Campbell, Deborah (2010): The Long and Winding (and frequently Bumpy) Road to a Highly Successful Client Engagement: A Case Study.

Campbell is talking in this paper about a very successful System Dynamics project, in which she was involved as a consultant with the Hewlett-Packard Company. From her experience she is pointing out eight important lessons which she has learned in this case study and in her short System Dynamics career in general.

The business problem of the project was about strategies to increase market share. Besides that, the problem was also connected with the development that managers of HP were losing the big picture, because of the fast development the company had undergone. A group model building process was used to face these two points. The project was based on a modeling team consisting of 15 to 20 people from HP. First a descriptive model and then a formal model should be developed by them. All take home messages from the two modeling stages are written down by the author in several lessons, these are briefly:

- Use of a common language helps to clarify HP's goals. A downside is that this process is very time consuming.
- Before the ambitious big project gone on, it's helpful to start with a learning project with a small, well-defined boundary.
- As known from programming: "Divide and conquer." → Break project up into smaller pieces.
- Tell all involved people in advance that confusion will occur at some point and that this planned in some way. Show how they can get out of this stage.
- Don't try to avoid complexity in the beginning. Everybody should have the feeling to "put something to the model". This guarantees identification with the model for all.
- The first stage (descriptive model building) should be leaded by vision. The second stage (formal model) should be guided by practice. "Demonstrate the value of System Dynamics to pragmatists."
- Keep in mind, that there are data requirements for the formal model. Ask corresponding persons early for data to have an overview what is there. Organize the data probably in one document.
- Last but not least, the team-learning experience of the model building process should not be underestimated.