



# Getting *OUT* of Grad School

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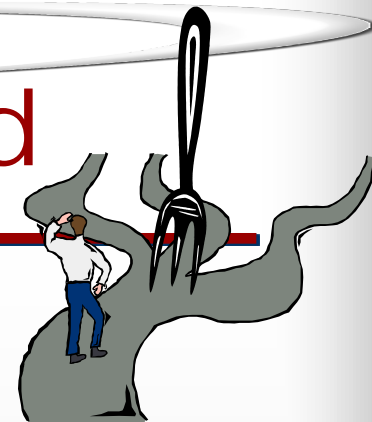
USC/ISI



USC **Viterbi**  
School of Engineering



# The Fork in the Road



- Industry I: development
  - More opportunities now
  - Bottom line determines direction (& shifts it *quickly*)
- Industry II: research
  - *Follow the big money...* anywhere in tech.
  - Values agility & diversity
- Academia
  - Heavier initial effort: *publish, publish!* (check metrics *first*)
  - Values focus
- Startups
  - Ph.D. = Chief Scientist (at best), *not* CTO
  - Focus is on *sales*



# Making Your Case

- Cover letter
  - Do some homework and be specific
- Resume
  - Start now – keep it updated
  - Draw a nice picture, but *leave stuff out*
  - Look at gaps as opportunities to *act now*
- Statement of research
  - Extend Ph.D. work
  - Propose something different (show taste & justify)





# Clues

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- Pick a direction
  - Pick *something* – long-range view
  - *Focus, focus, focus* – **until** you change it
- Get your feet wet
  - Faculty: *teach* a class (not just TA), advise a junior student
  - Industry: seek an internship
- Do something besides coursework/thesis
  - A Ph.D. is a profession, not a 'job'
- [www.isi.edu/touch/faqs/student-faq.html](http://www.isi.edu/touch/faqs/student-faq.html)
  - Personal contacts are everything – direct or indirect