

# How to successfully launch your research lab

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University of Iowa



# Stumbling into leadership...



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# Stumbling into leadership...

## Outline:

Goal: summarize 6.5 years of experience in ~20 min

- What's worked well
- Best pieces of advice
- Best books \ references



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All labs are not created equally



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# All labs are not created equally

Picking the right institution & negotiating

- Protected effort for research
- Startup funds



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# Selecting your lab's focus



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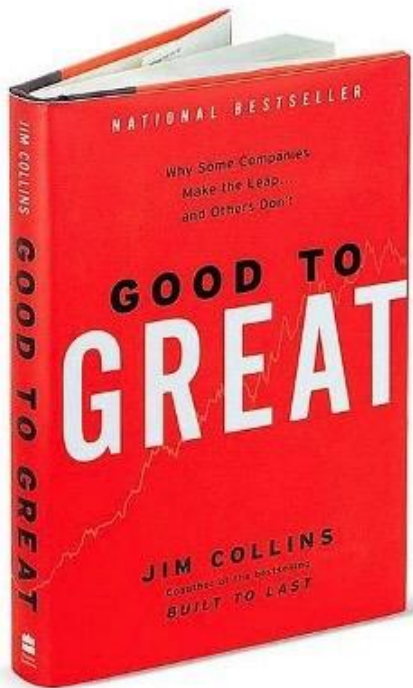


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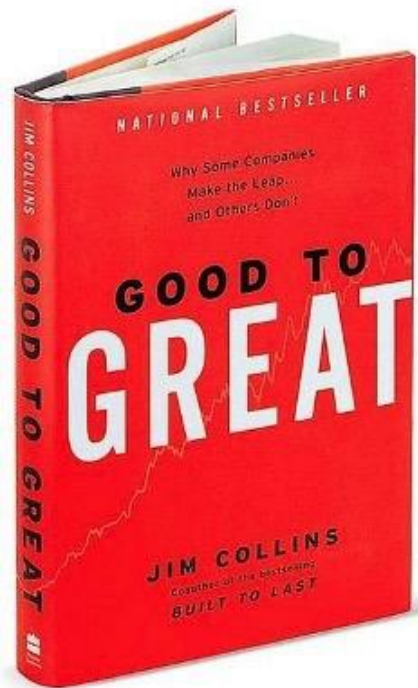


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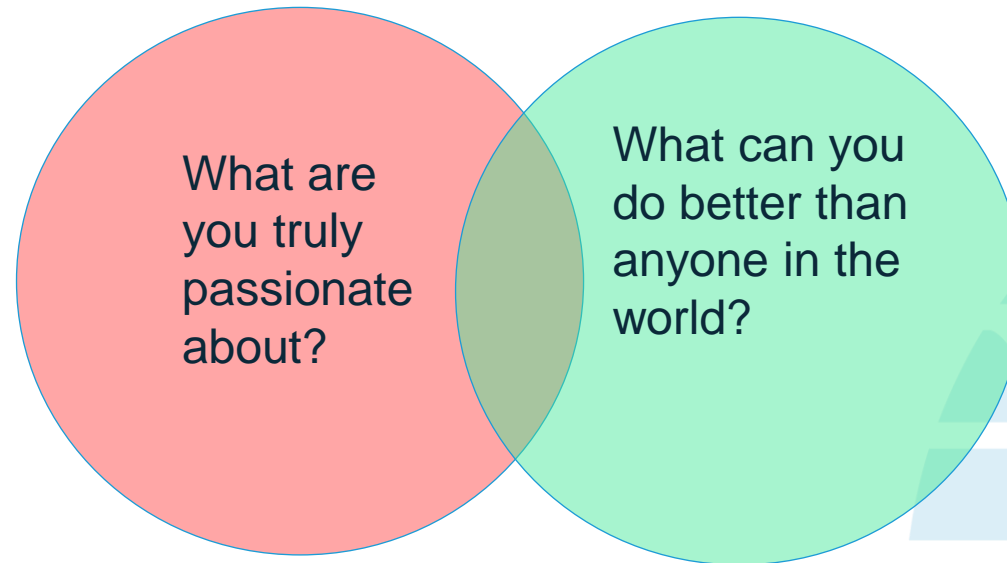
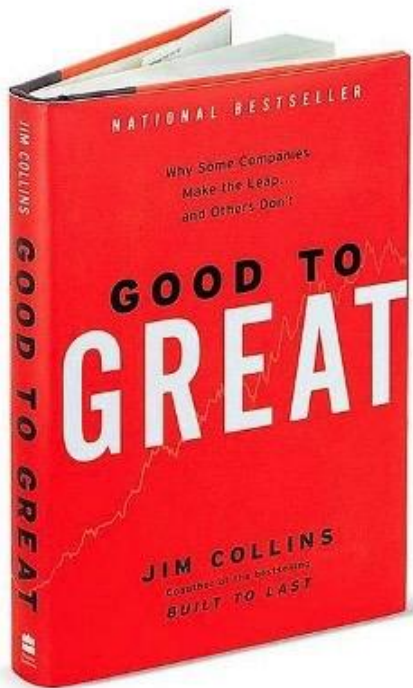
# Selecting your lab's focus



What are  
you truly  
passionate  
about?



# Selecting your lab's focus



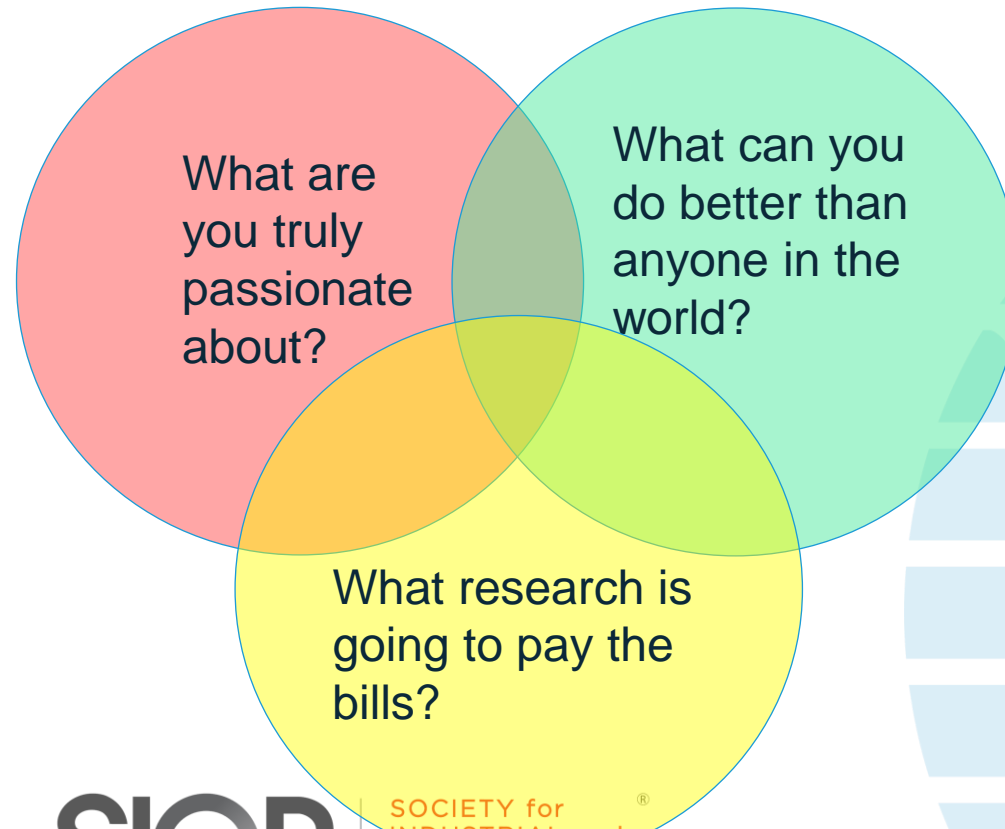
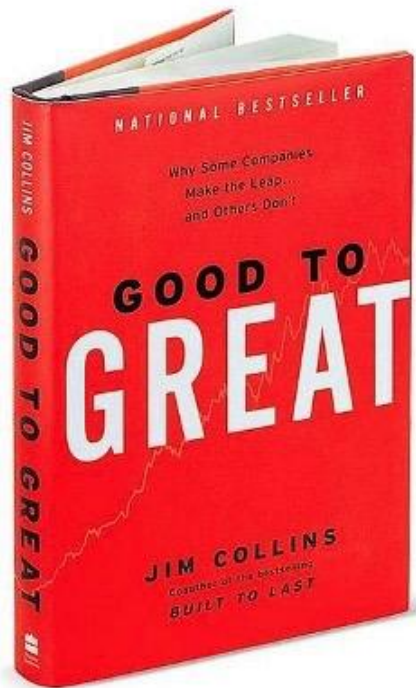
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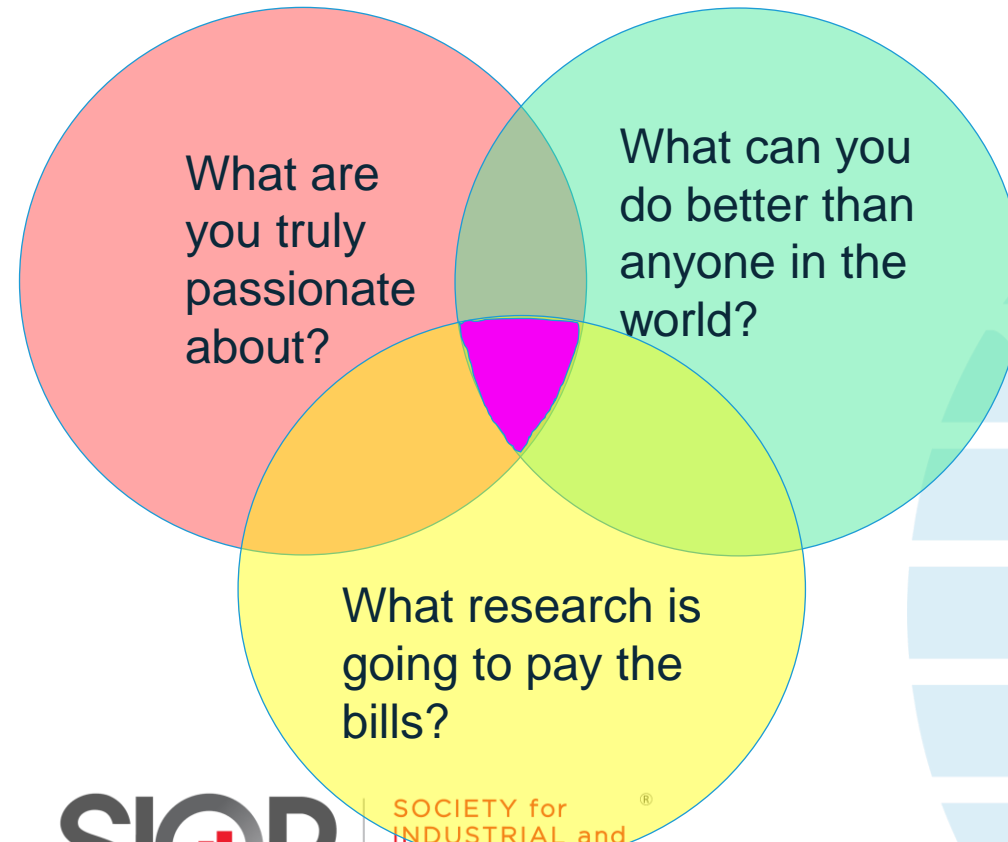
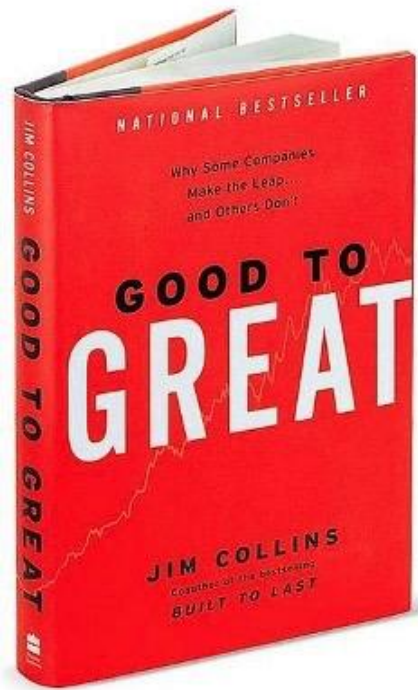
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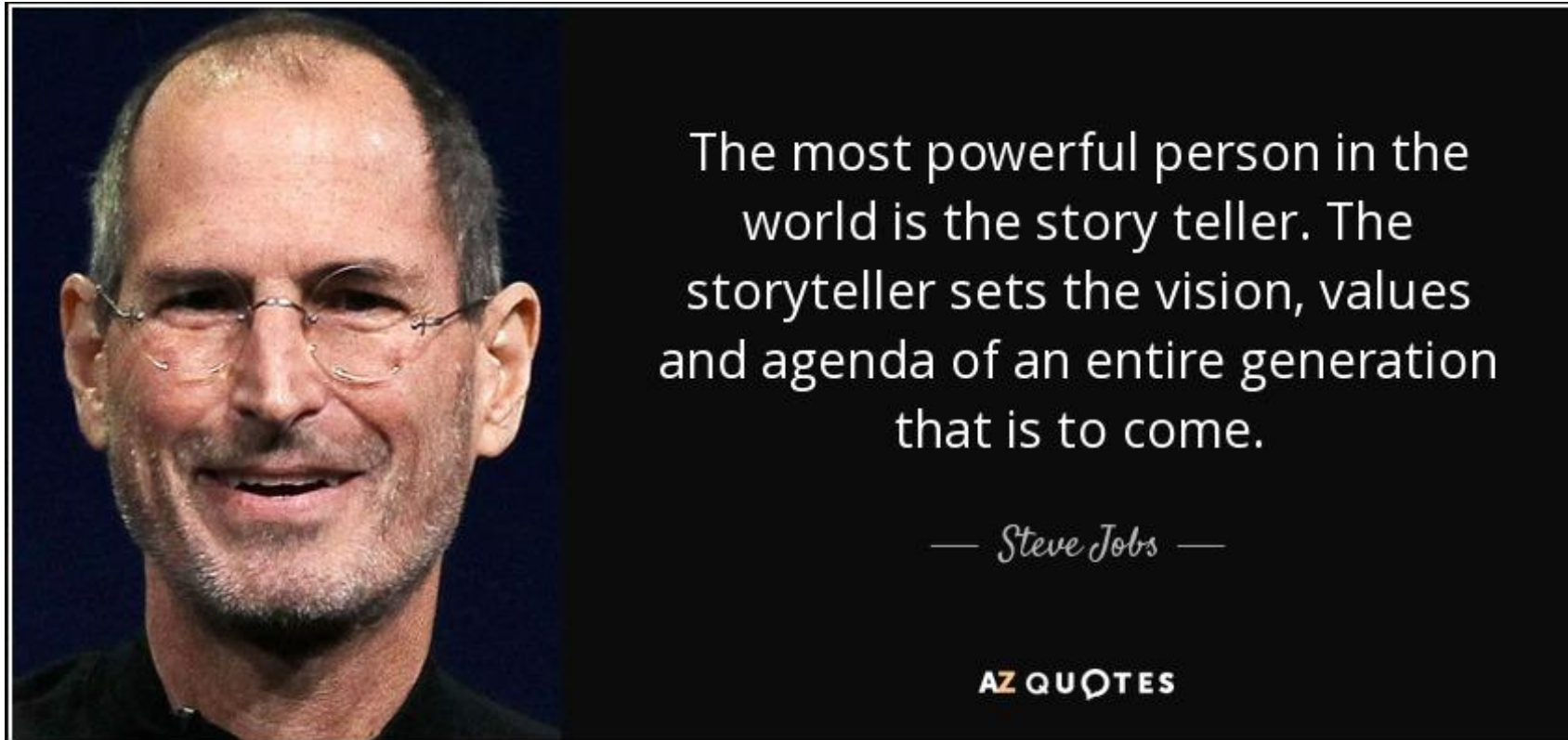


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# Articulate your vision

Why is the topic you study important?

- New hires, graduate students, funding agencies, philanthropists



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# Building your team



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# Building your team

- Get the right people on the bus... and the right people in the right seats. - James Collins, Good to Great



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  - Long-term personnel are key
  - Hire to complement your teams expertise



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  - Be patient in the hiring process
  - Good people will make or break your lab
  - Long-term personnel are key
  - Hire to complement your teams expertise
  - People should be in their “sweet spot” as much as possible



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# Leading your team



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# Leading your team

- Create leaders within your group



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# Leading your team

- Create leaders within your group
- Celebrate the wins



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# Leading your team

- Create leaders within your group
- Celebrate the wins
- Celebrate milestones towards wins too



# Leading your team

- Create leaders within your group
- Celebrate the wins
- Celebrate milestones towards wins too
- Develop the skill to initiate difficult conversations



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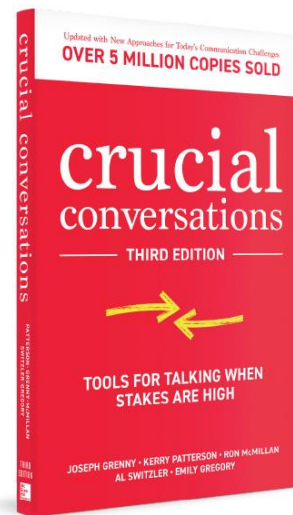


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# Leading your team

- Create leaders within your group
- Celebrate the wins
- Celebrate milestones towards wins too
- Develop the skill to initiate difficult conversations



# Budgeting

- Meet with research admin team semi-regularly to review budget
- Recruit from funded programs (T32s)
- Hang on to startup



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# Promoting your lab



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# Promoting your lab

“If you don’t promote your work  
who do you think will do it?”

- Nancy Andreasen



# Promoting your lab

“If you don’t promote your work  
who do you think will do it?”

- Nancy Andreasen

Have a good website

Reach out to media \ communications  
person with new discoveries



# Promoting your lab

“You should be on Twitter”

- Ted Abel



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# Time management



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# Time management

Need to have a system for scheduling time  
Planning sessions: year, week, day



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# Time management

Need to have a system for scheduling time  
Planning sessions: year, week, day

Schedule things you value the most first



Its all about the people



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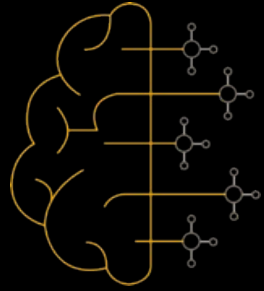
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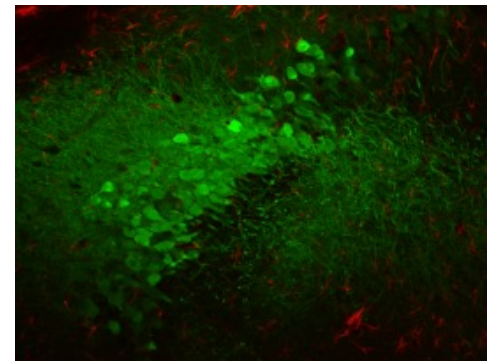
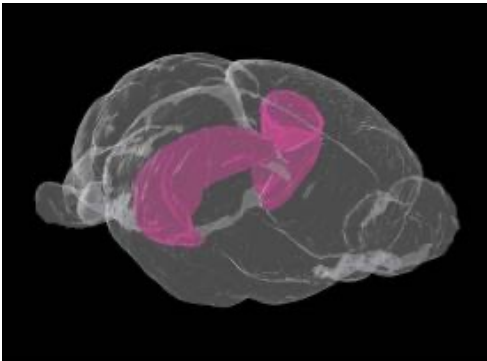


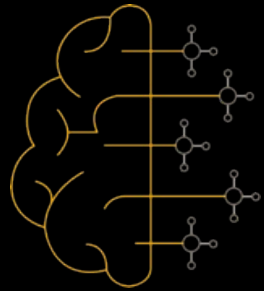
# Iowa Neuroscience Institute

Ted Abel

Director, Iowa Neuroscience Institute

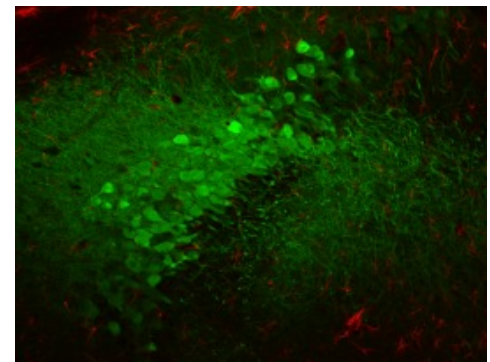
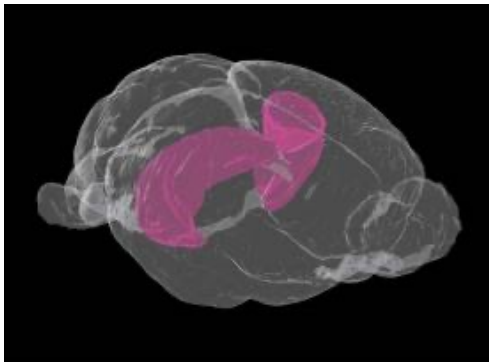
Chair, Department of Neuroscience & Pharmacology  
University of Iowa

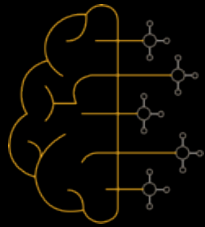




# Iowa Neuroscience Institute Vision Statement

Psychiatric and neurological disorders are devastating to individuals, their families, and society. We seek revolutionary discoveries in fundamental neuroscience to translate an understanding of how the brain works into clinical treatments for disorders of the brain and nervous system.

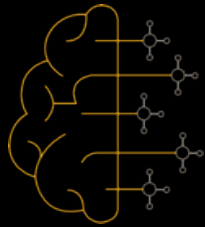




# Iowa Neuroscience Institute Institutional Support and Collaboration

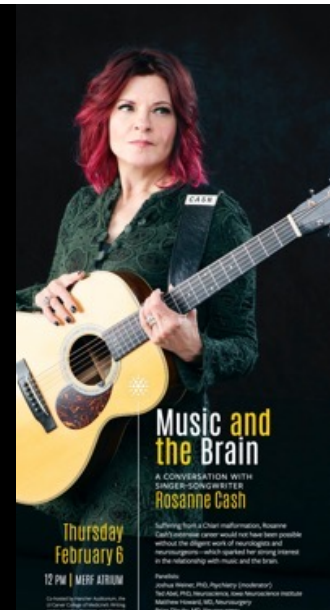
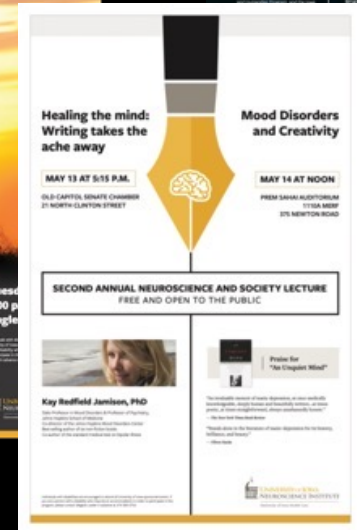
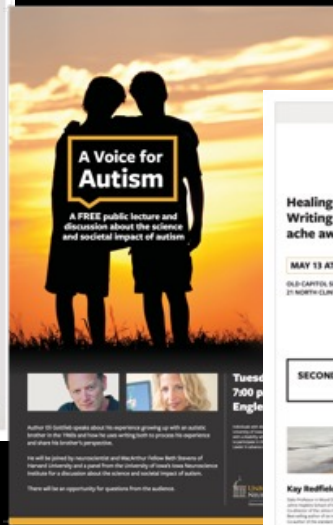
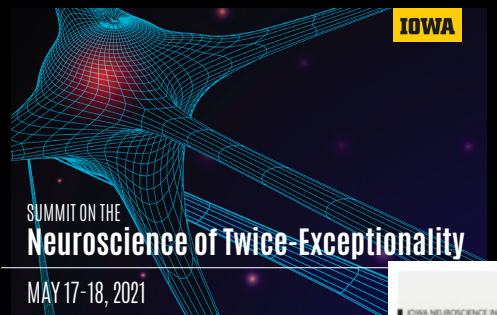
- Founded in 2016 with a \$45M gift from the Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust
- Additional philanthropic support totals \$64.9M since 2016
- INI faculty members bring in over \$90 million in grant funding each year
- 120 faculty members from 7 colleges and 30 departments
- 26 new faculty members hired since 2016 in 11 departments across the University
- Established Research Programs of Excellence, Accelerator Grants, Neural Circuits & Behavior Core and Neurobank



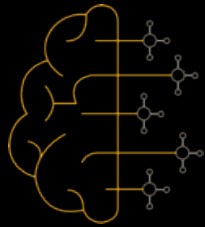


# Iowa Neuroscience Institute Outreach and Education

- New undergraduate neuroscience major with 275 students
- Post-doctoral fellowship program
- Outreach & Workshops
- New Big Ten Neuroscience Seminar Series

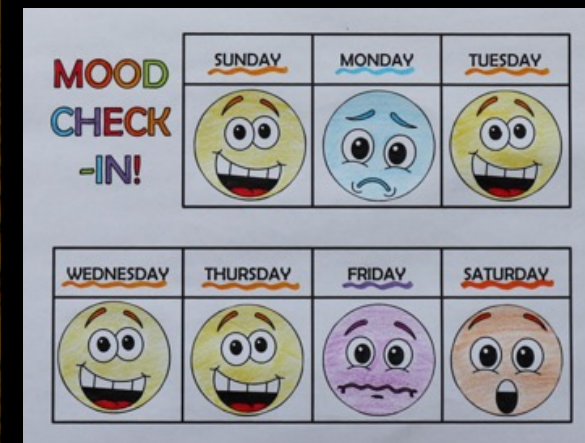
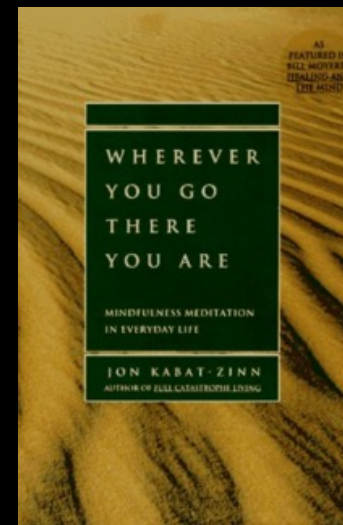
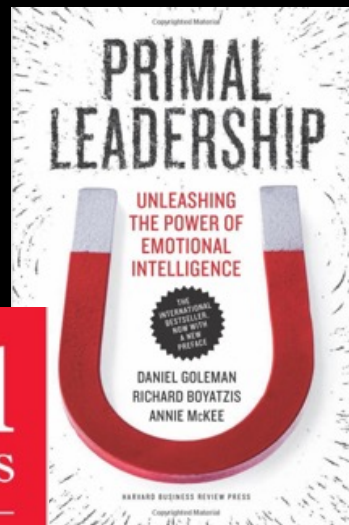
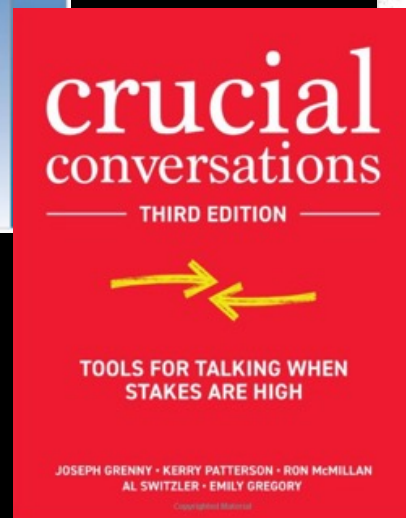
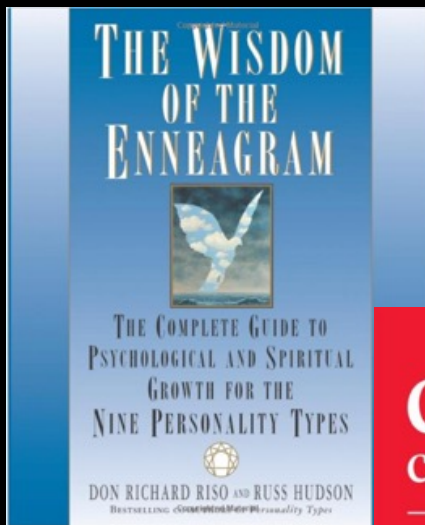


the Beilin-Blank Center and the Iowa Neuroscience Institute



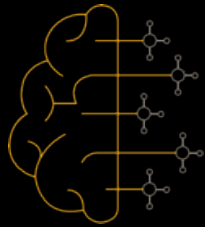
# Leadership Perspectives

- Interdisciplinary & collaborative
- Building a community starts with a sense of belonging

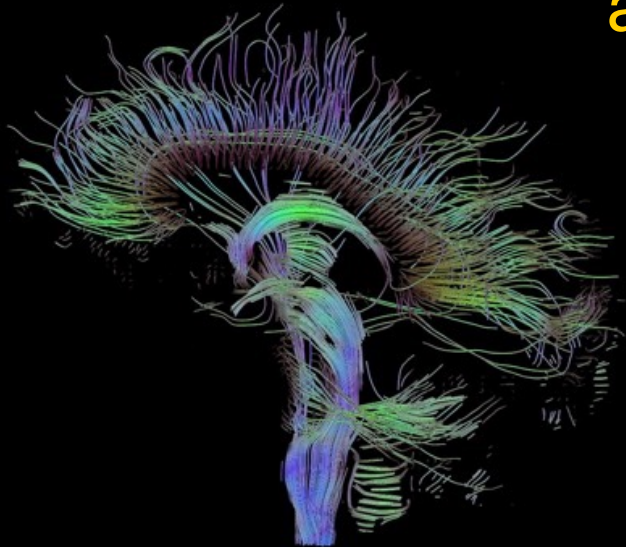


"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

— Maya Angelou



# To Understand and Treat Brain Disorders, We Need To Ask Big Questions and Develop New Ideas and New Technologies



“It's true that by blundering about we stumbled on gold, but the fact remains, we were looking for gold.”

Francis Crick

