

# NSF CAREER Workshop

Otis

# History

- Applied July 2006 – rejected
- Waited one year to build publication record
- Applied July 2008 - successful

# What is the CAREER?

- Not a lot of \$\$\$. One student/year for 5 years.
- Good visibility within your community.
- Not a requirement for tenure.
- A great opportunity to develop your 5-year vision...

# Recipe for success

1. Provide a very clear and complete literature review with a ton of references. Have a grad student help you with this.
2. Need one clever idea/hook.
3. Need to support the hook with convincing and understandable preliminary results.
4. Need a clever education plan.

# Do I need to call/visit the PM?

- Possibly helpful, but not necessary
- Consider first submitting a regular NSF proposal to your PM (on a different topic)
  - This will give you visibility even if it's not funded
  - Will also give you an early chance to navigate the NSF program structure

# A panelist's perspective...

- The panelists are reviewing a wide variety of proposals – they won't all be qualified to judge your proposal
- They need to see an appropriate blend of excitement and believability
- They are desperately seeking weaknesses in proposals – don't give them a thread to pull on...

# Misc advice

- Use LaTeX. More robust, more fun, you'll take more pride in your document.
- Show a draft to 2 or 3 trusted colleagues (your old advisor? mentor?)
- Make an attempt on your first year. Your proposal may be a bit anemic if you didn't do a postdoc, but it will help shape your research.