

# BUILDING YOUR PROFESSIONAL PERSONA

*Patty Lopez, Intel Corporation*  
*Soha Hassoun, Tufts University*

*Thanks to presenters from previous years!*



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# Soha Hassoun

## Professor

Department of Computer Science

Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering

Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering

Tufts University



**BS – South Dakota State**

**MS – MIT**

**PhD – UW, Seattle**

### **Research**

**Design Automation for  
Electronics and Biology**

### **Industry**

**Circuit Designer – Digital  
Consultant - Carbon Design  
Systems, Mentor Graphics, etc.**



# Patty – Brief CV



## **PhD, New Mexico State University, 1989**

- CS: Principles of Apparent Motion in Human and Computer Perception of Motion

## **Intel Corporation**

- Senior Platform Applications Engineer, Datacenter Group

## **Previous: HP**

- Imaging Scientist, 7 patents

## **Co-Founder, Latinas in Computing**

**Most recent talk: 2017 Tapia Conference**

**Board Service/Volunteer: CRA-W, CAHSI, NMSU, NCWIT**

*Hobbies: Seeing the world with family and friends*



Sr. Platform Application  
Datacenter Group



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# What does CRA-W do?

## Individual & Group Research Mentoring

**Undergrads:** Undergraduate Research Experiences

**Undergrads:** Distinguished Lecture series/role models

**Grad Cohort:** Group mentoring of graduate students

**Grad Students:** Discipline Specific Research workshops

**Academics/PhD Researchers:** Group mentoring for early and mid career @ CMW, Grace Hopper, and Tapia



**2400+ students & PhDs a year**

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Facebook: [CRA-W](#), Linked-in: [CRA-Women](#)*



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# CRA-W Events at Grace Hopper

Visit the CRA-W Booth in the EXPO  
to learn more (#2050)



Attend another CRA-W Session  
Wednesday (3): Thursday (3) or Friday (1)



Visit a CRA-W Table at the  
Student Opportunity Lab on Friday  
(Undergrads)



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# Takeaways

Make ***intentional*** choices about how you present yourself

It all starts with knowing ***yourself*** well

You are a ***dynamic*** person, requiring maintenance of your *persona* over time



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# What is a Professional Persona?

- “Professional Persona” - A persona that is effective in giving others a positive perception of you & your abilities
- You get judged quickly!
- Components:
  - **Appearance:** body language, clothing
  - **Behavior:** communication skills, attitudes
  - **Competencies:** work skills
  - **Differentiation:** what makes you stand out (in a good way) and makes you memorable



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# Why is a Professional Persona Important?

Instrumental in achieving your goals:

- Job opportunities
- Invitations to speak, participate, lead
- Award nominations
- Media opportunities
- Visibility of your work within your org and communities



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# Developing a Personal Brand?

- The way you present yourself and act around others shapes your personal brand
- To build a strong brand requires a strong understanding of your true authentic self
  - What are your values and priorities?
  - What are your passions and expertise?
  - Are you consistent in what you say and do?
  - What is the value you provide?
  - What do you stand (or kneel) for?



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# Identifying your Key Ingredients

## - A Writing Activity

Make five columns with these headings and list your attributes:

1. Core values
2. Passions
3. Personal traits
4. Signature talents
5. Accomplishments



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# Identifying your Key Ingredients

- StrengthFinders 2.0 is an inexpensive book with a link and code to a quiz to find out your top five strengths
- Share your strengths with others and make use of their strengths
- Your strengths may change over time as you grow in experience and confidence



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# Perceptions of You

## *How Others Perceive You*

Based on your online presence:

- Your professional interests
- Your professional activities

Based on your in person interactions:

- Your work style
- Your strengths
- Your areas for improvement

## *How You Perceive Yourself and Where You Want to Be*

- Your professional interests
- Your professional activities
- Your work style
- Your strengths
- Your areas for improvement

Getting *intentional*:

<http://myidp.sciencecareers.org/>



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# Developing Your Professional Persona

Make your best effort:

- In person
- Within a group
- Online - professional and social media

**First Impressions Are Important**



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# In Person

In ten seconds or less, someone unfamiliar with you will evaluate you based on your appearance, demeanor, and personality

- Focus on things you can control, like your introduction/elevator pitch
- If you know who they are, greet them professionally, mention their work if you are familiar with it



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# Within a Group

Your public image is critical when addressing a class or a large group

- People will retain very little of the content of your speech/talk, but they will always remember how they felt about it
- Integrate elements such as inspirational quotes to build your unique personal message



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# Within a Group - Online

- Recruiters look at social media to see how you represent yourself, review your contributions to code (e.g. github)
- Faculty look at your online profile to see your CV, publications, awards, and research presence
- Lock down your private persona and ensure that your public persona fits how you want to be perceived
- Web data is archived and searchable



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# What Does Your E-Persona Say About You?

- **Outlets**
  - Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Wikipedia page, Google Scholar, Web page
- **Personal vs Professional?**



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# Professional Presence

- Up-to-date CV or bio or LinkedIn or...
- Research interests
- Work Products
  - Publications
  - Software
  - Patents
  - ...
- Teaching materials
- Media coverage, photos, awards
- When to add personal info?



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# Five Tips



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# Tip #1: Assessing your Professional Persona

- Does your professional persona serve you well?
- Are you seeing a return on your investments?
  - Recognition: Credibility, expertise, knowledge, visibility
  - Influencing others
  - New opportunity
- Where are you spending the unique resource that is you?
  - Reassess regularly to avoid burnout
  - Be protective of your precious time and energy



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# Tip #2: Don't Forget to Include your Soft Skills

- Technical depth and breadth is important, but it may not win you the job or help you advance
- How do you demonstrate that you are:
  - an effective communicator?
  - collaborative and responsive?
  - a strong leader?



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# Tip #3: Be Clear in your Communications

- Pre-think through important conversations/posts
- Use clear language
  - avoid misinterpretation
  - Consider how others may interpret what you say
- Follow through on things you say you will do



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# Tip #4: Practice Makes Perfect

- If you don't get it right, try again
- Solicit actionable feedback
- Allow yourself to grow and change over time



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# Tip #5: When to develop a Personal Persona?

The right time to get to this is...

***NOW!***

Start a checklist and put recurring appointment on your calendar to revisit every quarter (reward yourself for doing it)



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# Activity - Going Forward

- Discuss your “key ingredients” with the person next to you
- On the sheet where you wrote down your list, pick 2-3 areas you will commit time to develop
- Write dates next to them
- Share with your neighbor
- Put these commitments in your calendar and practice them as often as you can!



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# Conclusion

- You own your future. Make intentional choices about how to brand yourself
- You will have the impact you choose to make through your actions

**GO FOR IT NOW !**



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# THANKS

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