

# WIM PANEL SESSION

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## HOW DID I GET HERE?

- 91 – 94 BSc Hons Pure Math – St Andrews University
- 94 – 98 PhD – St Andrews University
- 98 – 00 Postdoc – York University
- 00 – 02 Postdoc – Cornell University
- 02 – ?? Assistant/Associate/Full Professor – UBC

# HOW DID I KNOW IT WAS THE RIGHT PATH?

Learned from each what I liked and **what I didn't**.

- Solve my problems (mine/uni **vs** theirs/industry)
- More than research (teaching at uni **vs** research lab)
- More than teaching (research uni **vs** teaching uni)
- Bonus
  - Pretty for inspiration (Cornell in Ithaca **vs** York in Toronto)
  - City for freedom to change (York **vs** Cornell)

UBC was a great fit!

## HOW DID I REACH GOALS?

- Note your key goals (Professorship)
- Discover successful steps (get a PhD, 1 or 2 postdocs, then apply)
- Find someone who has succeeded for insider tips (good letters are key)

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A **mentor** will help you find goals, give you sources and tips, be supportive and be a role model – **find one!**

## ANY COMPROMISES?

**Definitely:** Focus on investments and needs vs wants.

**Investment:** Long distance while postdocs at more prestigious schools meant more job choice later.

**Need:** UBC in a city, even though in 2002 no-one in my area but more chance to solve 2-body problem.

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- Eat and sleep well – look after your health
- Take a break from mathematics – have hobbies
- Learn to say no

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Thanks!