

Informational Interviewing

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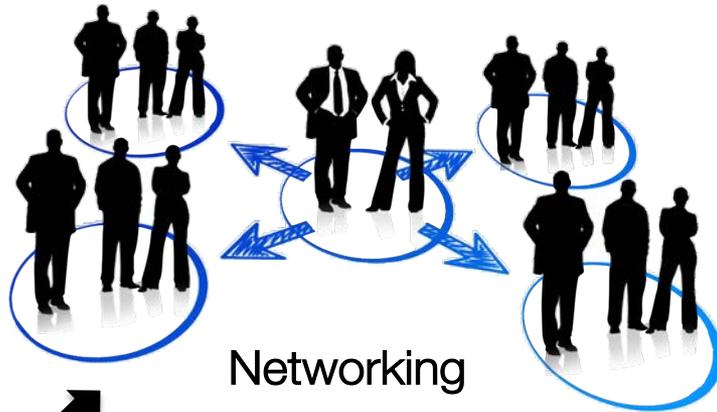
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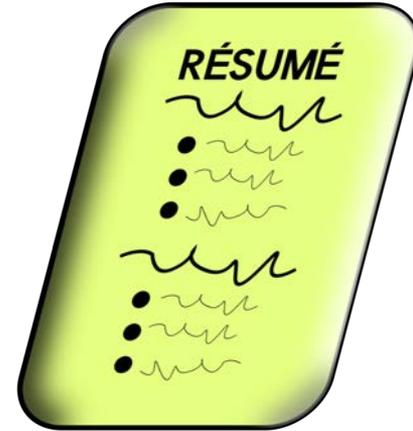
Career Exploration and Preparation Workshops: Develop YOUR Strategy



Search



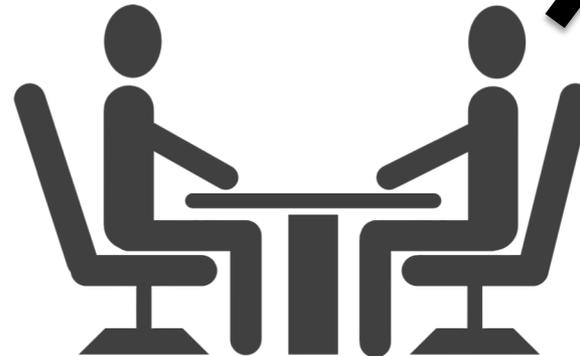
Networking



CVs and Resumes



Communication



Interviewing



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Workshop Objectives

- Present career options (briefly)
- Discuss informational interviewing fundamentals
- Develop your career story
- Practice informational interviewing

With permission, this workshop is adapted from a workshop created by Sarah Cardozo Duncan. You can find more information on Sarah at <http://careerstrategist.com/>.



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So, what do you want to do?



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20 Different Career Paths

Principal investigator in a research-intensive institution:

Independent researcher at a medical school, private research institute, government lab or university with minimal teaching responsibilities

Research in industry:

Discovery or preclinical researcher; manager of a research team or facility

Research staff in a research-intensive institution:

Staff scientist or researcher in academia or government, lab manager, director of a multi-user research facility in an academic institution

Combined research and teaching careers:

Faculty at a liberal arts college or university whose job includes both research and major teaching responsibilities

Teaching-intensive careers in academia:

A primarily teaching faculty position in a research university, liberal arts college, community college

Science education for K-12 schools:

Classroom teacher; curriculum developer; science specialist

Science education for non-scientists:

Education or public outreach specialist such as at a science museum or scientific society

Clinical practice:

Clinician such as genetics counselor, therapist, physician

Public health related careers:

Public health program analyst or evaluator; epidemiologist; biostatistician; medical informaticist

Drug/device approval and production:

Regulatory affairs professional; quality control specialist

Scientific/medical testing:

Testing specialist in an environmental, public health, genetics, or forensic science setting (intelligence agencies, federal/state departments of justice); clinical diagnostician

Science writing:

Science, medical, or technical writer or journalist; science editor; science publisher

Research administration:

Research administrator in private or public research institutions, government or academia, including compliance officers, grants and contracts officers; dean or director of research programs

Science policy:

Public affairs/government affairs staff at scientific societies, foundations, government entities, or think tanks

Intellectual property:

Patent agent; patent attorney; technology transfer specialist

Business of science:

Management consultant; business development professional in a biotech company; venture capitalist; market researcher; investment analyst

Entrepreneurship:

Starting your own business

Sales and marketing of science-related products:

Medical science liaison; technical sales representative; marketing specialist

Support of science-related products:

Technical support specialist; field application specialist; product development scientist or engineer

Clinical research management:

Clinical research project/trials manager or coordinator

Building Job Search Resiliency

- Resilience = People + Process
- Those who are resilient prepare to be resilient
- To be resilient we have to ...
 - Learn from previous experiences, both good and bad
 - Build strong positive professional relationships
 - Be proactive and use resources to thrive
 - Develop our growth mindset



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Slide adapted from Dr. Sharon Milgram's Resiliency workshop, NIH T3, 2018.

How can you learn about these different careers?

Resilience = People + Process



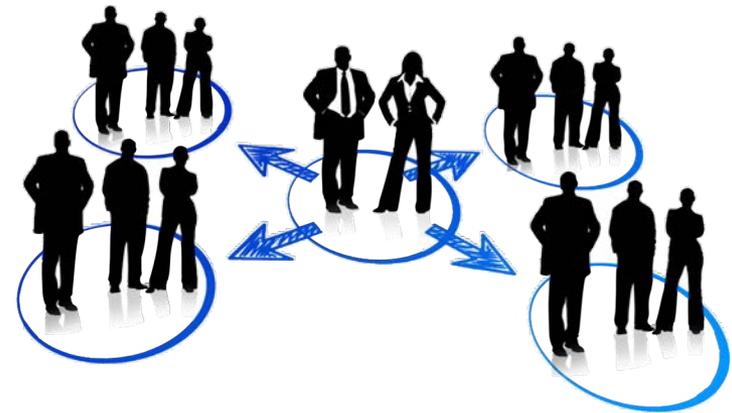
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Informational Interviewing

- Goals:
 1. Make a good impression
 2. Gather information to help make a decision
 3. Garner referrals
 4. Expand your professional network
- Structure:
 1. Introduction (Thank you)
 - Context (why did you ask)
 2. Conversation (career story)
 3. Thank You/Ask for Referral



Good Impressions

Be prepared!!

- Research the person, company, field, etc.
- Determine what you want them to know about you – Science and Career Story.
 - Why are you a good person to know (i.e., value)?
- Professionalism – dress, conversation, mannerisms, etc.
- Small community – only one chance to make a first-impression.



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The Science Story

- Goal is to engage, excite, and *start a conversation*.
- Clear, accessible (i.e. NO JARGON), explanation of your science.
 - Includes a non-science analogy.
- Needs to make a human connection – emotion is important for memory.
- Is tailored for each audience.



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The Career Story

- Describes who you are, not what you do.
- Highlights your motivations and non-technical skills.
- Conveys your value to an organization.
 - Strengths Finder personality assessment



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Career Story Exercise

Create and/or refine your career story (15 min).

Fill out the career story worksheet.

Pair up and discuss challenges.



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Gathering Information

- *Not* about the job posting.
- Just like asking for directions ...
- Good questions include ...
 - What do you find most rewarding?
 - What is most challenging?
 - What was helpful for making the transition?
- What do you want to know?



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Garnering Referrals

- Leave each interview with a new contact!
- Example warm referral letter:
 - “Dear ____, I recently spoke to (the connection) about my interest in a ____ career, and she/he told me you would be a (say something nice) person to ask for more advice.
 - I don’t expect you to have a position or be aware of any openings at this time – I was just hoping you might meet with me for 30min to discuss ____
 - If you’re willing, I will call you the week of ____ to arrange a time to meet. I know your time is valuable and I promise to be brief.”



How can you find an interviewee?

- Cold-call (e.g., LinkedIn, company website)
- Others in your network (warm referral)
- Follow-up from a networking event (collect and exchange those business cards!)
- Write an article for the PhD Post!
- Invite them to give a seminar (CIS, PDRD, etc.)
- Don't forget – most people are flattered that you want to learn about what they do!



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Mock Interview

- Goal is to learn about that person's current position.
- Select three questions to ask your interviewee (either from the handout or your own).
- Take turns interviewing and providing feedback.
 - Practice active listening.
 - Work on your intro and close.
 - Leave with a warm referral (someone else in the room).



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