Early on, Susan Nutter “realized how much leadership it was going to take to create the kind of libraries the university needed.” With the help of “a distinguished faculty member at MIT [who] really taught me what research was all about,” she did just that. A memorable mentor, “he saw something in me that I didn’t see in myself.” Another one, former NC State Provost, the late Kermit Hall, she recalls as “unusually gifted in how to make a university great.”

Nutter has learned from both -- learned that “the most important thing to do was change the culture -- a very traditional culture. So, developing the staff … how they fit into the picture and make a difference,” became her top priority. To this day, her goal is to “identify those people, get them here, and make sure I was always letting them know how much they were contributing.” Equally critical: “I had to learn when to give up.” Over the years, she’s discovered that “in developing a new relationship, learning to keep your spirits up was really important, not to let anything stop you. Alienating someone isn't gonna get you anywhere.”

Today, Nutter still sees, “more barriers than people realize; they're often unconscious, not always aware that a woman can do anything that a man can do and do it far better…If we do a job well, it must have been pretty easy and straightforward.”

Her advice: “Go for it! Take advantage of every opportunity; the more you've traveled and put yourself into situations with different kinds of people,” the better. “We as women … shouldn't disguise our personality. Our task: educate the rest of the world to what women can bring to situations. Have people who can help and support [you]. Find your passion!”