

# My IBM Story



JR Harrell

## 8 Years of Leadership, Innovation & Success

My IBM Story started at an IBM Windows95 help desk in Raleigh, NC. Within three years, I was managing the largest, most complex web hosting account at IBM. Successes included IBM IDEAS awards, stock options & top-tier PBC's.



I was hired by IBM five months before graduating from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I interviewed with MIT, Dell, Microsoft and many

other information technology organizations.

I chose IBM for a number of reasons, but the biggest reason was that the IBMers I encountered during my job search were the most professional, articulate and impressive of anyone. I told myself I wanted to be like that too.

For eight years at IBM and nearly two years as an entrepreneur after IBM, I have never forgotten the impression that those IBMers made. I have strived to live up to that image and it has structured me.

My results at IBM were tangible, valued and meaningful as my HR record demonstrates. My results outside of IBM were educational, successful and rewarding as my track record shows.

From my very first day to my very last day at IBM, I was treated like family. It gave me a great place to be and great places to go. It gave me the confidence to learn even more about the technology marketplace of sales, web 2.0 philosophies, mobile computing and search engine placement through running my own businesses.

## My IBM HR Record

As an IBMer, I always scored a one or two on my PBC. I was awarded stock options twice. I have



received at least three IBM Ideas awards. I was promoted and received raises out of cycle regularly. I was hand-picked for the first Leadership Excellence Program in Boulder, CO. I

essentially moved my way up into a new role on nearly an annual basis. I am energized to pick up where I left off on my string of IBM successes. (1)

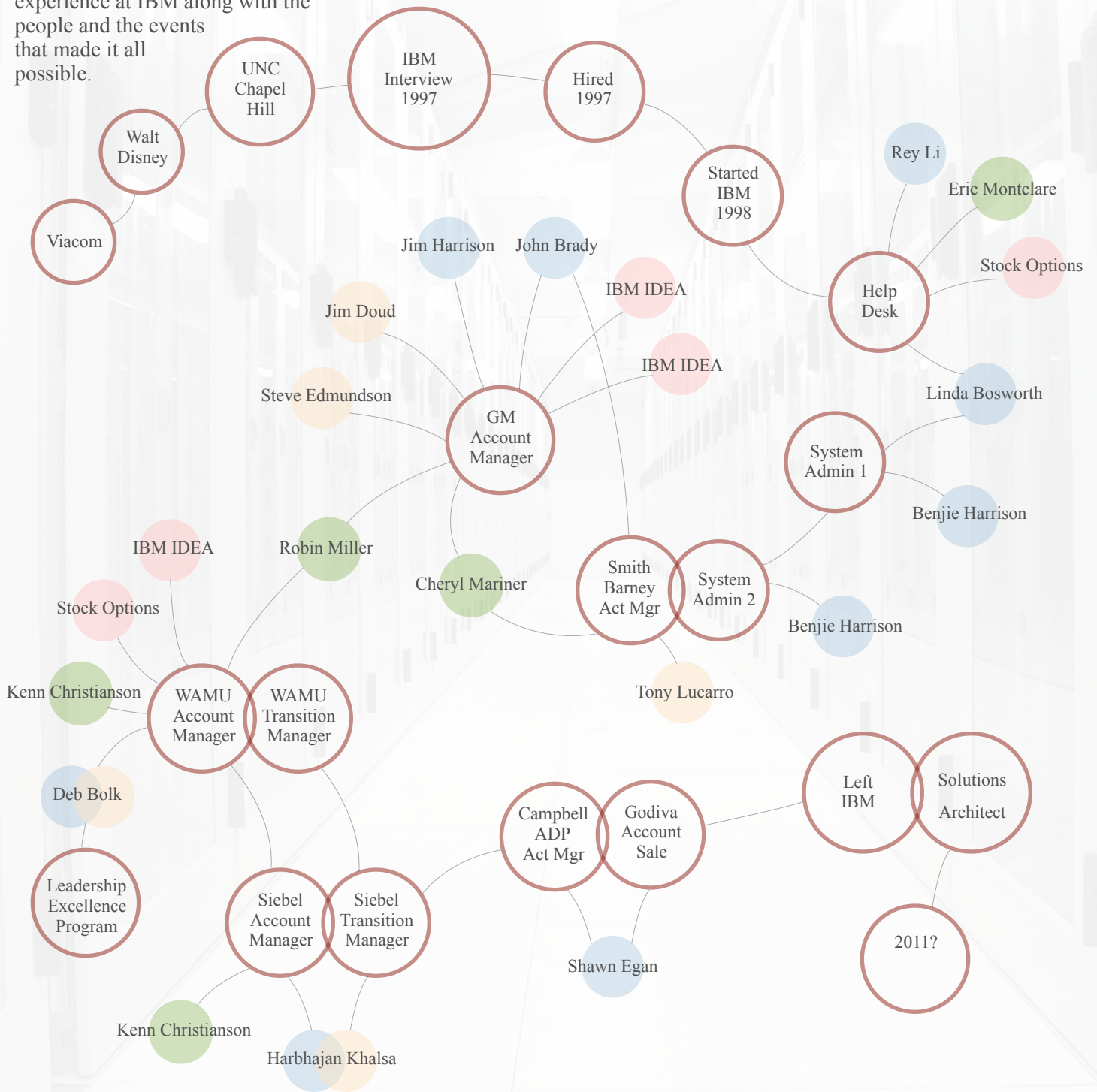
# My IBM Story

A visual depiction.

This chart shows the chronology of my experience at IBM along with the people and the events that made it all possible.

## Key To Chronology

- Manager
- Mentor
- Delivery Project Executive
- Award
- Activity / Job





## Solutions

The biggest problems can bring about the biggest solutions. Additionally, the biggest problems that we face are often the same ones that our colleagues

face. Solving our problems can help our colleagues too and create a multiplier effect. Instead of getting together with my colleagues at IBM to grumble about problems, I met with them to gather information and identify the patterns in the problems.

Typically, 80% of the problems were caused by 20% of what a given person's roles and responsibilities actually were. This caused the remaining 80% of their job to suffer. Flattening the major problems together yielded incredible efficiencies, allowing IBM colleagues to pivot from a re-active relationship to a pro-active posture with their customers. Asking ourselves what our dream outcome would be and working our way backwards from there is a powerful approach to solving the most seemingly daunting problems that yield the biggest rewards. The following are solution examples from My IBM Story.

### General Motors



**Problem:** System issues would render up to 58 global websites inaccessible. It could take over one hour to check site uptime after a correctional fix was made.

**Impact to GM:** World's #1 auto maker was losing online sales.

**Impact to IBM:** Service Level Agreement clock was ticking, causing refund payments to GM.

**Solution:** As account manager, I wrote a web-based solution that checked all sites in 5 minutes.

**Outcome:** IBM saved thousands per month in GM SLA penalties. The solution was rolled out to the entire Service Delivery Center, saving an estimated \$225k per year in SLA Penalties. (2)

**IBM Ideas Award Winner**

### Washington Mutual



**Problem:** Change Management was chaotic. WAMU wanted quick changes, but did not have internal processes to manage accordingly. IBM could not get their change requests approved.

**Impact to WAMU:** Customer initiated changes caused system outages to critical WAMU intranet applications.

**Impact to IBM:** Wasted resources and upset system administrator managers.

**Solution:** Implemented web-based, bi-directional approval workflow solution with auto-notifications.

**Outcome:** Accountability, reduced system downtimes and improved WAMU / IBM teamwork. (3)

**IBM Ideas Award Winner**

### IBM



**Problem:** There was no viable means to maintain and use pager and email notification lists for website outages.

**Impact to Customers:** Key contacts were not being notified of outages. This impacted their business and even their careers.

**Impact to IBM:** Key contacts were not being notified of outages.

This impacted their business and even their careers.

**Solution:** Implemented public pager groups on the IBM internal Lotus Notes address book. Users could pull these down from the server onto their Thinkpads.

**Outcome:** Used throughout the entire Service Delivery Center. (4)

**IBM Ideas Award Winner**



## Flexibility

Unfortunately, there are people who will work only within the perimeters of their narrowly defined job roles. I am not one of those people. One of the

reasons I decided to join IBM was because of the wide variety of opportunities that I could take on and explore. This approach made My IBM Story more interesting. I was actually able to “try out” a new job before being formally assigned to it. As a bonus, this

approach also turned out to served me well from a career perspective. When I was tasked to perform work outside of my traditionally role, it inevitably led me to promotions, awards and growth. It also allowed me to increase my network within IBM. This empowered me and my team to get work completed more quickly and efficiently. This in turn improved customer relationships and often led to more business for IBM. The following are flexibility examples from My IBM Story.

## Washington Mutual



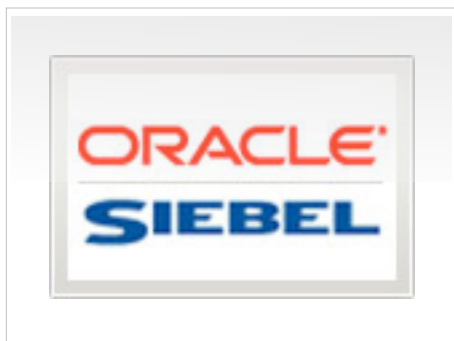
**Situation:** New WAMU executive management decided to in-source their web hosting & leave IBM due to cost factors.

**Sensitive Subject:** WAMU could not “pull the plug” all at once. Servers and services had to be shut down in phases without any impact to its end-users.

**Challenge:** IBM Transition Managers typically handled account shut downs but were not familiar enough with the site to prevent impacts. The service level agreements were still in place.

**Response:** As Account Manager, I learned the Transition Team’s processes & tools and managed the shutdown without a single customer system impact issue. (5)

## Oracle Siebel



**Situation:** IBM & Siebel were in a joint CRM website venture.

**Sensitive Subject:** The budget for this project was closely throttled. The project was experimental, closely monitored and tenuous.

**Challenge:** The site was growing quickly and application issues were causing system outages. System upgrades were needed.

**Response:** As Account Manager, I leveraged my WAMU Transition Manager experience to implement \$4 million in new hardware and software. This saved money because we did not have to bring on additional head-count and it also made implementation more seamless. (6)

## Smith Barney



**Situation:** New Smith Barney executive management decided to in-source their web hosting & leave IBM due to cost factors.

**Sensitive Subject:** The existing Account Manager was needed for the new General Motors account.

**Challenge:** It did not make solid business sense to bring on a new Account Manager to an account that was leaving.

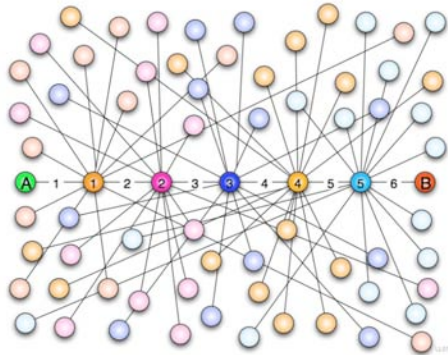
**Response:** As Level 1 & 2 System Administrator, I also took on the role of Account Manager. I would take problem calls as System Administrator, fix the issue and report on it weekly as Account Manager. This was my de facto transition into Account Management. (7)

# Leadership

Since I was a U.S. Army soldier before joining IBM, I knew what traditional leadership looked like. But IBM showed me a more modern approach to leadership where calculated risk-taking and breakthrough thinking can produce amazing results.

## Order From Chaos

When I was assigned to the General Motors account, it was in chaos. I sent an email out to the respective IBM support teams asking them to send me all their known problems. I put the responses into an array of spreadsheets, printed them out and put them on the wall. It was nearly the size of a VW Beetle. With management support, I asked folks around me to help analyze it. Together, we were able to see the trends in the data and connect the dots in a meaningful way to solve problems. I could not have accomplished this without my management's willingness to take calculated risks and my team's breakthrough thinking. (8)

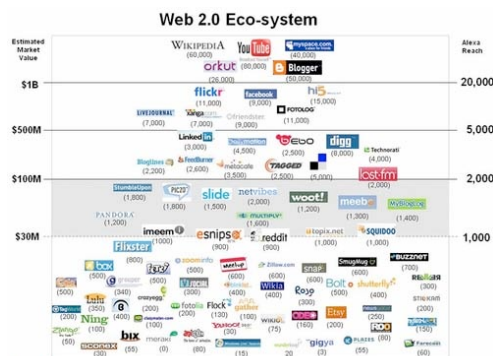


6 steps of connectivity



## Learn To Live With

I believe IBM shows leadership in breakthrough education. My management leadership all the way up to my third line was actively involved in sending me to training. I was selected for the first IBM Leadership Excellence Program series in Boulder, CO. These classes were the best I have ever attended. When I read the curriculum and saw a class entitled "The Tao of Humor," I was intrigued. After attending the class, I was blown away. That class series had the biggest impact of any education I have received. (9)



## JR 2.0

My manager at IBM allowed me to take a leave of absence sabbatical to pursue an entrepreneurial education on my own. During that nearly two year period outside of IBM, I have learned and leveraged new Web 2.0 technologies and built two successful companies upon them that are still flourishing. I am ready to take that entrepreneurial leadership back to IBM and leverage it to help meet and exceed business objectives. (10)

entrepreneurial proving grounds

## Technical Skills Lists

A short list of some of the hardware, software and related platforms that I have experience with.

### Apple Software

Leopard, Pages, Numbers, Keynote, iPhoto, iMovie, iWeb, iChat, Bento, Daylite, Garage Band, iCal, iDVD, iTunes, Parallels, Timeline, Time Machine

### Blogging Software

Wordpress, RapidWeaver, iWeb

### Collaborative Software

QuickPlace, Lotus, Podcasting, Microsoft Project, OmniGraffle, OmniPlan, OmniOutliner, iReport, MobileMe, RSS

### Creative Software

Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe CS3, Apple Final Cut, Apple Podcast Producer, Quicktime Pro

### CRM Software

Salesforce, Daylite

### Database Software

DB2, Oracle, Microsoft SQL, Informix, MySQL

### Middleware Software

WebSphere, MQSeries, BEA WebLogic, LDAP, Apache, Interwoven, Microsoft IIS, Akamai, Proxy Server, Messaging Server

### Mobile Computing

iPhone, Android

### Office Software

Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Entourage, Microsoft PowerPoint

### Network Hardware

Cisco, Airport Extreme

### Search Engine Software

Google Analytics, Google Adwords, Google Business Center, Google Webmaster Tools, Google Maps, Adgooroo

### Security Hardware

F5, Nokia, Cisco

### Security Software

CheckPoint, Norton, Cisco VPN, Virtela VPN, SSL

### Server Hardware

Compaq, IBM, AIX, Sun, Nokia, HP

### Server Management Software

Remote Admin, Remote Desktop, Microsoft Cluster Server, AIX HACMP, Tivoli Storage Manager

### Server Monitoring

Tivoli, IBM Web Portal, BMC Patrol, Capacity Planning, IP Ping, URL Monitoring, Process Monitoring, Threshold Monitoring, Up / Down Monitoring, Netview

### Server Operating Systems

AIX, Sun, Linux, Windows, Leopard

### Storage Hardware

EMC, Shark, IBM Arrays

## Credits

My IBM Story at Global Services has been made possible by the following folks to whom I am very grateful.

### Names & Roles

(1) Shawn Egan, Manager. Rey Li, Manager. Linda Bosworth, Manager. Eric Montclare, Mentor. John Brady, Manager. Benjie Harrison, Manager. Jim Harrison, Manager. Deb Bolk, Manager.

(2) John Brady, Manager. Steve Edmundson, Delivery Project Executive. Jim Doud, Delivery Project Executive. Vlad Perdomo, Account Manager. Dominic Medico, Account Manager. Allen Reaves, Account Manager. Keith Lorenz, Account Manager. Chris Hohman, System Administrator. Robin Miller, Account Manager.

(3) Deb Bolk, Delivery Project Executive & Manager. Dominic Perea, Manager & Delivery Project Executive. Kenn Christianson, Account Manager. Mary Beth McCauley, System Administrator. Jason Armstrong, Operations Lead. Robyn Miller, Mentor.

(4) John Brady, Manager. Jim Harrison, Manager. Steve Cox, Manager.

(5) Deb Bolk, Manager. David Pumphrey, Asset Manager.

(6) Harbhajan Khalsa, Manager & Delivery Project Executive. Kenn Christianson, Account Manager.

(7) Tony Lucarro, Delivery Project Executive. Cheryl Mariner, Account Manager & Mentor.

(8) John Brady, Manager. Cheryl Mariner, Account Manager & Mentor. Keith Lorenz, Account Manager. Vlad Perdomo, Account Manager. Dominic Medico, Account Manager. Allen Reaves, Account Manager. Jim Harrison, Manager.

(9) Deb Bolk, Manager.

(10) Shawn Egan, Manager.



Made on a Mac