

Time-management and work-life balance (Yes, I wrote this talk last night after I came home from playing soccer)*

Lorrie Cranor

CRA Career Mentoring Workshop 2024

*actually I wrote most of it after soccer the night before the 2022 workshop; last night I had to skip soccer 😞, but not to write this talk



About me

- Professor of Computer Science and Engineering & Public Policy
- Director, CyLab Security and Privacy institute
- Director, CyLab Usable Privacy and Security Laboratory
- Co-director, MSIT-Privacy Engineering
- Used to work for AT&T Labs and FTC
- Co-founded Wombat Security startup

CyLab Carnegie Mellon University
Security and Privacy Institute



How I got here

- WashU undergrad 1989-1992, WashU grad student 1992-1996
- AT&T Labs-Research member of the technical staff 1996-2003
- CMU faculty 2003-
 - Associate research professor (CS) 2003-2008
 - Associate professor (CS and Engineering) 2008-2014 (tenured 2011)
 - Co-director, Privacy Engineering masters program, 2013-
 - Professor (CS and Engineering) 2014-2023
 - Associate Dept. Head, Engineering & Public Policy, 2017-2019
 - University Professor (CS and Engineering) 2023-
 - FORE Systems Professor (CS and Engineering) 2017-
 - Director and Bosch Distinguished Professor, CyLab 2019-
 - Co-director, Collaboratory Against Hate, 2021-2023
- Co-founded Wombat Security, 2008 (sold to Proofpoint 10 years later)
- Federal Trade Commission Chief Technologist, 2016

- 1993, married and bought condo
- 1996, moved to New Jersey
- 1998, bought house
- 2001, first child
- 2003, 2nd child
- 2003, moved to Pittsburgh and bought house
- 2006, 3rd child, now high school senior



Hats I still wear

Proofpoint acquires Wombat Security Technologies for \$225 million



Start-up did well, no regrets, but start-ups are not my passion

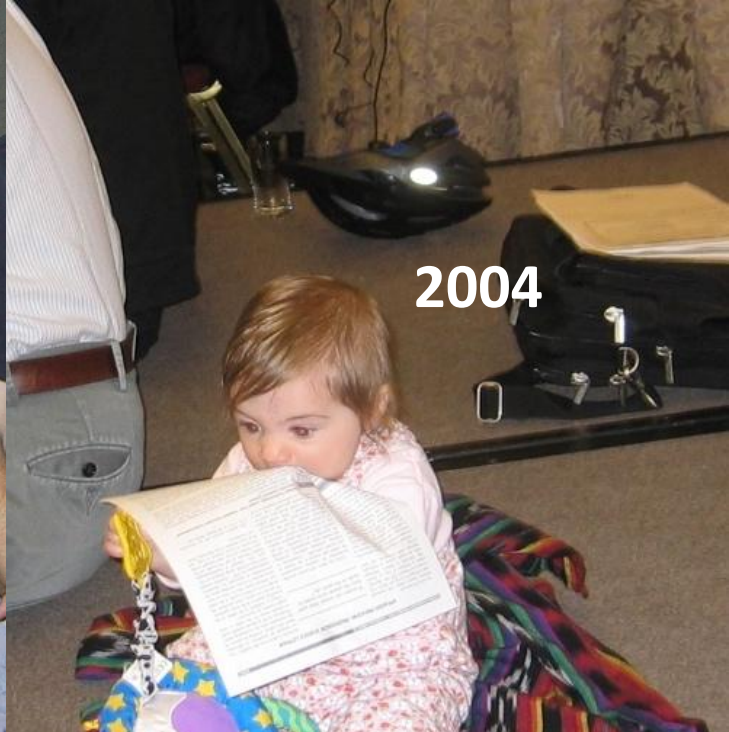
Work and kids: what worked for me

- Nannies!
- Very helpful partner with less intense job (non-tenure-track faculty at CMU)
- Leave work at 5ish and catch up on work after kids go to bed
- Live close to work (I walk to work, commute=exercise)
- Infants and breastfeeding
 - Good breast pumps (both manual and electric), good baby carriers (front, back, slings), breastfed everywhere, brought baby if needed, no apologies!
 - Yes, it was indeed me you remember giving a talk with a screaming baby 20 years ago! (btw she's in college now)





2001



2004

2006



Travel points for domestic peace

- <https://lorrie.cranor.org/blog/2017/08/19/travel-points-for-domestic-peace/>
- Keep track of your travel and assign points for amount of time away based on how disruptive it is to you and the rest of your family
 - In my system, travel on weekends costs double points
- Talk to your partner and agree on an annual (or semester or monthly, whatever....) points budget
- Before you say “Yes,” check your points budget and decide whether the trip is worth the points you will have to pay

Time for a sabbatical?

- I wanted to do something different and exciting (not write a book in my office)
- My family didn't want to relocate
- How about a staybatical?

different

**Mentally
liberating**

**Intellectually
restorative**

exciting

**Totally
awesome!**

relaxing

interesting





What have I always wanted to do but never seem to have enough time?



ART!

I made quilts!



Self Portrait
This quilt is based on a portrait of the artist, which was created in 1968. The quilt is made of 100% cotton and is a perfect example of the artist's style. The quilt is made of 100% cotton and is a perfect example of the artist's style. The quilt is made of 100% cotton and is a perfect example of the artist's style.



I dyed my
hair blue



I ran my
first 5k

I learned
how to play
soccer and
started a
recreational
soccer club
for women
over 30





10
years
later!



PITTSBURGH
DYNAMOMS
FOOTBALL CLUB



I flew to NYC for the day with my son to go to the Maker Fair



I chaperoned my kids' field trips



I taught a weekly sewing class at my son's middle school



When opportunity knocks

And your family still doesn't want to relocate

After declining to interview for my dream job in DC multiple times, I finally asked whether I could work part-time remote...



*This is
my
kitchen*

LORRIE CRANOR
FTC CHIEF TECHNOLOGIST



Didn't travel domestically for 2 years or internationally for 5 years

- My last trip before the pandemic was to speak at the RSA conference in the closing keynote with Penn and Teller
- Even without travel, I worked more than ever during the pandemic
- I got volunteered to run a second center
- And I had 3 teenagers stuck at home, including 1 applying to college



We *can* do it all, but *not at the same time*

- Prioritize
- Be selfish – Ask what’s in it for me? Joy? Money? Career advancement? Helping causes I care about?
- Think about opportunity costs before adding a commitment
- Better not to commit if you don’t have time than to do a bad job
- Find ways to bow out of activities that bring you no joy (with consideration for others)
- Realize that most opportunities are NOT once-in-a-life-time, you can pass for now and re-consider next time around