



# Sloan Career Cornerstone Center

## Profiles of Electrical Engineers and Computer Scientists



### John Hawkins

**Manager, Integrated Circuit Development  
Northern Telecom  
Research Triangle Park, NC**

#### Education:

B.S. - Electrical Engineering, North Carolina State University  
M.S. - Telecommunications, Southern Methodist University  
MBA - Duke University

#### Job Description:

Previously a circuit designer and design team manager; currently holds a technical marketing position.

#### Advice to Students:

"A person needs balance and variety in life."

#### Video Transcript 1:

"Some individuals regard discipline as working 80 hours a week. I think it's a more important discipline to make 40 hours a week as effective as possible and to balance that with the rest of life. I think that is my definition of discipline more than just hard work for work's sake."

#### Interview:

John Hawkins of Northern Telecom believes that a person needs balance and variety in life. Engineering is filled with the pressures of schedules and market competition that make a long-term career a challenge. Hawkins makes a point of giving time to his private as well as his professional life. As the father of two, Hawkins finds that the demands of family life cannot be denied. But he also makes time for church obligations and his own personal development.

During the ten years he has been in industry, Hawkins' career has followed an atypical path. "I've had two bosses throughout that time period, and I've worked in one single capacity and that's in integrated circuit design. I've been a specialist in that area for my entire career, even before my graduation from undergraduate school when I was a cooperative education student."

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Prepared as part of the Sloan Career Cornerstone Center ([www.careercornerstone.org](http://www.careercornerstone.org))  
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Hawkins has brought variety to his professional life by pursuing graduate studies. He earned his master's degree in telecommunications on the job through satellite link-up to the National Technological University. He explains, "There is a sense that if you're in an environment that changes a lot, you get different views of techniques, of methodologies that people employ in your workplace or in similar workplaces to yours. Having missed out on that, I've tried to counter with a good deal of academic exposure and I've tried to be constantly aware and appraised of what industry is doing by keeping in contact with my customers and with my suppliers who do things that are quite similar to what I do."

Hawkins continues to vary his professional life. He is currently working on an MBA and has moved into management, but sees his present work as a natural extension of his previous work. "I view management as simply a different engineering problem. I view a manager's tool kit as being different. My tool kits now are other engineers, influencing people, convincing teams that we're on the right track or that we're on the wrong track and that adjustments need to be made. All of these, I think, are analogous to an engineer's workstation, an engineer's technical toolbox from which he or she draws on a daily basis. So I really don't view management as a significant departure from engineering."

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