

# Career Development for ITSS

**Tony Brett**  
**Head of IT Support Staff Services**  
**Oxford University Computing Services**  
**[tony.brett@oucs.ox.ac.uk](mailto:tony.brett@oucs.ox.ac.uk)**

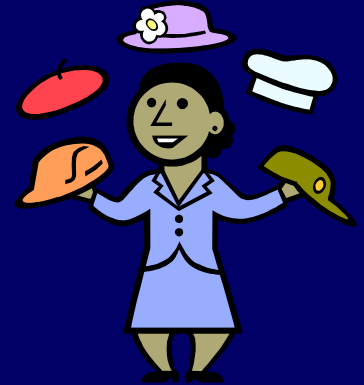


# Agenda

- ☐ I'm not Jane!
- ☐ What do you want out of your career?
- ☐ Looking out for yourself
- ☐ Networking – not wireless or ethernet!
- ☐ Training
- ☐ Barriers to efficiency – workplace health
- ☐ Work/life balance
- ☐ Professional bodies
- ☐ Your plan
- ☐ Q&A

# What do you want out of your career?

- Are you doing your job:
  - Because you enjoy it?
  - Because you need the money?
  - Because you kind of slipped into it?
- Your work makes up about one third of your life!
  - Important to get it right
  - Affects your health
  - Affects your home life, relationships etc.



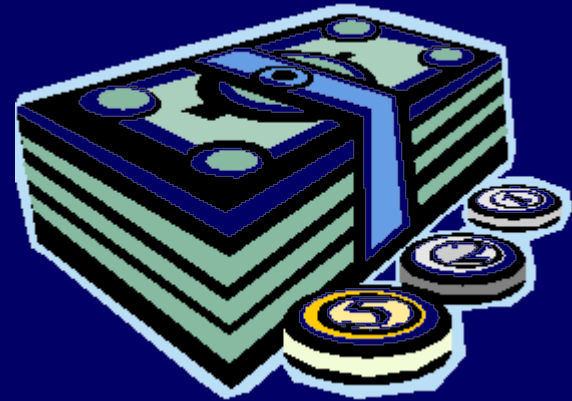


# The best person to look out for you...

- ☐ Is you!
- ☐ Show loyalty to the organisation but beware of assuming it will show loyalty to you
- ☐ Constantly work to show your value
- ☐ Join a trade union
- ☐ Be assertive – i.e. firm but fair
- ☐ Don't be a martyr
- ☐ Take your breaks, especially lunch!
- ☐ Manage your employer's expectations

# Things you can change

- ☐ Staff numbers
- ☐ Your pay
- ☐ Your reputation
- ☐ Flexibility
- ☐ Hours
- ☐ Variety
- ☐ Specialisations
- ☐ Stress levels





# Network Network Network

- Go to conferences – well done, you're here!
- Get to know peers and decision-makers
- Go to work-organised events, even just to show your face. People will remember it.
- Shamelessly show what you are worth
- Have business cards handy and wear a name badge when appropriate
- If you deserve the credit for a project then don't be afraid to accept it!
- Consider a shift on the OUCS helpdesk
  - Evening slots are available



# Places to Network

- Commercial events
  - Product launches
  - Technology briefings
  - Roadshows
- ITSS events – including social!
- Exhibitions & Trade shows
  - How many do you go to?
- ITSS-discuss JISCmail lists
- Get involved in University-wide IT issues and groups
  - ICT Strategy
  - ITSSG
  - Colleges IT Officers' Forum



# Simple Networking Exercise

- Tell the person on your right what your job is, and also something not job related about you. They tell you the same
- Then turn to the left and repeat what you learned about the first person and then give information about you. Swap roles and do the same.
- Easy isn't it!
- You learn much more by talking to people you don't know!



# Training

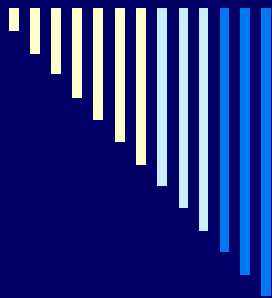


- Develops your value and effectiveness
- Also your employability
- Ask for what you want
  - Back requests up with research and justification
  - Maybe offer to pay cost back if you leave within an agreed period
- Keep cost in perspective with what you cost your employer in salary!
- ITS3 will help you make the case to your unit

# Time Management



- Learn to manage your time effectively
- University has courses available on this
- There are books available
- Work out if you work better late or early and plans difficult tasks around that
- Take a few minutes at the start of each day to think about how you will spend your time
  - Maybe write some notes
- Remember the story of the man with the blunt axe and the tree to fell. Sharpen your axe first!



# The Oxford Learning Institute

- Formerly Continuing Education
- Lots of training available, with other University Staff
- Seminars for support staff and first line managers
- Introductory Certificate in First Line Management
- [www.learning.ox.ac.uk](http://www.learning.ox.ac.uk)



# Barriers to efficiency

- ☐ Office colleagues?
- ☐ Long lunches/late starts/early finishes
- ☐ Browsing the 'net
- ☐ All these can be accepted or changed as you wish
- ☐ Talk to colleagues if they are preventing you from working properly
- ☐ Ask your line manager for help

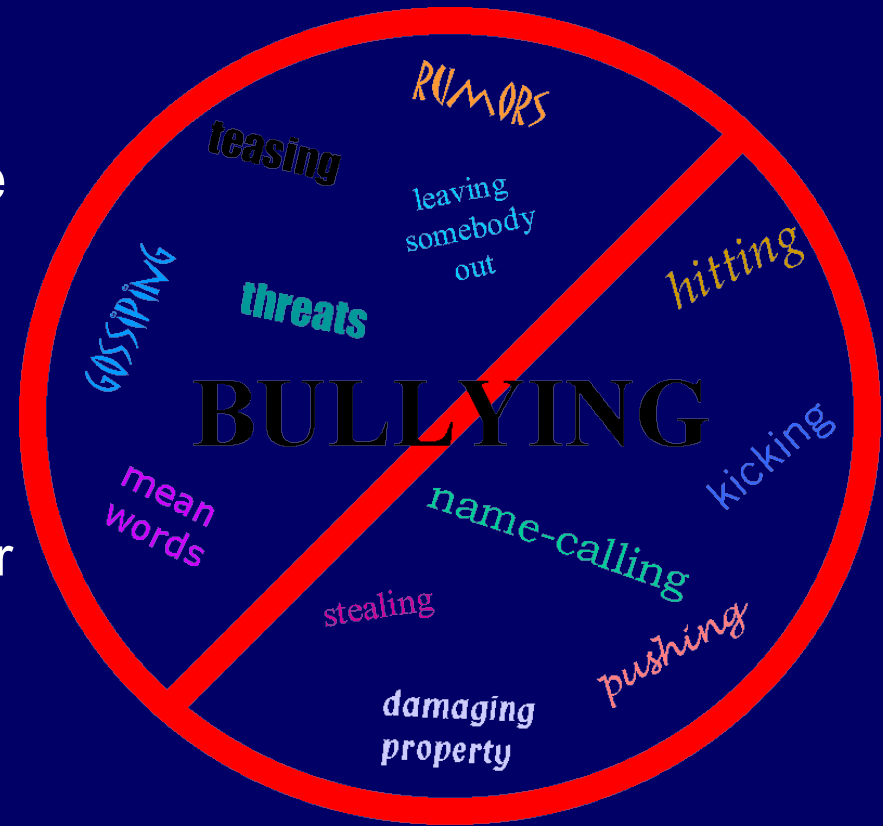


# Efficient but overworked?

- You don't have to take responsibility for everything!
- Guilt is a personal choice
- Line manager has a duty to recognise and eliminate overwork
  - Don't be afraid to point it out though
  - Note hours, tasks etc. etc.
- Negotiate with your line manager
- “I could do that but if I did, what would you like me to stop doing to make time for it?”

# Health at Work

- Vital to look after yourself
- You have a right to work free from bullying or harrassment
  - Being bullied is **NOT** your fault!
  - Talk to your department or college's harrassment advisor if you need to
- Excellent BBC web site at:  
<http://tinyurl.com/jwm9v>





# Work/Life Balance

- The old phrase: work to live, don't live to work!
- There is much more to life than just work
- Work should not overshadow the rest of your life
- Parents have had the right to request flexible work since 6 April 2003

# Professional Bodies



- British Computer Society (BCS)
  - Various levels of membership
  - Not cheap!
- Association for Computing Machinery (ACM)
  - Based in New York
- Institute of IT Training (IITT)
  - Focus on IT Trainers
- Can add credibility to you as a professional
- Useful sources of books, courses, career advice, local groups, events, awards and certification







# So what will you do?



- ☐ Don't try to change too much too fast
- ☐ Think about changes needed in
  - Colleagues
  - Management
  - You!
- ☐ Plan how to achieve the changes
- ☐ Make a timescale and have regular reviews to see how you are doing
- ☐ It needn't feel like climbing a mountain!



# Finally

- Remember that very few are completely happy with their career
- But most are happy most of the time
- Focus your energy on things you can change
- Don't waste energy worrying about things you can't change



# Questions & Answers

- Thank you!
- Thanks to Jane Littlehailes for allowing me to use her slides from a previous conference for ideas

