Starting your job and planning your career in Industry

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CRA Graduate Cohort 2006
Spr 1996: Interviewed for research positions.
May 1996: Accepted job at AT&T Labs Research.
**Sum 1996:** Hiring director left AT&T.
Sep 1996: Started at AT&T
**Win 1997:** Discovered neither department head nor director understood why I was at AT&T.
Spr 1997: Started Hancock project with Anne Rogers
**Spr 1998:** Received bad review
**Spr 1999-2001:** Received “okay” reviews
Aut 2002: Started PADS project with Robert Gruber
**Spr 2002 - present:** Good to really strong reviews
Starting your job

How do I fit in this organization?

Requires understanding two different things…
“this organization”

• Research labs differ from universities
  – no teaching, students only in the summer, little fund raising, corporate objectives,…

• And vary quite a bit…
  – almost academic to almost development
Questions to ask

- What does my institution value?
- What am I expected to do?
- What are other people doing?
- How are projects started?
  - Am I supposed to join a project or start one?
- What resources are available?
  - students, machines, travel, support programmers
- How are resources allocated?
- How am I going to be evaluated?
- Who around me is highly valued?
  - Who has resources? How did they get them?
How to find answers...

• Talk to your department head
  – likely invested in your success
  – get him/her to help you

• Talk to your colleagues
  – you have a good excuse
  – good networking

• Find a mentor
  – doesn’t have to be formally assigned

• Watch what goes on around you
Understanding “I”

• What do you want to do?
• Do you want to change areas?
• Do you want to write papers? Build systems that lots of people use?
• Who do you want to work with?
• Do you want to mostly impact your company? your research community?
• How much do you want to work?
• What other things do you want to do?
In the mean time…

• Finish writing the papers from your thesis
• Network within your institution
• Look for a mentor
• Go to conferences
• Ask questions
• Ask for resources if you need them
• Be patient
• Believe in yourself