Chapter IV

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To foster excellence, equity in learning, teaching, research and scholarship and in so doing serve our regional, national and international communities

My name is **Wendy Bussen**. I am the director of information technology services at AUT University in Auckland, New Zealand.

Personal History

I was born in Huntly, New Zealand. It is about a 1½ hours drive south of Auckland. I attended Huntly Primary School and Huntly College, and then went to Waikato University in Hamilton. I lived in residence and graduated with a Bachelor of Science, majoring in mathematics. Ten years ago, I went to Auckland University to study for a Master of Philosophy, majoring in management sciences and information systems.

My first job after university was as an actuarial trainee for National Mutual Australasia in Wellington. I worked there for about 18 months. I could have stayed and studied for a professional actuarial designation, which would have taken 5 or 6 years, but

instead I chose to travel. I don't regret that I did. I set a personal goal to go around the world before I turned 30, and I managed to achieve it.

While on my travels, I decided to find employment in England. For 3 years I worked at Unilever Computer Services in London in their operational research division. I was a FORTRAN programmer, writing code for simulation packages. One exciting project I worked on was simulating the addition of a new cutter for the Thames timber mill in northern England.

I was also involved in the establishment of a new division. Unilever wanted to set up a new information centre at their head office. I was seconded to work on the data analysis and graphical representation of data from all the Unilever factories around the world. I had to learn a new programming language called "A Programming Language" (APL). Senior management had never seen the data presented in the graphical format that I developed. This was in the 1980s, when graphical tools were still in there infancy. I was pleased with the results as they showed information about production in a different light. This was greatly appreciated by senior management.

After 4 years living in London, I decided it was time to continue on my travels with the intention of returning to New Zealand. I had some difficulty finding a job when I first returned to New Zealand. My experience was in management sciences and operational research. Most companies in New Zealand were too small to have a department specialized in this type of work. Most computing companies developed business systems. I managed to secure a job with a company called Computer Professionals Limited in Auckland. I coded accounting systems using Visual Basic. After about 2 years, I moved to Quanta Consulting Ltd, as a systems consultant. I wanted to work closer with the client and gain a deeper understanding of business needs and system requirements. Once the client decided to buy the software I would project manage the implementation until the system was up and running. After 2 years working for Quanta, we decided to start a family and I became pregnant with my first child. I had hoped to take on contract work, but when the baby was born everything else took second priority. My focus became the needs of my baby.

Eventually, a friend of mine called and asked if I would consider working part-time at UNITEC Institute of Technology teaching accounting information systems. This was ideal, as the lectures were in the evening and fitted around my family commitments. I enjoyed working with the adult students and spending time during the day preparing my lecture notes. I lectured for about the next 2 years, and then took 6 months maternity leave when our second child was born.

At this time, I started working on my master's degree in management sciences and information systems. I wanted to lecture in the Bachelor of Business program and I needed to have a higher qualification. It was a challenge fitting it in around my commitments; however, it has assisted me with securing the job that I have today.

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