Who You Know, What You Know and Timing: Merging the Technical and the Personal to Define Your Professional Pathway

Dalene Stangl
Professor and Director
Institute of Statistics and Decision Sciences
Duke University

New Researcher’s Conference
August 4, 3006
Seattle, Washington
Question #1: How many of you think that it is your research capabilities that will make or break your professional success?

Advice #1: Build a professional network.

Phil Agre: Networking on the Network
http://polaris.gseis.ucla.edu/pagre
Question #2: How many of you believe that it is important to find a single role model or mentor upon whom to model your own career?

Advice #2: Take charge of your career and seek out multiple individuals upon which to model your values and behaviors.
Question #3: How many of you know what department chairs, deans, and provosts (or other organization counterparts) do?

Advice 3a: Know your administrators.
Advice 3b: Do not fear administration.
Question #4: While a graduate student, how many of you ever hosted a party for other graduate students at your home?

Advice #4: Be a social host.
Question #5: How many of you have sent written thank-you notes to the people that wrote you letters of recommendation?

Advice #5: Be sincerely appreciative to those you know and communicate it often.
Who You Know

Build a professional network
Seek out multiple specialized mentors
Learn administrators roles
Build community
Show appreciation to all those who you know
Question 6: How many of you know where to find your organization’s strategic plan? Know what groups sign off on your grants? Know who to go to if the xerox breaks down 30 minutes before your deadline and you don’t have copies made?

Advice #6. Know each staff person in the department, know what their duties are, and know what makes them feel appreciated.
Question #7: How many of you have read the written policies for promotion reviews? Do you know what will be required in your dossier?

Advice #7: Figure out the process within your first semester.

Potential for (Evidence of) scholarly impact and leadership
Potential for (Evidence of) research productivity
Potential for (Evidence of) research funding
Potential for (Evidence of) collaboration
Potential (Demonstrated ability) to attract and supervise graduate students
Potential (Demonstrated ability) to teach and supervise undergraduates
Potential for (Evidence of) positive contribution to department’s climate
Potential for (Evidence of) positive contribution to university
Question 8: How many of you expect to be occasionally mistreated in some way, perhaps your contribution is not recognized, you hear racist or sexist comments about your own race or gender, or something else.

Advice 8: Know how to cope with slights, insensitive comments, and injustices that occur.
Question #9: How many of you in your lifetime have had persons in position of power tell you something that suggested that you lower your expectations for yourself? Ex. Not study statistics, not apply to a particular department, not submit to a particular journal, ...

Advice #9 Know how to filter unsupportive opinions of others.
Question #10: How many of you feel confident you know how to get the most out of JSM?

Advice 10: Know how to get the most from conferences.
Question #11 How many of you have had an interaction in which someone’s self-promotion came across as arrogant? What was it that made it seem arrogant?

Advice #11 Know what Phil Agre calls “Norms of Humility”.
What You Know

Know who can provide you with access to information and resources you need and show this group the appreciation they deserve

Know the process for performance evaluation

Know how to cope and filter the unsupportive actions of others

Know how to get the most out of conferences

Know the “Norms of Humility” in self promotion
Question #12: How many of you submitted papers for publication before you defended your dissertation?

Advice #12. Don’t wait too long to submit, and don’t waiting too long to revise and resubmit rejected papers
Question #13: For how many of you will your first course be an undergraduate course? A graduate course?

Advice #13: Request teaching introductory graduate classes
Question #14: How many of you have been advised to protect yourself from committee or service work?

Advice #14: Don’t avoid all service work, just select carefully.
Question #15: How many of you balanced family, friends, hobbies, and your health with graduate school in a satisfying way? How many of you expecting or finding this to be harder in your job than in graduate school?

Advice #15: Expect some sacrifice of personal life, but don’t ignore your personal life especially health and family.
Question #16  How many of you think you are proficient in time management and multi-tasking?

Advice #16: Make multi-tasking easier by choosing activities that serve multiple purposes.
Question #17: How many of you expect to be in the same position (but at a higher level) ten years from now?

Advice #17: Change is good.