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Bill Mattson, Randolph College

Thursday, May 12, 2011
Green Chemistry and Renewable Energy – Two Peas in a Pod
Michael Heben, University of Toledo

ACS WEBINARS™
May 3, 2011

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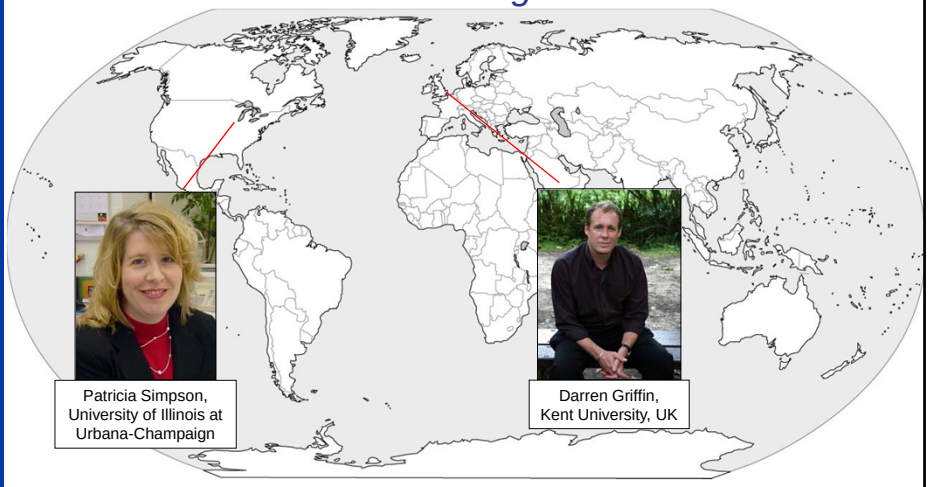
Ten Commandments for Being a Successful Scientist



Patricia Simpson, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Darren Griffin, Kent University, UK

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Darren K Griffin
Professor of Genetics
University of Kent
Canterbury, UK

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My brief CV

- 1985-1988: Student. Awarded BSc (Manchester)
- 1988-1992: PhD student. Awarded PhD (UCL)
- 1993-1995: Post-doc in US
- 1995-1988: Post-doc in Cambridge
- 1998: First academic appointment (Brunel)
- 2000: Fellowship of Society of Biology
- 2001: Promoted to Senior Lecturer
- 2002: Post graduate teaching certificate (HE)
- 2004: Promoted to Professor
- 2004: Took up Reader post at University of Kent
- 2007: Promoted to Professor of Genetics
- 2008: Fellowship of Royal College of Pathologists
- 2008: Awarded DSc (Manchester)

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How am I judged?

- Research
  - Money
  - Publications
  - Successful completion of graduate students
  - Enterprise/industrial links
  - "Impact"
- Teaching
  - Innovation
  - Student feedback
- Administration
  - Leadership
- **PERCEPTION IS REALITY**

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Am I perceived as a good scientist?

- I'm a Professor
- About £3million raised in grant funding
- 100+ publications
- More than 30 of them have 30 or more citations (H-factor)
- 12 PhD students taken to completion
- Lab of about 12 people
- Done some research into innovative teaching
- Various leadership roles

- But one thing you really need to know about me

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I'm not very intelligent

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The Ten Commandments of being a successful scientist

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1. There is only one way to do good research

Get on with it

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2. When opportunity knocks

Open the door

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3. Build a team

- You need people who are better than you are
  - Otherwise they're no good to you
- With good people you can do anything
- To keep them:
  - Let them go when they want to
- Listen to them, learn from them

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4. It's not about your knowledge:

- It's about your imagination and ideas
- And talented friends
  - Your team
  - Your collaborators
- If you want knowledge:
  - Look it up on the web

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5. Always bring something to the party

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6. It's not the size of your gun

- It's when you shoot
- Judicious shooting can help define the target

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7. If the system doesn't work for you, either:

- Change it
- Do something else

or

- Don't complain

- No-one likes a whiner

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8. Don't ask why

- Ask why not
- Don't take no for an answer
- Every no is one step closer to a yes
- It's easier to chase that be chased

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9. The journey

Is usually far more rewarding than the destination

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10. Be nice to people

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The eleventh commandment

Nil carborundum illegitimi

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10 commandments

1. The only way to do good research is to get on with it
2. When opportunity knocks, open the door
3. With good people you can do anything
4. It's not about your knowledge. It's about imagination and ideas
5. Always bring something to the party
6. It's not the size of your gun, it's when you shoot
7. If the system doesn't work for you, change it, do something else or don't complain
8. Don't ask why - Ask why not
9. The journey Is usually far more rewarding than the destination
10. Be nice to people

11. (*Nil carborundum illegitimi*)

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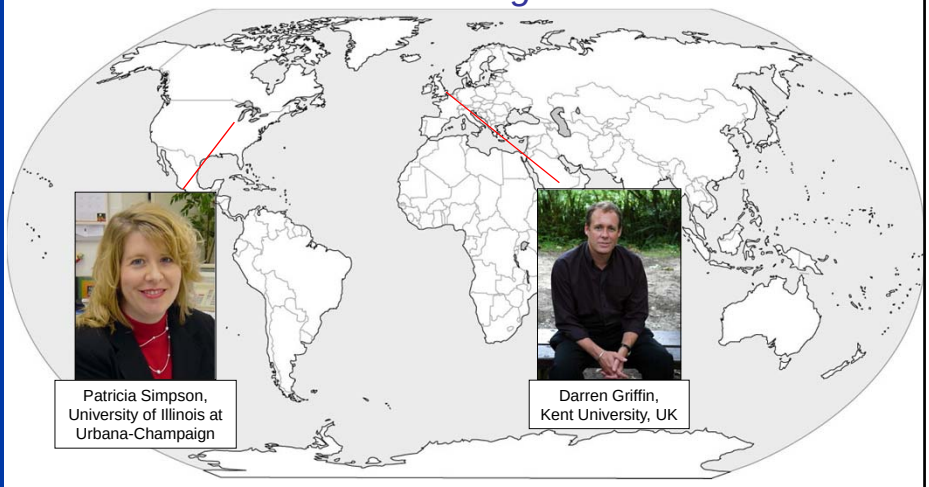
Q&A SESSION

Ten Commandments for Being a Successful Scientist



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