

How to turn your profession as a university professor into the best job in the world  
PhD/GOLD session at ISCAS 2010  
Wouter A. Serdijn  
1-6-2010

**TU Delft** Delft University of Technology  
Challenge the future

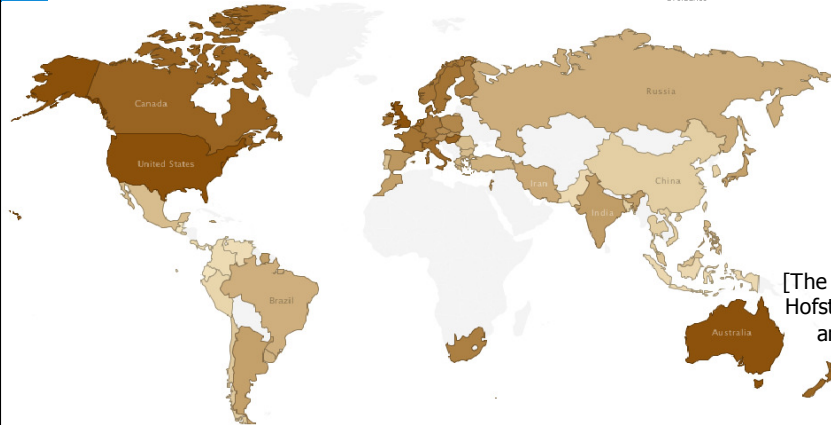
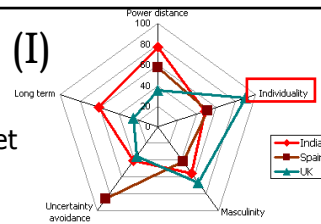
**DIMES** Delft Institute of Microsystems and Nanoelectronics

## Outline

- Based on my personal experience and conviction
- The cultural perspective
- The organizational perspective
- The academic perspective
- The personal perspective

## The cultural perspective (I)

- The world is our podium, so we get to meet many cultures and personalities



[The works of G. Hofstede (father and son)]

## The cultural perspective (II)

- It is great to work among and with so many talented people
- Always keep an eye on the cultural differences
- Movie: Dark Matter (2007)
- Scene: Liu Xing meets his idol, Prof. Reiser
- based on the true story of Gang Lu, a Chinese graduate student at the University of Iowa



## The cultural perspective (II)



## The organizational perspective (I)

- You have many bosses
  - Group/Lab leader
  - Project leader
  - Department head
  - Dean
  - Director of Education
  - Course Director
  - Rector Magnificus
  - Director of research center
  - Conference chair
  - CASS President
- Learn from them all
- It is impossible to satisfy them all
- Select those that really appreciate and deserve your good work



## The organizational perspective (II)

- Allow your students to learn from you
- Try to learn from them
- Try to learn from your colleagues
- Allow them to learn from you
- Team up with people that have complementary skills; they appreciate yours and will not compete with you
- Many ways for "green" interaction
  
- CASS society is open for governance by GOLD members

The key to success in life is using the good thoughts of wise people  
Leo Tolstoy

## The academic perspective

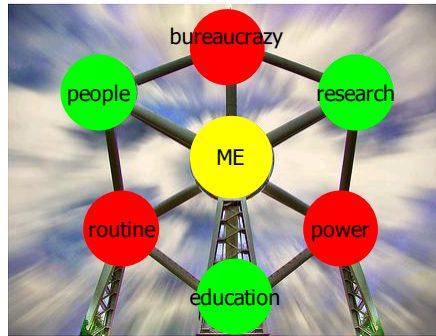
- Keep an eye on the field and how it is changing
- Keep an eye on your students and how they are changing
- Keep an eye on teaching methods and how they are changing
- Meet with your peers (and see them grow older)
- Team up with people that have complementary skills
- Enjoy the academic freedom you have

## The personal perspective (I: seeing)

- What do you like best?
- What do you do best?
- What would you wish to do?
- What is it that drives you?
- Who has inspired you?

But also:

- What is not your cup of tea?
- Which things take you a long time to complete?
- You should know in order to sustain it for many years and be successful



## The personal perspective (II: doing)

- Can you relate the above to the choices you make, every day?
- Who can be your mentor, personal coach?
  - IEEE Mentoring Program
- Write down your plans and check them after a year. Are you still on the right track?
- Without trying you'll never know
- Try to keep the balance in your personal life...  
... how else can you sustain your career for more than 40 years?



## The personal perspective (II: doing)

- Movie: Dead Poets Society (1989)
- Scene: John Keating leaves the school



## The personal perspective (II: doing)



## How to turn your profession as a university professor into the best job in the world

Thank you for your attention

Thanks 2 to Elvis for inviting me

Thanks 2 the Biomedical Group members  
(not yet on the photo, Mark, Wu, Menno)

More info: <http://elca.et.tudelft.nl/~wout>

