

STILL LEARNING

Dr. Francine Berman

Chair, Research Data Alliance / United States

Hamilton Distinguished Professor of Computer Science, RPI



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Today's Talk

Email to Fran for this talk:

"We hope you would be willing to speak on the topic of "How I Got to Where I Am." It is pretty open how you interpret that, but we are interested in hearing of how, as a leader in the field, you handled the ups and downs that you encountered"

Leadership and Approach

Jobs and Transitions

Lessons Learned

Questions



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Progress happens in context

How to navigate opportunities and challenges?

Multi-tasking, Prioritization

Opportunities for
Promotion

Personal challenges

Management responsibilities

Pay equity

Organizational culture

Failure

Resilience

Family responsibilities

Roadblocks

Kids

Politics of recognition

Mentoring

Illness

Leadership opportunities

Only woman in the room / program / panel

Strategic Thinking



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Take the long view

Careers are marathons, not sprints

Good rules of thumb:

- Show up
- Go for a Personal Best
- Spend time on important things
- Focus on the strategic and actionable



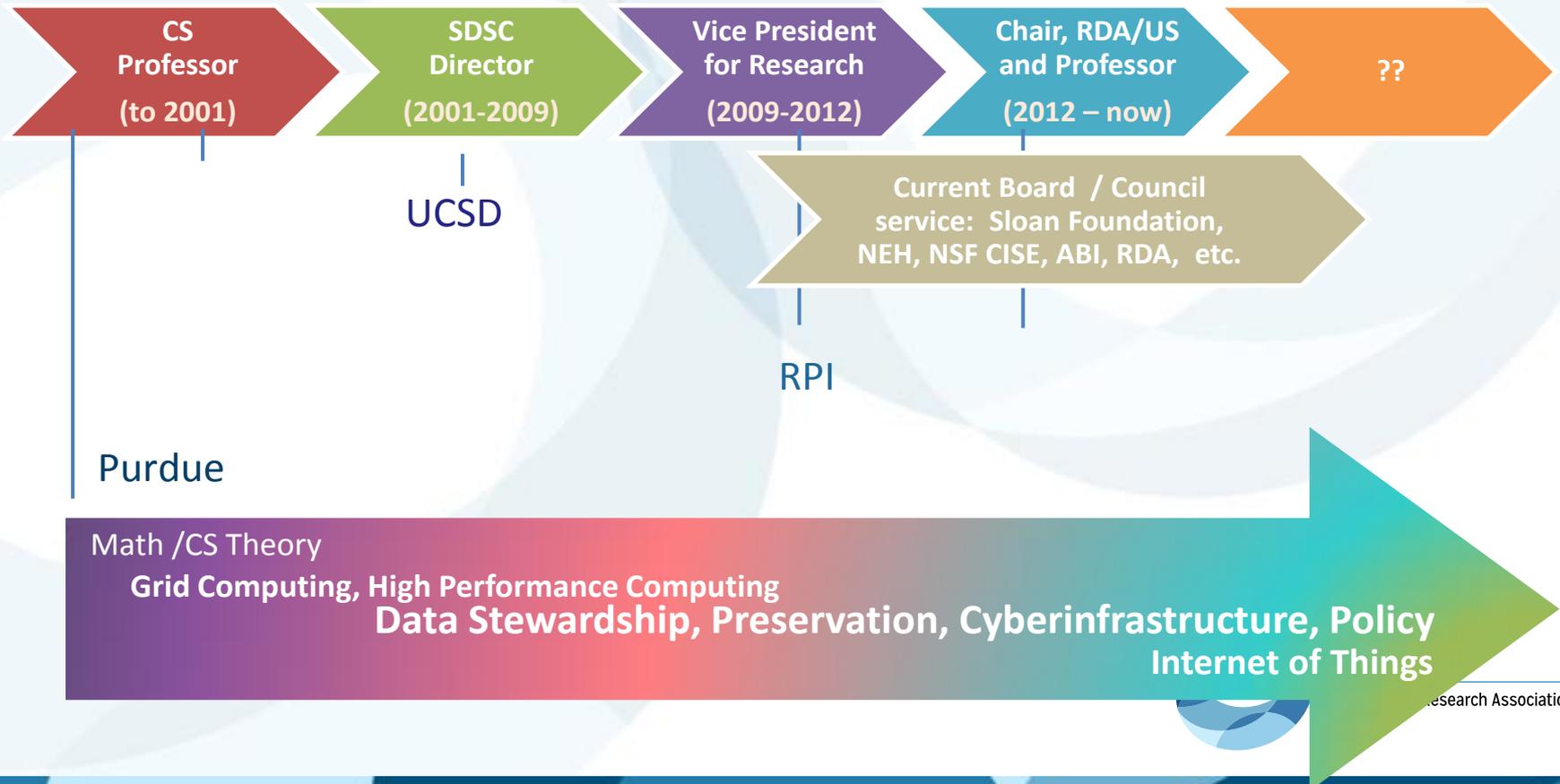
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Fran's Career Trajectory in One Slide

Current interests: Digital data – stewardship, preservation, infrastructure, policy; Internet of Things – governance; Women in tech -- leadership

Current goals: move the needle in the national conversation to create positive structural change that better supports the data ecosystem; train new Jedi



4 Positions, 3 Transitions



Job Assessment:

- What I'm proud of
- What I would have liked to do better
- What I learned

Making a Transition:

- What's next?
- How to transition smoothly?
- How to prepare?



CS
Professor
(to 2001)

SDSC
Director
(2001-2009)

Vice President
for Research
(2009-2012)

Chair, RDA/US
and Professor
(2012 – now)

??

CS Professor

What I'm proud of

*What I would have
liked to have done
better*

What I learned



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Transition: CS Professor → SDSC Director

Mt. Woodsen, San Diego



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Director, San Diego Supercomputer Center

What I'm proud of

*What I would have
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What I learned



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Transition: SDSC Director → RPI VP for Research

- **Leaving SDSC:**
 - Succession Planning
 - Pre-tells, Tells, and Post-tells
 - Thank yous
- **Preparing for VPR:**
 - Due diligence / talked to a lot of VPRs about their jobs
 - Asked for briefing documents from RPI centers, 1-1s with key stakeholders
 - Gave myself time to “on-board” before making any big decisions / changes



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What I'm proud of

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Transition: VPR → Research Data Alliance



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Chair, Research Data Alliance / US Co-Chair, Research Data Alliance Council

What I'm proud of

What I'm learning



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What's Next?



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Lessons Learned 1

- **“Work Tools”**
 - Recognition
 - Reputation
 - Credibility
 - Integrity
 - Preparation
 - Skilled self-promotion
 - Your network
- **Attributes worth developing**
 - Resilience
 - Integrity
 - Strategic Approach
 - Effectiveness
 - Thick Skin
 - Generosity
 - Leadership
 - Personal Responsibility
 - Courage



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Lessons Learned 2

- **It's OK to ask for help.** Learn how to ask so that you maximize your chances for getting help.
- **Show up and try for a personal best.** Keep at it.
- **Don't give up.** If things are not working, try a different approach. Keep trying until some other strategy or some other goal seems more promising. You always have options; you don't always know what all of them are.
- **Develop a thick skin.** Fail and then get over it . Minimize beating yourself up. Don't think that because you don't know something or are not good at something or failed that you don't belong. You belong.

Take responsibility.

“With great power comes great responsibility.” *Spiderman*



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Lessons Learned 3

- **Accept that everything has a political aspect and get good at it.** Ask for help; use the system; improve the system when you have enough power/influence; Be strategic. Learn when to color outside the lines.
- **Build your own community.** Develop a rich network of stakeholders, colleagues, mentors, mentees, and people that you enjoy. It will be more fun and more will get done. Be part of others' communities.
- **Maintain your integrity.** Nothing beats looking at yourself in the mirror and feeling OK about yourself. Take the high road. Behave so you are proud of yourself.
- **Give back.** Whatever level you are, you can help someone. Do it. Make it a career practice. Mentor new Jedi. Pass it on.



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Make a difference for Women. Pass it on.

- ***What you can do at work:***

- Foster a recruitment process that seeks out diverse candidate pools
- Monitor and promote pay equity
- Develop organizational mechanisms for mainstreaming and promoting diversity. Make them part of the assessment and reward system.
- Provide leadership opportunities for women and promote their efforts. Help women identify advancement opportunities. Mentor.

- ***What you can do in your professional community:***

- Be strategic about your own recognition. Use your influence to help others. Mentor.
- Suggest / nominate women colleagues for awards and recognitions. Share and cite their work.
- If you are asked to present or be on a panel, ask if there are women participating. If not, suggest names of women to invite.
- Help make professional events more inclusive. Include women at all levels.



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