



North America ~ East

August 11 - Doing IT Around the World





Christa - USA: Network Engineer

About My Career About Me

Interview with Christa – Entrepreneur : USA

What do you do?

I have been in the IT field for 8yrs now and 5 of it with My Computer Girl, Inc. www.mycomputergirl.com As a small business owner I wear many hats. I do everything from computer repair & networking, to billing & bookkeeping.

What is a typical day like?

A typical day starts with checking my emails & answering calls. My day is always different & full of challenges. Things I do on a daily basis are virus/spyware/adware removal, troubleshooting hardware & software errors, data backup & recovery, software installation & configuration, replace hardware, setup new computers, server & networks, network wiring, server administration, remote offsite support & phone support. Most of my support is done onsite while the rest is remote or phone support.

Challenges?

Some of the challenges I face in my work range from, user error to new viruses. Even harder would be hardware that is displaying symptoms or errors that lead you to a wrong diagnosis.

Sometimes you just can't duplicate the problem or it doesn't give the necessary clues to fix the problem. You then have to wait until you have more data or it just fails to finally proceed.

What are the BEST parts of what you do?

The best part of my job is that every day is different, as is every office or environment. I deal with different people and issues. It's like I am a detective of sorts or a diagnostician. It is a mystery or puzzle that must be solved. I have to admit that I have had to raise the white flag a few times and call for backup. You can't win them all, but with good deductive reasoning skills you can solve most problems.

What I enjoy most about my line of work is helping people. I like simplifying things for them, so that they may be more productive. I also like the fact that I work from home & I am my own boss.

Traveling from site to site gets me outside, even if it is from my car. I feel I don't miss out on the day too much when I get to travel. It also doesn't feel like the same routine day in and day out. Doing what I like to do, is the best experience. Especially when I complete a job that is extra hard or when I can figure out something that others couldn't.

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Continued interview with Christa – Entrepreneur : USA

What have been your most significant achievements

My most significant achievements to date would have to be building this business on my own and getting my degree during this process. It has been a slow process getting to where I am, but I am happy and content with what I have accomplished so far.

I would have to say that the biggest accomplishment I have had during all of this was, attending school part time in an accelerated program & working full time as well. It was a very trying and stressful time that I managed to pull through.

I almost gave up a couple of times due to the weight of it all, but did not, and I received my degree with honors and a big sigh of relief.

How did you get started?

I knew this was my niche and decided to start school to learn more as I continued to work full time.

After 2 years of schooling, sometime after 9-11, a German fellow that lived down the street from my father was going back to Germany and had to give up his business. He gave me his client list in which I then partnered with a male friend. With his sales skill & knowledge & my work ethics and slight working knowledge we formed a company.

After a few years our ideas seemed far apart. With this we parted and I started my own company. It took me a couple of weeks to come up with the name. It wasn't just me, but a local artist that I was just chatting with. I had mentioned that I hadn't come up with a name yet & that everybody just said, "My Computer Girl is here." He said, "There you go, My Computer Girl." Creating my 3 logos, I sent an email to family, friends, & clients to vote on, & My Computer Girl was born.

What was your first day like?

When I first got into this field and started my first company, I was very nervous. This was a totally new line of work for me and I was not good at speaking to people. I tended to talk way to fast. I read Dale Carnegie's "How to Win Friends and Influence Others", among a few other self-help titles. Eventually I got over my extended first day. I became more confident and realized you can't know it all & being honest about it will keep you calm and respected.

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About Me Interview with Christa – Entrepreneur: USA

What are 3 words that describe you?

Understanding, Diligent, Ethical

What qualities do you have that make you good at what you do?

I deal with people who need my help daily. I must have patience, as most of my clients do not. I take the time to show them what has happened, as simply as I can; and how to correct it, if it should arise again. If it is too complicated an issue then I just give them the Gilligan version and leave it at that.

I also take the time to create step by step picture files for simple tasks; that they should be able to complete on their own and keep in a network manual for future reference. I also keep a copy of these files as well. That way, when they can't find them, I can easily shoot them a copy.

It takes patience and understanding to calm people down; when computer problems seem like the end of the world.

Tell us more about how you do it?

With computer problems, comes an issue of time and how fast you can fix it. You must work diligently when it comes to helping your client regain their productivity. Whatever, or however long it takes, you must stay until the job is complete. At the same time you must do it in a reasonable amount of time. I charge on a learning curve. This means, if this is something new and it takes me a while to learn how to do it, I don't charge the extra time it took me to learn it. Clients will respect you for this and have confidence in your work.

After understanding and diligence you must have good work ethics and strength. As a woman, I find it harder to get new clients; as I have to work harder at proving myself. You have to work harder and have the strength to prove yourself.

Without ethics, you will lose business fast along with respect. This is something that lot of male dominated companies lack. They are more about the big sale at whatever cost, than they are at customer service and ethics. That is how I came up with my logo, "Never Over-Promise, Just Over-Deliver". It is what I live by, in work and my personal life.

What previous jobs have you done?

I didn't jump right into the IT field. I tended bar for 8yrs prior while attending school part-time, while working full time. It was hard sometimes and I wanted to give up, but I bit the bullet and stuck with it until I got far enough along and caught a break. Knowing that this would make me more financially secure was not the only reason I jumped into this field, I had a love for what I did. It is my passion and keeps me motivated.

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Continued About Me Interview with Christa – Entrepreneur: USA

How did you get started?

I started as a self taught computer hobbyist and then moved on to taking classes at the local college, finishing my degree online, at AIU. I have studied Different OS systems, applications, simple programming, MCSE, A+ certification repair & maintenance, telecommunications & network cabling.

I have also been to many Microsoft seminars, in an effort to continue my technology education. This keeps me ahead of the game and informed. Along with that, I get newsletters to keep me current on the latest techniques and technology, read when I can, take online classes, watch demos or live seminars on new products and technology, along with taking on new projects to learn while I earn. I have found that classes may be good on paper but nothing beats real world, working experience. Trial and error is the greatest teacher next to repetition. Repetition is the key in any field, but is something I find you must do in order to become great in any career.

What motivates you?

Along with most people, money motivates me. It is the life source to your needs and wants. Besides financial security, challenging problems and new technology are my main drivers. I like learning and solving problems. I also like helping people and teaching them to be self-sufficient with simple tasks.

Being “My Computer Girl” makes me feel good about myself as well. I have had many MEN in my industry try and tell me how and what I should do to my business. They all look the same; I stand out and have a unique marketing tool. So it makes me feel good and motivates me more when I get compliments on my website, logo and name from other male clients. I am surprised how many men ask if I would do their website and how much they love my logo and name. It makes me feel pretty good that others feel threatened by my marketing niche. It makes me feel I have something special and that makes it all worthwhile.

Do you have hobbies?

I don't have too much time for hobbies as I work beyond the 9 to 5 routine. I have much to do. When I do have time; I like to work in the yard, walk, shop, watch TV, read, play games and eat out. I have set hours and don't usually work the weekend, unless it is an emergency or it just cannot be avoided. This is the time I set aside for myself and family to enjoy the fruits of my labor. I don't always get a full weekend to do what I want, but that is the price you pay when you are self-employed.

What is your advice to other women?

Women need to stand up and take on whatever role they wish, to make themselves happy. Because your persona or ideas are different; makes it all that more special. Don't let them tell you how your image or business should be run. Take your ideas and run with them and run hard. And as a wise person once told me, use the heck out of that TECH SUPPORT number.

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Claudia ~ USA: Executive
About My Career About Me

group in variety/category
Select a strong leader
Make group objectives clear

ALSE
E violence
A ppearing
R ea

100
X-Treme
Team
100
X-Treme
Police



Interview with Claudia – CEO: North America

What do you do?

I run a Center supporting girls and women's participation and leadership in the knowledge society.

What do you enjoy the most?

One project for which I am very proud is the one in South Africa where I will be with a group of 5 US women technology entrepreneurs working with 12 South African women to help them launch or grow their ICT-enabled businesses. As a lifelong learner, I have continued to learn about new technology applications.

How did you get started??

I had some seed funding to develop "something" for women and technology at the University of Maryland Baltimore County in 2001. Seven years later, I have funded \$10 million in programs and started a new nonprofit called Multinational Development of Women in Technology to expand our successful pilot programs around the globe.

Will you continue this work?

I hope to continue this work for another five to ten years until a protégé can take over and continue to move it forward to ensure women's lives are enriched using technology that meets their needs and interests.

Challenges?

The greatest challenge I face is that of keeping the issue and its importance in front of people who have the power and influence needed to help achieve our goal of 50% engagement by women in technical fields.

How far reaching has your work been?

Through my work, I have touched perhaps millions of people. Thanks to technology, I can regularly connect with women and girls around the world. Today, women are technology entrepreneurs, engineers, computer scientists and leaders of centers in other parts of the world, thanks in part to the wonderful work I get to do.

Can technology solve world issues?

I am so excited to see that moment of truth when a woman realizes that technology is not about the tool, but about what that tool can do and how powerful it can make them in shaping the world they want to see changed.

Travel?

I travel a lot with this job - about once a month all over the world.

So many young women want to help their communities. I think we need to help more women understand that technology is the tool needed to solve the problems of today given the right focus.

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Continued Interview with Claudia – CEO: North America

Claudia you have created, and implemented many outreach and intervention projects and programs - tell us about a few of them?

Computer Mania Day for Girls that has touched over 2000 girls– www.computer-mania.info

International Taskforce on Women and ICTs that has helped shape policy and program development for women and technology globally - http://www.mdwit.org/init_international_itf.html

The Declaration of Agreement developed as a general statement about women's rights to technology - http://www.mdwit.org/resources_declaration.html

The ACTiVATE program for women's technology entrepreneurship which has helped to increase Maryland's technology start-ups grow by almost 50% annually – www.umbc.edu/activate

ESTEEM informal education program for girls which had a huge impact on girls interest in technical fields – www.umbc.edu/cwit/esteem

Our annual conference networking women in technology from around the region - http://www.mdwit.org/events_techhighlights_pics.html

The creation of the CWIT Scholar program for undergraduates in technology who support women in technology, which grew from 8 students to over 60! http://www.umbc.edu/cwit/cwit_scholars.html.



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About Me Interview with Claudia – CEO: North America

3 words describe you?

Creative, Passionate, Silly

What great qualities do you have?

I am willing to think outside the box to solve problems. I also like to work to see a successful outcome.

What qualifications do you have ?

I have two master's degrees, but more importantly, I am a lifelong learner, so I have continued to learn about networking and new technology applications, such as wearable technology and crowd sourcing, as I work daily.

What motivates you?

I'm motivated to learn as I get bored easily. I love a good challenge and love to innovate and create new solutions to old problems. Technology lets me do that.

What previous jobs?

Before I ran the Center for Women and Technology, I was a full time grant writer and before that an assistant professor. Both jobs were very useful in preparing me for the next job.

Relationships?

I am blessed with a wonderful husband of 26 years, three beautiful and successful daughters (the oldest is an engineer!) and wonderful friends who share my passion for supporting women and girls to likewise take on challenges, work hard, and live fully.

Hobbies?

I don't have hobbies as much as I have interests, such as baking, hanging with my husband and kids, going to the spa, and eating chocolate.

What is your advice to other women?

- First, get all the education you can and learn to learn.
- Second, take courses in technical fields and take time to learn to program the VCR.
- Don't let technology, even the simple things, intimidate you.

Mathematics, science, technology and engineering can all be hard to learn, but they are hard for everyone. If you hang in there to get the degree, the rewards will be many in terms of quality of life and the ability to generate real wealth to support yourself and your family.

As for my daughter, *the engineer*, she also is proud to say that the work that she does directly saves lives. And so can I. Now what can be more rewarding than that?

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More information about Claudia: CEO: USA

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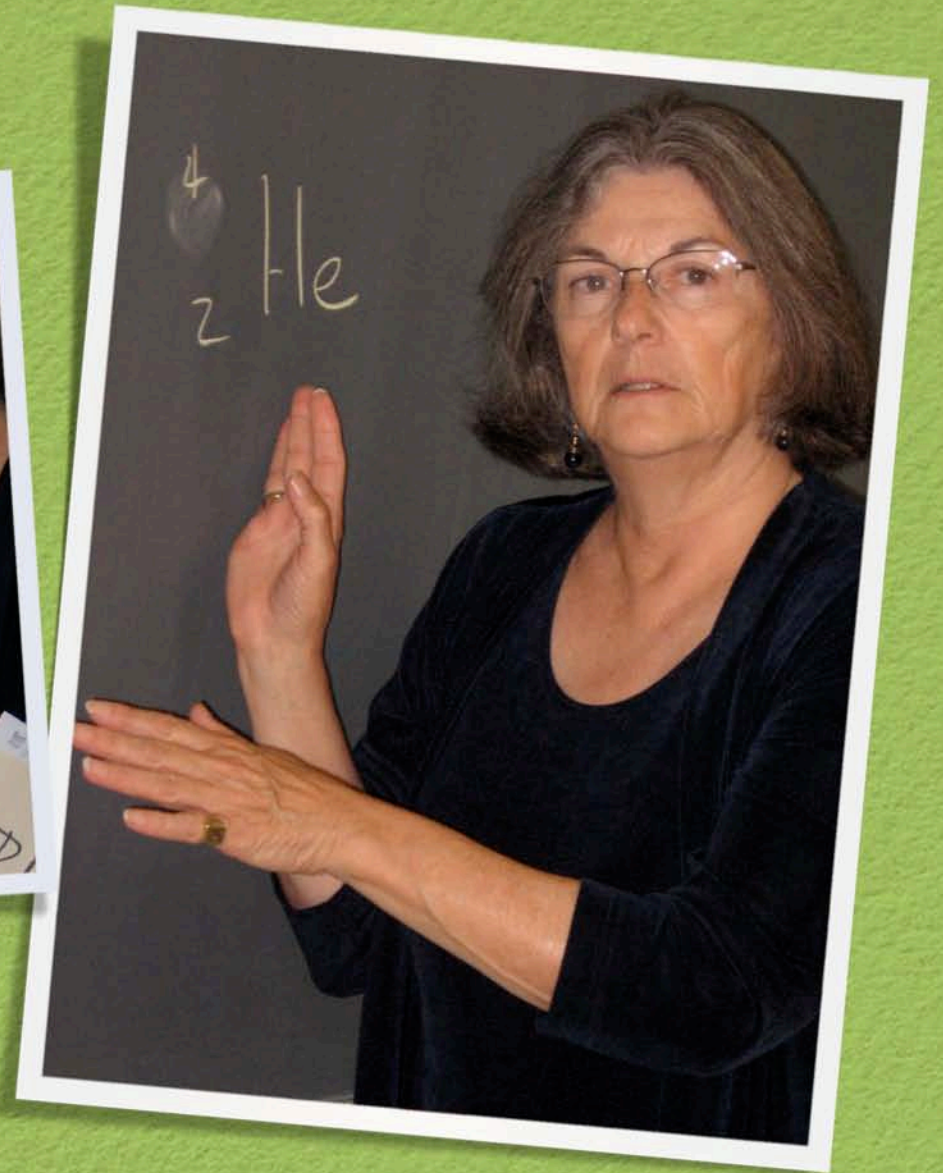
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Margaret-USA: Physics Professor
About My Career ABout Me

Interview with Margaret – USA: Physics Professor

What do you do?

My official title is: Full Professor of Physics. The location of my two year technical community college is Springfield, Massachusetts, USA, located about two hours west of Boston and four hours north of New York City. Springfield Technical Community College [<http://www.stcc.edu>]

I am fully qualified for my position and have been active in my professional societies, regionally and nationally. I am neither offended nor overwhelmed by constructive or destructive criticism. I just listen, digested the information, and respond. I may just adapt to a more improved model or discuss at a large decibel what is wrong with the suggestion.

I teach transferrable physics courses with laboratories for students in medical technologies [radiography and nuclear medicine] and mathematics courses for students in automotive technology. In addition to completion requirements of the two year degree [A.S.] in their specific field, they are tested and licensed at a national level. I am also the Department Chairman of Physics.

Anything funny happened ?

My derivations are correct as are the units but oh those arithmetic skills are sloppy. The students pounce on my every mistake. I provide comic relief responding with horrible physics jokes. My handwriting deteriorates over the semester.

Challenges?

1.Students. With the required part of the course topics, classes commence on time and finish on time. I distribute a 20 page single spaced syllabus. I require attendance, scientific calculator, and use of the electronic blackboard. It takes about one week for the class to understand why this class has a paced structure.

Many students come to a community college with a GED [graduate high school equivalent diploma] and have not adapted to the rigors of higher education. Many are older returning students who have little time and money to execute the routine aspect of college, such as taking correct data and then producing the report. As the participants in my classes are second year students with the pre-requisites, there are only a few who do not understand.

2.Deans. With few exception the Deans have no practical work experience outside of academia and may be versed in a scientific discipline and reluctant to let the details of physics and its laboratory component be managed by our department

3.Technology. I must be current with the automotive and medical technology to present relevant concepts and problem sets.

4. Continuous organization.

Any typical day?

twelve contact hours for class, one for a department meeting, three office hours, at least two committee meetings per week, and advisees constitutes a typical work week. For the off semester time, I engage in continuing education with respect to the technologies and after six years take a one year sabbatical.

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Continued interview with Margaret – USA: Physics Professor

What has been your best experience in your job?

Sabbaticals.

I always make a thorough review of the material published by the overriding credentialing bodies related to my courses. Then I fold in something correlated to work but different each sabbatical. The last time was Australia, and currently Japan. I return back to teaching with a very positive start to the new academic year. The leave abroad opens a perspective on international education and where the USA community college fits into the larger educational picture.

What was your first day like?

My first day at this institution was interesting. I had changed my job from a hospital environment to the community college. I was actually recruited due to my reputation of teaching in the hospital based programs. I was hired in by the President of STCC who related to me that five [5] persons in the physics department had attempted to teach the two sequential physics courses for the medical technology students. Students were not passing the physics portion of the board exams and complaining at the Dean level; ergo, go to it.

The first day of work set the tone for the next 30 years. The “charming five males” in the physics department meeting greeted me in the first department meeting with accusations of being a political hire. After all I was over 30, still single, did not have a PhD in hand, and that I “did not seem to know much physics.” Furthermore, there was not one laboratory set up, no previous syllabus, nada for the courses. My response to them was and still is unprintable. In the longer narrative, I tell you why this experience was not bad.

What do you enjoy about your work?

What I enjoy most about my role and future relevance is the same as what I dislike.

1. Students. Eventually I meet these technology students in the work force. The automotive students repair my car, including the brake. The tough guy with the tool box now makes constructive suggestions about automobile maintenance. The medical technology students administer mammograms and various other medical discomforts in competent, professional manners. The joy is that I was a part of their educational process. I am part of the great chain of educational and institutional continuity.

2. Deans. A few times a small side suggestion has reaped a very positive academic change.

3. I enjoy the independence from the 8—5 routine. I normally work a 7 day week during the semester, correcting all of my own laboratory reports, having never copied an old examination to be re-administered. Each one is de novo from my test bank and reviewed each summer for relevance. The large blocks of time at semester’s end allow me to stay current with the change in the field and to travel.

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About Me Interview With Margaret: USA

What are words that describe you?

First and foremost, I was qualified for the position from the first day

Persistent Adaptable Resilient

Previous jobs?

Yes, medical physicist
hospital based.

What do you like?

I like what I do. The structure in which I
work provides the constraints.

Hobbies?

No hobbies. Watching
American Football; No

Time flexibility?

On a personal level the time distribution has allowed me devote time to one
husband and produce and help raise two children without ever missing one day at
work.

Qualifications?

A.B., M.S., Ph.D

Advice to other women?

Women statistically enjoy longevity and coupled with education, good health. One needs to find entertainment
that will sustain throughout a career and over one's life time. A career in any technology provides changes,
sometimes in an annoying manner, sometimes by surprise, but necessary to keep the rust from one's life.

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Words of Wisdom from Margaret: USA

I relate my experiences so that maybe one woman out there can make a professional decision with some ideas based on my experiences. I joined this technology project as a reader of the listserv, daphnet [daphnet@imperial.ac.uk]. The recent August 2008 threads on women in technology have resonated with my own experiences. In my career, the only breaks taken from work have been my year abroad in Italy as a student of the language and history of art and sabbaticals. Neither marriage nor the birth of two children has taken one day from my schedule. Now with salt and pepper hair, this project has given me some time to reflect over the changes in technology and my own experiences.

Getting Started in Science & Technology—Pick the correct institution for you

I entered tertiary education with a mind for science, physics in particular, through a curriculum of a liberal arts education. I had entertained the prospect of entering an engineering program for a B.S. in mechanical engineering. I did not like the USA large university settings what with 6,000 or more undergraduates where the engineering programs were situated. I preferred the smaller ~1000 size [for four years]. The then required college interviews and the questions not then regulated by federal law posed indicated that a woman's college was a more appropriate choice.

Undergraduate flexibility in curriculum has changed positively since then. I live in Western Massachusetts in the midst of the Five Colleges, one of which is The Smith College in Northampton. This women-only institution has initiated a B.S. in engineering coupled with the option of an A.B. in a liberal arts field. In addition, a matriculated student at any of the five colleges can opt for courses at any of the other four by simply registering. This consortium of public and private educational ventures has been positive. A large percentage of single sexed colleges have become co-educational, leaving a necessary few to serve out their own purposes.

Graduate School—long term or short term goals [terminal degree or general foundation]

I selected a terminal master's program in a very good job market. Immediately upon completion of an A.B. in physics I entered a specialized applied M.S. program in radiation physics designed to place the graduate into a medical physics position in a hospital setting. Medical physics at that time in the mid 1960's encompassed what are now separate disciplines of Health Physics and Medical Physics. An applied degree has the distinct advantage of allowing entry into a professional position in a very good job market.

Professional Position—locate where the best job for you is

The professional job market was wonderful when I began to work in Pittsburgh PA with my newly minted degree. Much of the detailed learning was on-the-job as physicians each had his / her manner of treatment in what was called radiation therapy. The field of Nuclear Medicine and CT arose during this time. Hospitals were becoming medical centers with excellent patient care supported by state and

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Christine -Canada:
Director
About My Career
About Me

Interview with Christine - Director of Business Development: Canada

What do you do?

My typical day at work is brainstorming on how to better deliver technology and technology projects to our customers. We are on the leading edge of application development technology so our customers and partners come to us for ideas on how integrated the latest solutions - both enterprise and open source - with current legacy business applications.

What has been your BEST experience?

I have worked with fortune 500 companies on several key projects. It is great going online and seeing the results of successfully implementing the right mix of good ideas and solutions.

What have been your most significant achievements?

My most significant achievements to date are actually around learning to balance work and life.

The technology industry and consulting can consume your time if you really enjoy what you are doing. For me it was about how to best mix my work and personal life.

Any challenges?

Challenges the job presents are a mix of organizing your time and focusing on the most important tasks at hand.

All jobs within the technology industry require constant reading and updating; time and technology change stops for no woman.

This translates to organizing your time and efforts to focus on the right tasks. Constantly asking, is the work I am doing now going to be of benefit to me and my customers? Is there something else I should be focusing on that will return greater results?

What do you enjoy the most?

My favorite part of my role is the brainstorming of ideas and solutions.

Technology is a great partner for business solutions when paired correctly. The solutions that seem like common sense are usually the right ones and can surprisingly be overlooked by the latest trends that capture everyone's attention.

I love matching creativity with technology; creativity can be anything from helping with the marketing of technology to solving business needs.

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Continued Interview with Christine - Director of Business Development: Canada

How did you get started?

Dating back to my first Commodore 64 I won selling chocolate, I used to always love computers. I remember when Apple displays were black and green.

Where I am now really owes to knowing another woman who had become a successful software development consultant. I called her one day and asked her how I could take my business background and combine it with my love of technology. She pointed me in the right direction and a good contact and I have not looked back since. In those days it was not hip to be in technology and not enough female mentors were available.

Do you travel?

I used to travel every week for 5 years across the US and Canada. In the beginning it was great but now I would say no more than 50% travel is best.

Several of us who traveled every week used to joke that if you are Super Elite with Air Canada you either travel overseas several times a year or you are now divorced.

I do miss being treated like a queen by the Starwoods hotel chain and not having to wait in line at the airline check-in

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What was your first day like?

My first day at work and my "funny thing that happened at the office..." are both the related. I can still remember my first day with a large technology consulting firm.

At that time I was a network engineer fresh faced and excited to start work. I showed up in a professional knee length skirt, a pressed white shirt and neat simple flats. Of course a half a day bending down on my knees under peoples desks and running network cables while configuring servers in a data centre quickly had me realize a skirt was not going to worn the second day.

Luckily my current job allows me to dress down like the old days and dress up for executive presentations. Basically the best of both worlds though I still remember my first day fondly.

Will you stay in technology?

I like what I am doing now and will most likely continue to move in the sales / business development side of technology and professional services.

Having worked on the consulting side of technology for so long it is nice to be able to contribute to better ways of delivering customer solutions

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About Me Interview with Christine - Director of Business Development: Canada

What are 3 words that describe you?

Fun, Inventive, Persistent

What motivates you?

Enjoying what I am doing. As a young girl I loved creating things and solving puzzles. The same seems to hold true in my current career.

What great qualities do you have?

Inventive with a sense of humor.

There are many times you are going to hit a wall in your job, projects, solutions, customers and team mates. It is not the final solution that is important but how you got to it and that you got it. My favorite line comes from Marshall McLuhan, "You don't like those ideas?... I got others".

What previous jobs have you had?

I used to own my own company in a non-technology unrelated field. Other than the usual jobs you have in university, I have always leaned towards the business / technology environment.

Hobbies?

A dichotomy of adrenaline and relaxing activities make up my list of hobbies:

- Endurance kayak races (participated in the world's longest river race (742km in 4 days)
- Backcountry hiking and adventure racing (up to 8 days backcountry)
- Scuba and free diving
- Building large scale interactive media and pyrotechnic art/sculptures
- Gardening
- Global travel
- Global and community politics

What studies have you done?

I have a BBA, Masters Certificate in Project Management, Masters Certificate for Business Analysts and debating an MBA. I must admit acting classes and a few stints on stage in University really paid off as they gave me the skills needed to present in front of audiences and executives. Let that be a lesson to parents who discount acting 101 as an elective.

Relationships?

I have several acquaintances around the world and a few close friends I will always have for life no matter the distance or time. I am currently married to a fantastic individual who is also in my industry and loves creating interactive media art. The bad side to both of us being in the same industry is the need to know when to stop talking about work.

What is your advice to other women?

It is a great career with lots of opportunity. Women bring to technology a level of communication and thought that is much needed in the industry. You do not have to follow a stereotype personality to get things done; just observe the traits in others that you admire and learn to apply them in your daily work ethic. Never be scared to try something new as the great thing about this industry is that it constantly changes and allows you to take what you have learned and apply it to new career paths or personal growth.

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federal tax dollars. It was all upbeat. I advanced professionally with a moved to Boston in the emerging area of Oncology. I really liked the direction of medicine and the new fun instrumentation that popped up.

Professional Position—at least two years in one position will indicate direction to the future

Then, I began to dislike my job. It was basic perturbation theory—I disliked my job, and the job disliked me. The patients who benefited from treatment, the majority, did not return to the treatment area. They went back to their home lives as successes. Only those with recurrences did I see again. And I only saw a patient for measurement or an adjustment on treatment time, not on the daily schedule of the technologists. Statistically it made sense; psychologically, it was upsetting to work with the pool of patients who required additional treatment, and some who had the nerve to expire in our department. Each morning the technologists would discuss the latest news from the obituaries. Doom & Gloom. Actually, I was just getting older and more sensitive and less suited for the job. The one sector of my job that I loved was teaching the radiographers, nuclear medicine, and radiation therapy technology students the fundamentals of radiology.

Also, the economy was evolving downward. The support staff and middle management were slowly being eliminated. The universities were down-sizing the PhD physics teaching jobs driving the physicists from post-doc to the hospital environment. At one point I knew that in the next ten years that I too would have an effective pay cut or be retrenched with my existing credentials and middle management role. A serious re-evaluation of my future meant a drastic upgrade educationally or possibly leaving the medical center permanently. I knew by then that all the electronics and instrumentation from my terminal master's needed a serious fundamental upgrade. Many of the physics fundamentals were missing. Certainly I could function day to day. It was the long haul that bothered me.

I should like to note that I did not sense then nor now in retrospect that I was ever discriminated based on gender or marital status. I enjoyed all the benefits from my position on a par with men of my age and education. There were status differences between physicians and non-physicians.

Change in Job—the best for you—carpe diem

Therefore, when the hospital based programs moved to the community colleges in the 1970's, I changed employment from a lucrative position with many benefits to a yearly contract until I was tenured working for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as an Assistant Professor.

I point out that I made what I thought was a financially risky move. I changed jobs because I was really unhappy. In the long term as of today middle management medical physicists have been eliminated, one Ph.D. at the top directing a staff of technologists. Now the Ph.D. must be board certified, rightfully so, and in more than one area. Calibration of radiation detection equipment is a serious

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responsibility, even if calibrated by an outside laboratory. Any class action suit in the Radiology area involves this person. I did and do not relish such critical responsibilities. My future would have been a change of position in any circumstance.

On the other hand, my entrance into the community college system was timed coincidentally when no one with solid academic credentials wanted to teach there. I did only because my medical technology students were matriculating there. The hospital based programs were being phased out replaced by community college academics training. My expertise in radiology was recruited, and I changed jobs. In the USA system in a job change such as this, one loses retirement benefits, sick days accrued, and continuity of health insurance coverage. These benefits, I forfeited. So, a change of job decision is based on many factors. Mine were relatively simple as a young single woman with my only dependent being an Irish Setter.

Outcome of a job change

Formal education continued in parallel and part time in my new job culminating with a second M.S., this time in physics, twelve years after the first one. The cut in salary was balanced by the academic calendar, leaving the necessary time to catch up with the fundamentals of the science and the march of the technology development. I continued on part-time for a PhD in Environmental Science, taking courses related to my area of teaching and personal interest.

What remained constant was my contact and continual involvement with the same professional societies, all related to ionizing radiation and some to medical applications. I delivered talks and papers at national meeting, becoming a board member and an officer in the local chapters. The time spent kept me in sync with the evolution of the professions and prevented rust from settling in the motivational part of the brain. Teaching fundamental science is repetitive and can present a false image of what is really happening in the real world.

Long term results

Today the community college system is the feeder for the universities and four year colleges. STCC is the largest of the 15 community colleges in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and part of the University system. I still teach those physics courses with modern laboratory applications and a mathematics course for students in Automotive Technology.

How did I get involved with Auto Tech? Personality. No maths faculty member wanted to teach these fellows. There have been females in the program; they are just as rambunctious. All my courses involve a set curriculum and external examinations. I like the goals, the students, and therefore the teaching. Intensive but rewarding, and they all leave at the end of two years.

My decision to enter the academic world and finish off part time two more degrees was correct for me. The PhD nearly finished me off. Graduate school was miserable, and I am more of a party creature than a researcher. Yet the friendships have lasted. Due to this marathon, I am at the top of my salary and rank and department chairman.

I stay somewhat current with technology development in the world via an international Sunday newspapers, the USA Public Broadcasting System, which includes the BBC, and trade journals on instrumentation, and of course professional societies. All of the preceding may seem as though this procedure is routine for professional development for a person in the technologies; however, a teaching tenured position requires self-motivation to keep in touch with the changing world. There is nothing more boring to a student than an outdated female professor.

Benefits of my Job

I have no hobbies. I am useless except for teaching. I can't even cook. Gardening is viewed as a chore equivalent to vacuuming. My husband does the laundry as my definition of cleanliness does not include spots.

Travelling is an experience that I prefer with a theme of meeting with the locals laced with pub life with an academic thread. The economic and technological booms in the Far East and now the stage of the Olympics have beckoned. A few weeks ago my husband and I returned from five weeks in Japan as part of my sabbatical. We enrolled in an intensive Japanese language program at a university and also were conferees at the Sustainability Conference that paralleled the G8 summit in Sapporo. I actually selected the Japanese language over Chinese due to the cool climate of Hokkaido combined with the wealth of activity there during June and July 2008. The country is agreeable with my bones and ease of travel.

Lack of language familiarity, particularly eastern non-Indo-European ones, is one of the limitations of USA public K—12 education. A visit to the national Japanese K—12 museum in Kyoto and dinners with former physics grad students will be published in relevant newsletters and alumni magazines. Travelling is part of my continuing education, in conjunction with professional meetings, not really a hobby. I love to talk.

Working Mums & Discrimination

I add this paragraph as a point in summary. The current thread [Aug 2008] on daphnet is discussing working mums. Most of what I read is the assumption that she is the main caretaker or equally shared caretaker. I can point out an alternative. I married in my mid-thirties, have two sons, and the original husband. The dog died. Our plan was for me to work full time, him part-time. Due to this arrangement, I never was late, absent, or unprepared for my job. In conjunction with frugality, the economy of the time allowed for us

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not to rely on day care for our children. Eventually I added teaching a graduate course and part time consulting, which enhanced our income.

This family arrangement has had its down side. The responsibility of the household income lay with me, which makes a secure income a necessity. It means that I hustled in a fair manner for promotions--dazzle with degrees and paperwork. It means that I take a stand and hold my ground on issues as I am there for the long term. Something so simple as enforcing pre-requisites for physics courses has elicited responses from my colleagues directed at me personally. I'm not so sure that the derogatory comments relate to motherhood or marital status, but simply to the skirt I wear. In health terms acting like a male at work will give one the same health stress risks.

My first physics department day at work synopsis is a summary of what is endemic in the community college. Assertive and competent women are a problem to any of the weak men and women. This work force is self-selected, mostly by elimination from other professional positions. I too am included in this pool. Many of my colleagues could not attain a position at a university due to lack of a PhD or competence at that level. The residual pool of colleagues views their job as perfunctory, and many are just not happy with their lot.

I extrapolate my thoughts to stating that my academic world is more openly verbally abusive than our Northeastern USA business world with open maliciousness toward women. In business, financial accountability will sustain professional relationships and allow promotions. There are regulations limiting the nature of verbal abuse. No company wishes negative public relations in this area. The discrimination is more subtle.

In the world of tenure, a constant paycheck, and lock-step pay raises, laziness and outspokenness have limited accountability. My statement that my first day at work was not a negative is true. The nasty remarks alerted me to my standing with my co-workers, all five of them. I knew from the beginning that I was on my own and needed to keep marching. They also realized from my response where my values lay. The beginning was at least an honest one.

Well, the lot of them is now retired, and I have a wonderful female colleague and a male physics adjunct. What I miss most about the change in the science building is that I, the solitary female, once possessed four of my own personal faculty ladies' rooms. Now I have to share. That indeed is progress.

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Remember

1. Your professional societies and attend meetings even if you are on a break from work,
2. To stay in touch with the change in technology, even if out of phase by one year,
3. That risk is part of each decision. It's the grey area in the statistics,
4. That benefits make take a decade or two to surface,
5. That life is a conservative system with respect to time. Enjoy the pieces.
6. Not to degrade fellow females. The males will do that for you. Just shut up.
7. That luck has a part to play.
8. To keep marching,
9. And that she who never has any enemies never has any friends.

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