

Transitioning from University to _____

Craig Wilson
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Bio

- Graduated from Software Engineering program in June 2006
- Completed Master of Applied Science in June 2008, under Michael's supervision
- Presently Software Quality Engineer for EMC²

Bio Continued...

- Interned at Research in Motion for 16 months during 2003-2004
- Split 4th year into 2 years after internship
- Developed Psychology Experiments for the lab of Dr. David Shore from 2005-2007

Outline

- Central messages of the talk
- Introduction
- (Other) Things to do in undergrad
- Job searching in your final year
- Graduate studies
- Closing comments
- Q & A

Main Points for Today

- Network
- Don't rush yourself
- Do something different!

The Undergraduate Life

- DO THE ASSIGNMENTS. ALL OF THEM.
- Seek out ways to differentiate yourself
- Don't let school get in the way of learning

Attend Conferences

- Exposure to current technologies, ideas in software development
- Broaden perspective on how other schools teach
- Network with other students and employers
- Resume padding

Undergraduate Conferences

- CUSEC: Canadian Undergraduate Software Engineering Conference

<http://2009.cusec.net/>

- CS Games: Compete against other students in programming challenges

<http://www.csgames.org>

- CUTC: More general technology conference (<http://www.cutc.ca>)

Look on campus for practical experience

- ▶ Many other fields need software developers
- ▶ Psychology, Biology, Chemistry, etc.
- ▶ Acquire knowledge in other domains
- ▶ Assist in published research

Campus Work Example



Campus Work Example

- Eye tracking experiment
 - ▶ Memorize names associated with faces
 - ▶ Track where participants look when memorizing faces
 - ▶ Interface between Matlab and eye tracking headset
 - ▶ Resulted in published research

Internships

- More than just resume padding
- Exposure to current technologies, processes
- Improve communications skills
- Beware of post-internship lag!

Your Final Year

- Transition to workforce or grad school
- Start early, before workload hits
- Keep applying, don't get discouraged

Applying for Positions

- Process begins early (mid-September)
- Have resumé critiqued as much as possible
- Say what you **accomplished**, not what you did
- Don't fear qualification requirements

The Interview

- Two-way line of interrogation
- What does a usual day consist of?
- Processes in the team / department
- Visibility of your efforts

Graduate Studies

- Finally get paid to go to school!
- Study something you're interested in
- Not a large time commitment
- Attend more conferences (worldwide)

Example Research Areas

- Process routing algorithms
- Software for specific industrial use
- Playing with Playstation 3s

Summer Research Opportunities

- “Mini-Grad School”
- Work with faculty member(s) on research project
- Less flexibility on topic, but can still choose

Closing Comments

- Lots of other possibilities in undergrad
- Many ways to gain experience besides jobs
- Consider other paths

Q & A

- Ask me something. I dare you.