't do it so we won't, we're trying to do something but we're having problems so people concentrate on the problems...em...there are reasons why that happens as well I think some of the politicians are to blame as well

MC: Do you think we have control over our destiny or whatever you want to call it?

MD: As people?

MC: Yeah or as a country? Or even say economically? In terms of a lot of companies here that we work for, salaries are paid by foreign companies, that sort of way

MD: Alright...yeah, yeah...I think we need to be very, eh...cost effective to keep these people in the country...I mean we can keep throwing tax breaks at them but that's just...that's...that will only go so far, em...*it's a fools economy or a false economy or fool's paradise* or whatever you want to call it...I think we need to be, you know...more cost effective and I don't think the way inflation etc. is at the moment...that we really are...what we have got is, as I said, is a well - trained, well -educated, kind of...workforce...so that's in our favour but...again time will tell whether that's enough...I don't see it attracting everybody...I think they'll always come in for the tax break and that's probably the main reason they're here for now...so I'm really not sure where this is going to be in 10 - 15 years time...you could have a lot of well - educated people walking down to the dole office and you know...we need to be careful how we elect our next government because the one we have at the moment seems to take things for granted...a change of pace maybe not a bad idea even if it's only for 4 years, you know...a kick in the ass, (MC: A change is a good thing), so that's...but like, I don't really know where it's going...you know

MC: Okay seems like a good point to finish on...thanks a lot...I wish we had more time to be honest

MD: No problem