

A Partial Journey

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Early Years

- Clovis High School, Clovis, NM
 - Tinkerer -- was always playing with radios and antennas
 - TRS-80 -- First computer 4K memory and a cassette drive for storing programs
 - IBM system 34 mainframe

- Texas Tech:
 - Punched cards, learned Fortran and a slew of classes that I would never use again
 - 1987 was exciting year -- learned about superconductivity and optical computing -- did MSEE trying to encode information on a laser beam.

Working Life

- Texas Instruments
 - Setbacks that lead to opportunities
 - TI Speech Research group -- a story of many people helping to form a career
- NYNEX (Now owned by Verizon):
 - Can I make it on my own?
 - Designed a signal processing card, wrote a time-synchronous OS, wrote a speech recognition system.
- IBM
 - Spent 20 years there -- along the way gathered 20+ patents, conferences around the world.
 - Worked and did my PhD -- Trainable Question Answering system, Rutgers, 2001.
- Google (current)
 - I work in Google Research on large language models and platforms.

My advice

- School is to teach you how to learn... the material itself may not be that useful to you in the future, but the learning skills can be applied (and in my case over and over again)
- You are your own brand -- the quality of work you do and the things you stand for make your brand!
- Look for opportunities -- often they appear in the form of a professor or an opening in the department. If you haven't heard yet -- "change is the only constant"! -- so embrace it -- look for change and don't be afraid to change.
- For me, Google's door opened with Cracking the Coding Interview, G. McDowell -- when you want something, find resources and work at it!