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Lessons Learned as President of the Institute for Systems Biology (2000–2018)

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I stepped down as president of the Institute for Systems Biology (ISB) on Jan 1, 2018. As I think about my 17-year term as President, I am astounded at how much I have learned, not only about science but also about, among other things, what it takes to build a unique world-class institution.

The beginnings

I came to the non-profit, independent ISB from 30 years in academia. For 22 years, I was a faculty member of Division of Biology at the California Institute of Technology (Caltech), the last 10 years as chair of the division. Following Caltech, I spent 8 years at the University of Washington (UW) Medical School as founder and chair of the Department of Molecular Biotechnology (MBT), the first cross-disciplinary biology department to my knowledge in the world.

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