MS CAREER OPPORTUNITIES
AND JOB SEARCH

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Agenda

• Introductions
• Possible career paths with an MS degree
• Finding an industry position
• How to present yourself
• Career growth and advancement
Jeanine Cook, Sandia National Laboratories

- BSEE, MSCS, University of Colorado
- PhD EE, New Mexico State University
- Faculty Member NMSU ECE, 2002 - 2012
- Principal Member Technical Staff, Scalable Architectures, SNL, 2012-present
Jaime Moreno, IBM Research

- Originally from Chile
- Electrical Engineer, University of Concepcion, Chile
- Computer Science, MS, PhD, UCLA
- Faculty Member, University of Concepcion, Chile
- Researcher, IBM TJ Watson Research Center, NY

Current role

- Senior Manager, High-Performance Data Centric Systems
- Distinguished Researcher
Where can you get a job with a tech MS degree?
Where

- Many starting paths for tech Master graduates
  - Developer
  - Designer
  - Data Scientist
  - Product Evangelist
  - Program/Product Manager
  - Consultant
  - ....
  - ....
  - Go on to PhD program

- Tech jobs are not only in tech companies
  - Business: Retail, Banking, Sports, etc., etc.
  - Government
  - Healthcare
  - Services
  - Entertainment
  - Education
  - Etc.
Any organization, multiple departments

• **Product or Service**
  • Development, manufacturing, deployment, maintenance
  • Advanced development / research (future product or service)

• Marketing
• Sales
• Client support
• Finance
• Operations

• Opportunities for tech-MS people exist on all these areas
Range of Opportunities and Tradeoffs

- Established (large/mid-size) organizations
  - Scale
  - Resources, roles, locations, career path
- Small organizations
  - Focus
  - Diverse role
- Start-ups
  - Risk/reward/pace
  - Role breadth
- Freelance
  - Autonomy
  - Diverse role
What can you do now to prepare for your job search?
What

• Develop skills and technical profile
• Develop and leverage a professional network
• Be recognized among your peers
• Maintain updated personal social media presence
  Professional web page, LinkedIn profile, other professional social media, etc.
• Attend career fairs, companies’ campus visits
• Join professional organizations
• Attend technical conferences and workshops
• Participate in events (competitions, hackathons, etc.)
• Use recruiters
• Search broadly
How do you prepare for the job market?
Finding Opportunities

• Use your professional network
• Use recruiters
• Use professional networks (eg., LinkedIn et al)
• Organizations’ campus visits
• Organizations’ job postings on their web sites
• Conferences and events

• Search broadly
How do you grow in your career?
Career Growth

• Understand expectations and opportunities of a position
• Understand objectives and goals of your organization
• Define clear goals and set expectations for your performance
• Align with the objectives of the organization
• Regularly meet with team and manager, be proactive, make them aware of your progress, understand their expectations of your contributions
• Actively participate in meetings (sit at the table, not in the back)
• Balance between being nice and making a point
• Be visible: to peers, your manager, your manager’s manager
• Take on stretch assignments to grow visibility and capabilities
• Meet other people in the organization over lunch/coffee, job shadows
• Find or ask for a mentor (formal or informal)
• Take risks
Career Growth: Advancing

• Be pro-active about your career plans
  • You can change your mind any time
  • The first job most likely will not be your only job
• You own your own career

• Ask frequent, actionable feedback (manager, peers)
• Talk to people at the next level about what is expected and how you can achieve it
• Volunteer to take on roles above your current position
• Work with advocates to build a case for promotion before the decision window opens
• Find a sponsor
Someone I know

- MS female graduate in Computer Science
- First joined database company as Software Engineer
- Moved to research/advanced development in a large company
- Established herself as technical leader in her group
- Became manager/senior manager of a group
- Transitioned to business organization
  - Product and services deployment, business development, strategy development

- Currently: Vice-President in the large company

- Many successful executives have MS degrees
Special Considerations for Persons with Disabilities
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• Accommodations
  – Don’t assume all organizations comply with ADA
    • There is no ADA enforcement
• Disclosure
  – When to disclose disability?
    • At interview if physical (visible) disability
    • At offer if invisible
• Job Search
  – Some organizations actively seek persons with disabilities for certain product development tasks
• Career growth
  – Advocate for what you need to be successful
Resources
Resources

• Many resources available on-line
  • *The Google Resume: How to Prepare for a Career and Land a Job at Apple, Microsoft, Google, or any Top Tech Company*
    • Gayle Laakmann McDowell
  • *Cracking the Coding Interview*
    • Gayle Laakmann McDowell
  • askamanager.org
  • glassdoor.com
  • 185 powerful verbs, TIME.com