A User’s Guide to Humanities Without Walls

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Strategies

1. Gather data about career fields
2. Critically evaluate
3. Build relationships

A. Value your experiences
B. Do your research
C. Tell your story
Results

1. Skills
2. Career Values
3. Career Story
4. Informational Interview Strategies
First Things First

Source: “Putting Your Science to Work: Practical Career Strategies for PhDs,” by Peter Fiske

Job Search/Action Plan
- Resumes, interviews
- Networking, researching options

Focusing
- What organizations are a good fit?
- What do I need to be competitive?
- Who can connect me to these organizations?

Exploration
- What's out there?
- What options do I have?
- Would I prefer business, non-profit, or public-sector?
- What jobs fit my skills?
- What careers and industries use them?

Self-Assessment
- Who am I?
- What are my interests?
- What kind of skills do I have?
- What are my work-related values?
- What is my work style?
Career Decision-Making Model

Assess → Explore

Act ↔ Decide
Self-Assessment

Assess

Skills

Preferred Work Environment

Personality

Interests

Values
Value Your Experiences/
Do Your Research
Identify Your Skills

transferable skills, *n.*

skills used in one job or career that can be useful in another job or career:

Example: Persuasive writing is a highly transferable skill.
What did you do as a TA for an intro class?

**Tasks**
- Met with professor and other TAs to plan for term
- Planned lessons
- Updated course content via Blackboard
- Wrote, delivered a lecture
- Facilitated discussions
- Answered questions during one-on-one meetings
- Graded student papers
- Emailed with academic advisors and dean of students about possible plagiarism case
- Calculated grades and entered online

**Skills**
- Coordination with a team
- Organization
- Course management software
- Research, writing (analysis/synthesis)
- Public speaking
- Ability to communicate complex concepts to beginners in a field
- Interpersonal skills
- Diplomacy, supervision, leadership, and relationship management
- Problem solving
- Ability to think on one’s feet
- Evaluation of progress over time
- Microsoft Office
Skills Employers Want

1. Ability to work in a **team** structure

2. Ability to **make decisions** and **solve problems** (tie)

3. Ability to **communicate verbally** with people inside and outside an organization

4. Ability to **plan, organize and prioritize** work

5. Ability to **obtain and process** information

6. Ability to **analyze quantitative data**

7. **Technical knowledge** related to the job

8. **Proficiency with** computer **software** programs

9. Ability to **create and/or edit written reports**

10. Ability to **sell and influence** others

Source: National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), 2014 Survey of Employers
All Skills Are Not Equal

Motivated skills = Skills you enjoy using most

Avoid Burnout
With a Partner

• Make a list of 1 – 3 accomplishments or significant activities from the past 2 – 5 years of which you are proudest (from school and outside of it)

• Pick one experience in which you feel you did well and that you enjoyed doing

• Talk about the tasks involved in the activity (no task too small) and list the skills required
The Importance of Values

Skills

Career Values

Interests
Recognize Your Career Values

• Take 10 minutes to fill in the career values worksheet.
• Identify your top 5 career values.
• With a partner, talk about a time when one or more top career values wasn’t met in a job/activity/academic program
Your Preferred Work Environment

Questions to consider

• In what type of work environment are you most productive?

• What type of management do you prefer?
Continue Your Research
Terminology

**Industry/Field:** a type of work or business
- Education
- Arts/Culture
- Financial

**Job Title:** name of a position within an organization
- Assistant Director
- Social Media Manager
- Education Coordinator

**Job Function:** routine set of tasks or role played
- Career advising, program development, relationship building
- Marketing and communications, design, writing
- Curriculum evaluation and development, training
Online Research

Keyword searches
- Skills
- Values
- Interests

Search alumni

Look at work styles and values

1. LinkedIn
2. Idealist
3. Indeed
4. O*NET OnLine
5. USAJOBS

Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Occupational Outlook Handbook
Tell Your Story
Reframe

Who are you?

What can you do?

What do you want to do?
I didn’t like academia, so I looked for something else to do.

While I loved teaching and advising, I realized I wanted to focus on supporting first-generation college students adapt to the college environment.

I realized it was unlikely I would get a tenure track job, so I figured a research position at a think tank would be the next-best thing to being a professor.

I decided I wanted to focus on research that would have the possibility of impacting people’s lives in the form of policy.
Develop Your Story

1. Current position

2. Path to your current position
   - Highlight skills/experiences, interests, values that connect with your aspirations
   - Frame positively, emphasize agency

3. Vision for the future
   - Evolving
   - May change, depending on audience

4. Practice with a partner
The Art of Informational Interviewing
Definition

• A planned conversation with goals
  – Research/Exploration
  – Building relationships with practitioners
  – Creating a favorable impression

• Not a solicitation for a job or internship
Know Your Goals

• Are you exploring broadly?

• Are you learning more with the intention of applying within a year?
Info Interviews as Research

• Professionals in a field are the best sources of information about the field

• Each source will provide a unique perspective AND sources have perspectives

• More sources = better research
Get Organized

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Learn About

• Career paths within a field
• Organizational culture
• Trends in field
• Professional organizations
• Opportunities for professional development, advancement
• Transition from academia (for PhDs)
• Management style
• Application procedures
Pre-Interview Research

• Answer basic questions through online research

• Craft questions that showcase your values/interests/skills and your research:

“I noticed that one of your organization’s guiding principles is social justice. How does that principle shape the work you do?”
Put Interview Subject at Ease

• Make it easy for them to help you

• Listen attentively

• Approach difficult subjects obliquely
Consider the Difference

A. Do you like your job?

B. What are the parts of your job that you find most intellectually stimulating?
Create Research Questions

• Use self-insights to craft questions
  – E.g., I value a collaborative work environment.
  – “Could you tell me about how your office chooses which projects it will focus on?”

• Open-ended questions can yield useful and sometimes surprising information
Get at Fit

• What kind of person thrives here?
• What are the qualities you look for in a candidate?
• How are decisions made in the office?
• What’s the leadership style?
• What are the opportunities for advancement?
• What are the backgrounds of the people in the office?
When an Informational Interview Becomes a Job Interview

“Often employers do not... know... what they want until they find it. As such, they rely on you to make clear your added value. ‘Once you do,’ [an employer] explained, ‘they will say “yes, that’s what we were thinking.”’ The essence of added value is knowing how your interests, skills and values align with theirs.”

Source: Stephanie K. Eberle, “Acing Informal Interviews,” Inside Higher ED, 7/13/15 (emphasis added)
Interview a Peer

- Find a new partner
- Introduce yourselves
- Take turns asking a question to learn something more
QUESTIONS?

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