

**A User's Guide to  
Humanities Without Walls**

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# Strategies

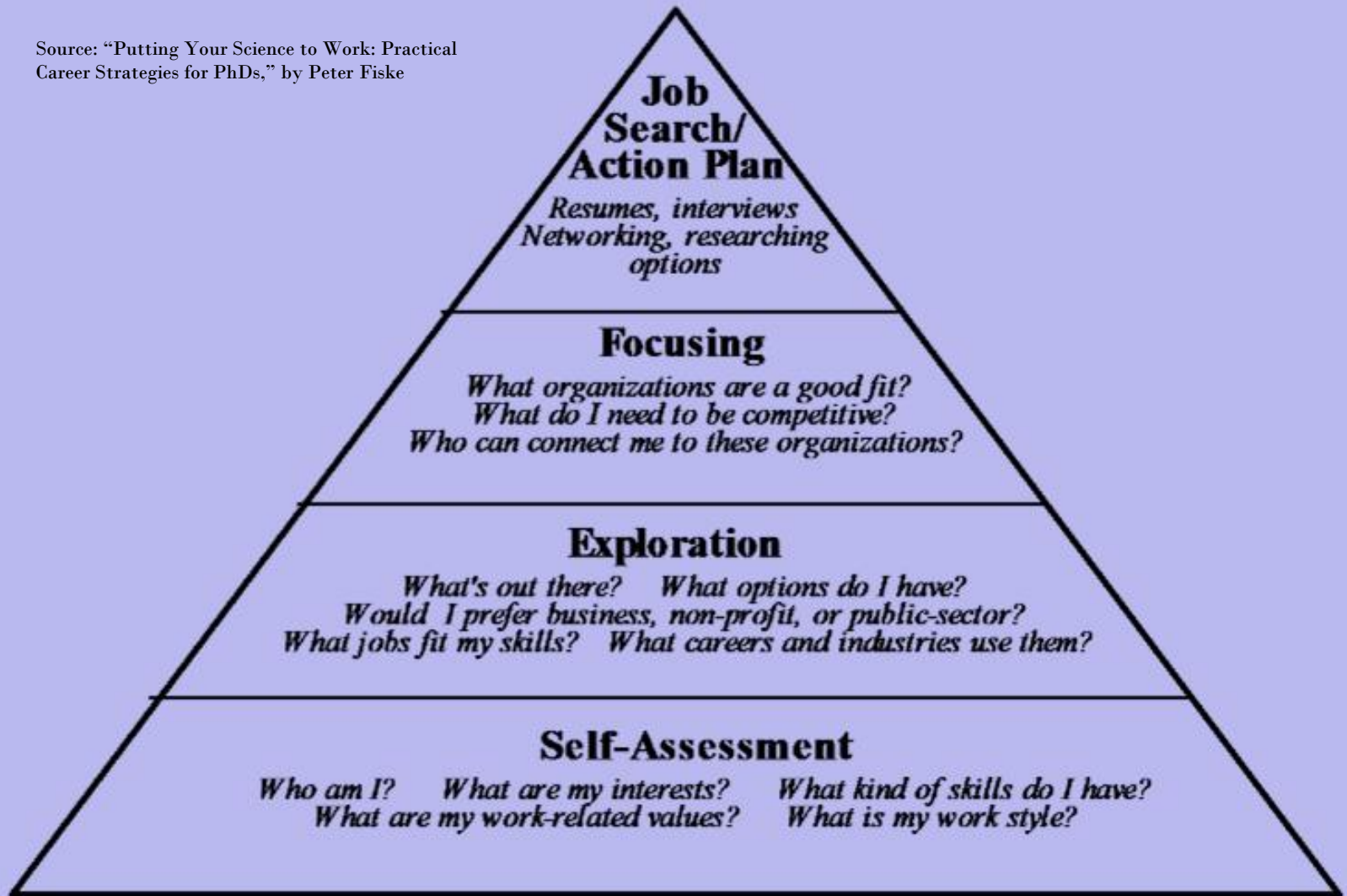
1. Gather data about career fields
  2. Critically evaluate
  3. Build relationships
- A. Value your experiences
  - B. Do your research
  - C. Tell your story

# Results

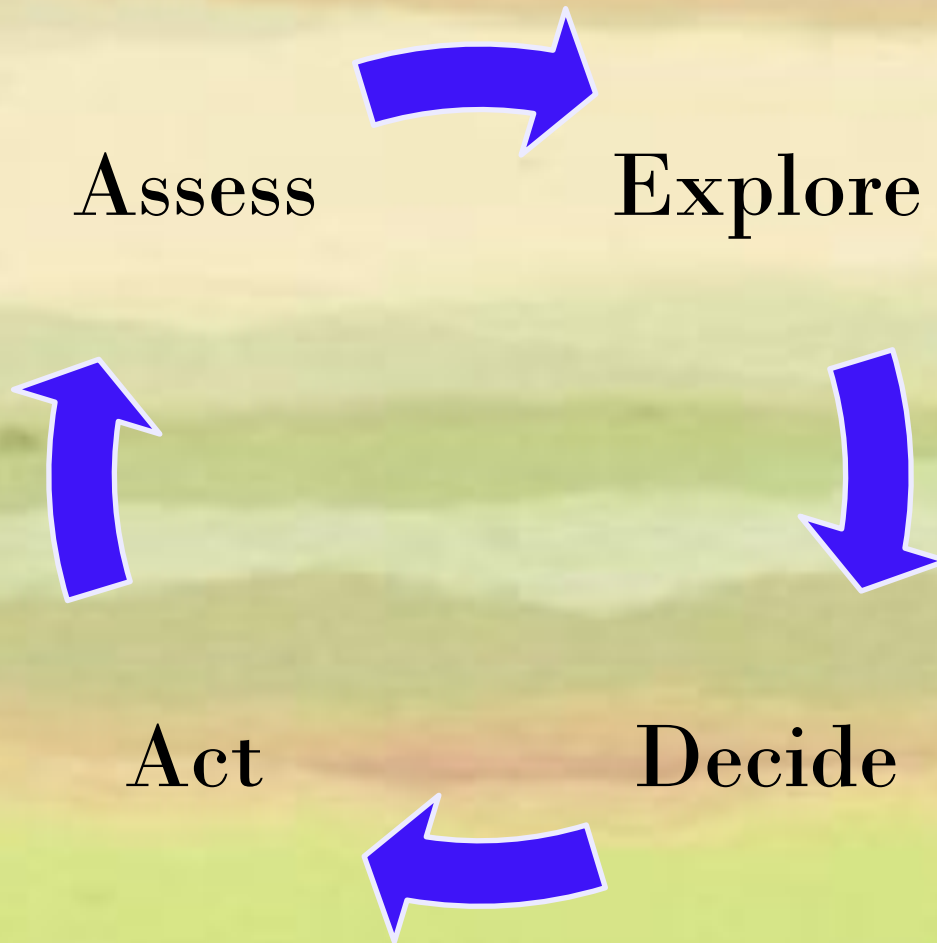
1. Skills
2. Career Values
3. Career Story
4. Informational Interview Strategies

# First Things First

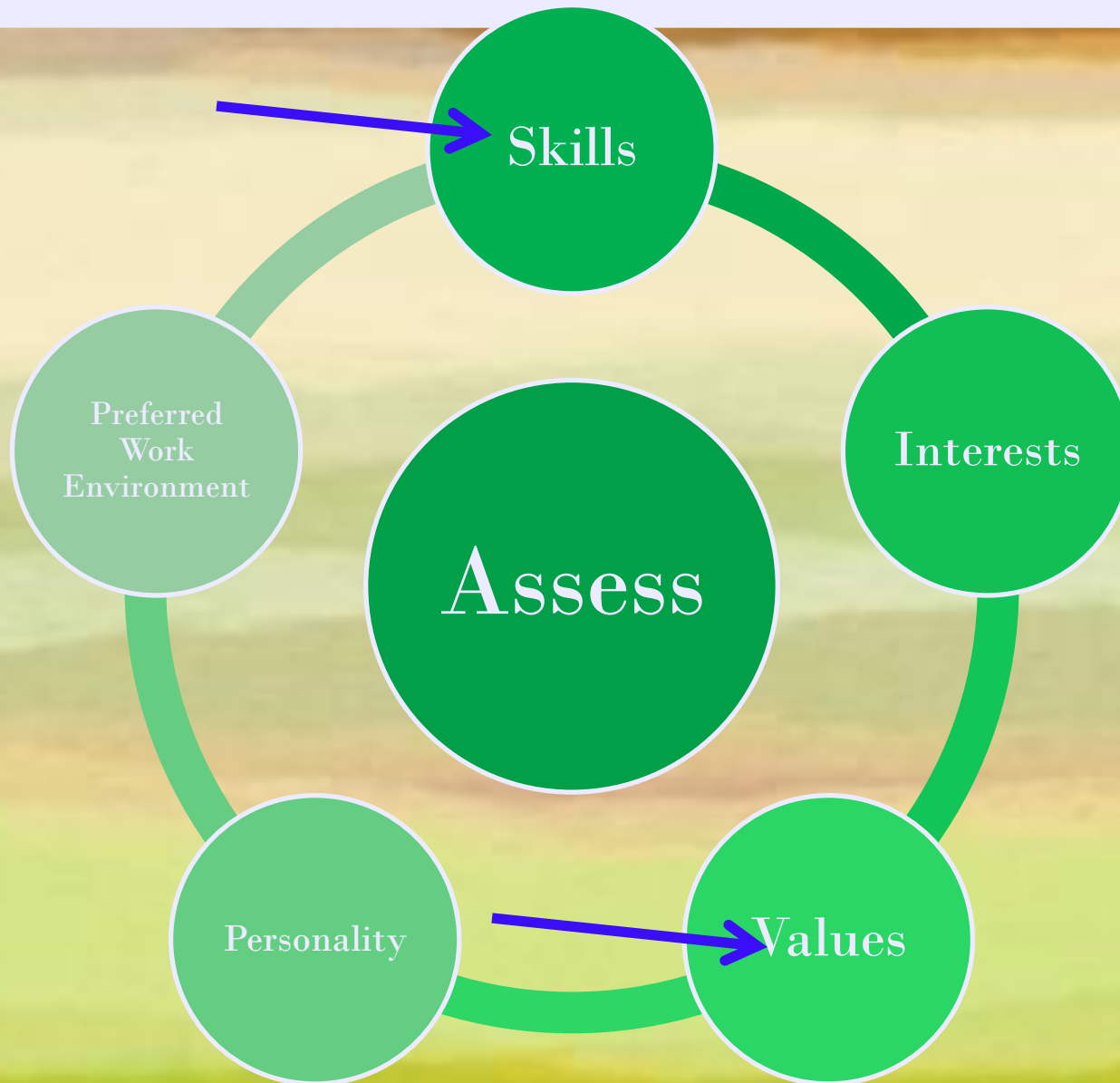
Source: "Putting Your Science to Work: Practical Career Strategies for PhDs," by Peter Fiske



# Career Decision-Making Model



# Self-Assessment



**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

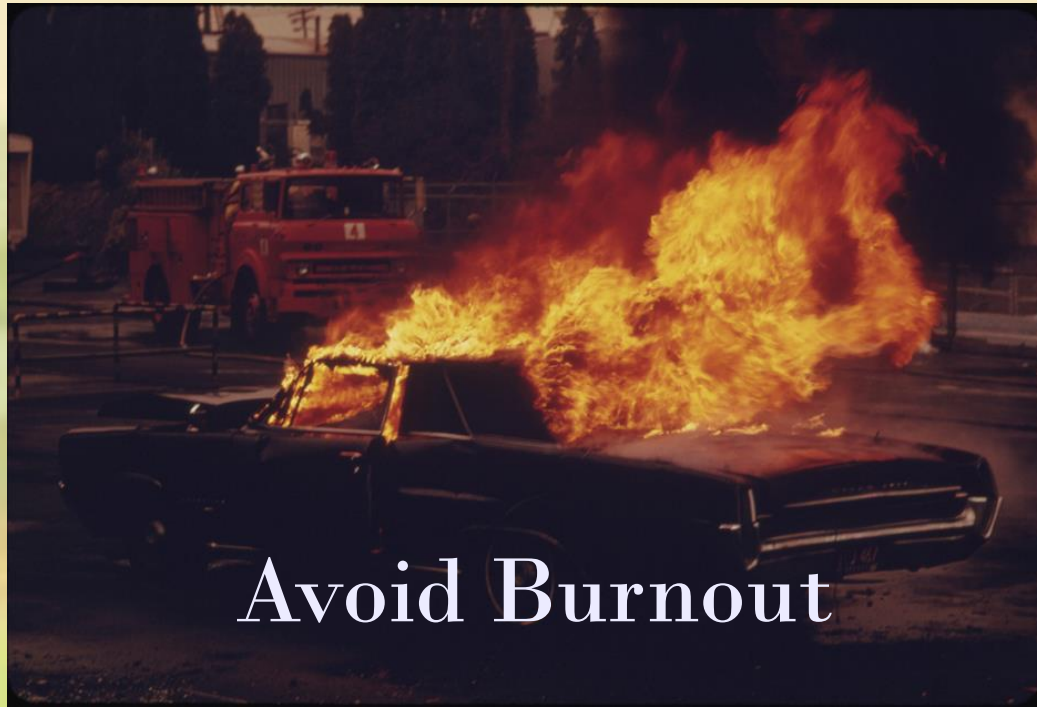
# Skills Employers Want

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**

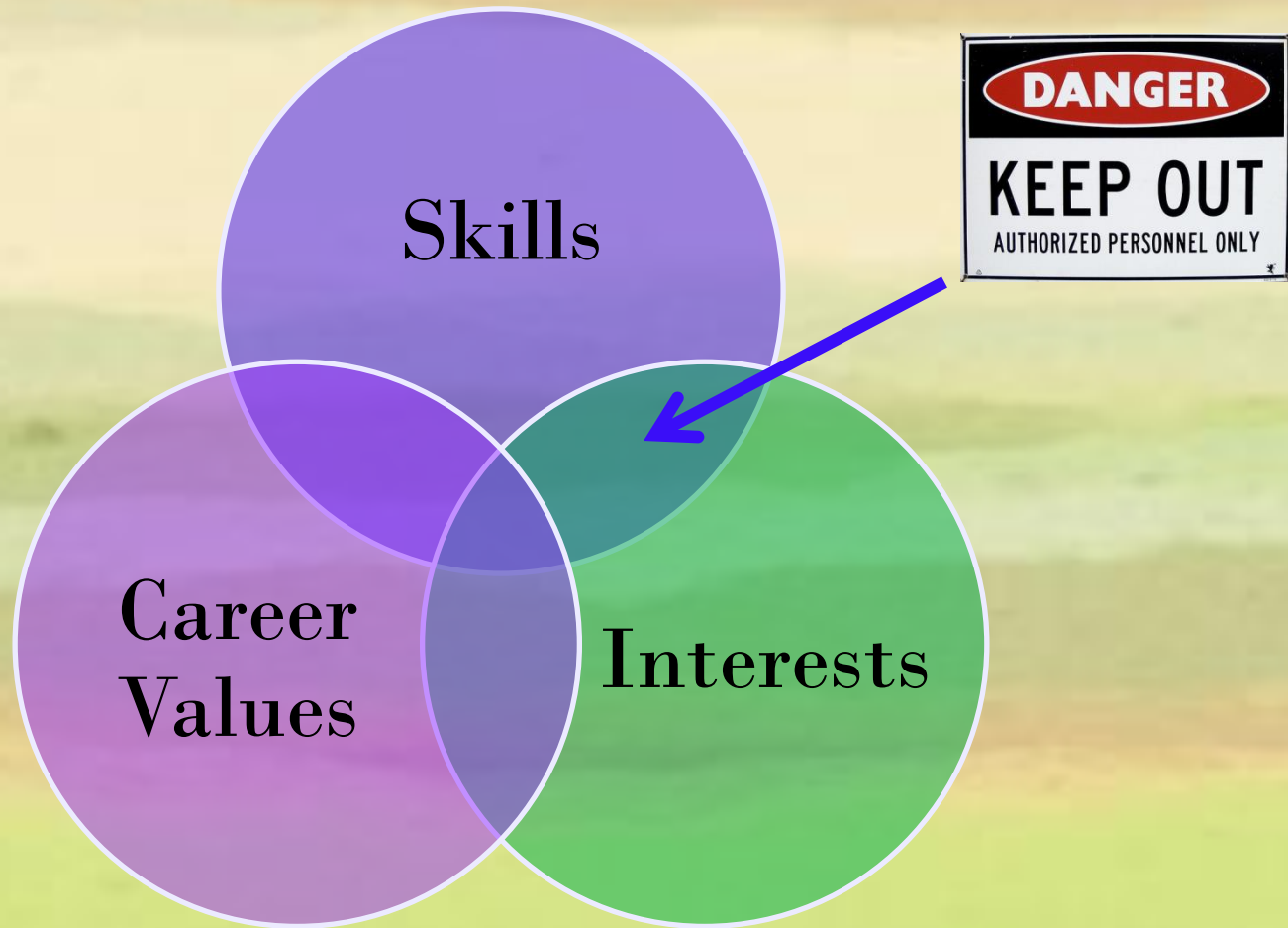


**Avoid Burnout**

# 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



# 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



Search alumni



**Keyword searches**

- Skills
- Values
- Interests



Look at work styles and values





**Tell Your Story**

# Reframe



# Frame Experiences Positively

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

Name	Contact Info	Referred By	Date Contacted	Notes	Thank You Sent

# 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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