

Non-academic work search

WHEN CONSIDERING WORK OUTSIDE OF ACADEMIA WITH A MASTER OR doctorate, the challenge lies in identifying the type of position you want, and understanding how the skills you have developed through your academic work can be applied to different types of work. When trying to decide on the type of work you want to do, it is important to spend time thinking about who you are and what you want in your future work. Evaluate your skills, interests, personality, values, previous experience, and any other additional aspects such as family commitments, or personal plans — you will be more appropriately equipped to consider and vet occupational options. To begin the process of identifying your skills and ways to apply them to work situations, attend these two workshops offered for graduate students: Discover Your Skills and Options, and Career Choice and Your Personality.

Skills

Employers value the skills that graduate students have developed while completing their academic coursework and the skills developed through other experiences such as research, teaching, academic, administrative, and additional professional work. Here are some skills you have developed:

- gather relevant information using library and Internet resources;
- understand and synthesize large quantities of information;
- identify goals and tasks to be accomplished;
- develop realistic timeline for completion of project;
- ability to write at all levels — brief abstract to book-length manuscript;
- attentive to audience knowledge and needs and able to shape oral and written communication.

To further develop your list, consider all the learning experiences that you have engaged in up to now, as these translate into skills and competencies.

Options

There certainly are a wide variety of options open to graduate students. Here are some examples: management consulting, training and development, intellectual property agent, product developer, assignment editing, research for radio, corporate curator, association management, development and fundraising, foundation executive, project manager, regulatory affairs agent.

There are many more options available to you. To enlarge the list of potential options,

- read the *Alumni Profiles*,
- talk to people,
- join associations,
- review the articles on the non-academic job search at <http://chronicle.com/>

Strategies for finding work

Once you have some ideas regarding what type of work you would like to pursue, the next step is to consider how to secure a position. Networking and informational interviews are both ways of tapping into positions which have not been advertised. Identify people who are in positions and organizations that would be a good fit for you or can provide you with information that can help you make career decisions.

Networking

Networking is a process of developing and maintaining personal and professional relationships resulting in sharing of information and knowledge, learning about what other people do, and uncovering job opportunities.

This is not about asking people for jobs or for the sole purpose of, How can you help me? Rather, it is a two-way process, where the goal is to get to know other people. It is something that is done continually rather than just once or only during the time when you are looking for work. Each person you meet has the potential to be a contact for you; likewise, you become a contact for them.

Informational interviews

One way of networking is conducting informational interviews that allow you to talk to people working in the field that interests you. From the meeting, you can gain up-to-date or specific information, and build contacts.

- Review a copy of the *Networking and Informational Interviewing* tipsheets.
- Plan to attend the Non-Academic Work Search and the Get Networking workshops.

Should I use a c.v. or a résumé?

Once you are meeting with employers and presenting yourself, you will need a résumé or c.v. Review the *Résumés* and *Curriculum Vitae* tipsheets for details. To select the right document for you, you need to understand the difference between the two.

c.v. for academic positions — this is for academic positions, therefore, it has an academic, scholarly focus; there is no length restriction (can be multiple pages); the focus is on three main areas of expertise: research, teaching, and administrative, in addition to other professional experience; it includes teaching and research interests, publications, and references (not typically included in a résumé). Call the counselling desk at 416-978-8010 to book a c.v. critique with a career counsellor.

c.v. for research positions — this focuses on research experience and includes a complete or partial list of publications; the length is restricted to two to five pages; the format is similar to those used for résumés i.e. chronological. Attention is paid to the style as well as the content; it reads more like a summary of qualifications rather than a comprehensive description of academic and professional experience. Call the counselling desk at 416-978-8010 to book a c.v. critique with a career counsellor.

résumé — this is for non-academic positions and focuses on experience relevant to position; it has typically two pages but in some cases will be one page; it focuses on experience relevant to position and any additional activities that demonstrate transferable skills. Book an appointment with the Résumé Clinic for feedback from a résumé professional.

Resources found in the Career Resources Library

Books

- *Alternative Careers in Science: Leaving the Ivory Tower* by Cynthia Robbins-Roth.
- *Outside the Ivory Tower: A Guide for Academics Considering Alternative Careers* by Margaret Newhouse.
- *Put Your Science to Work: The Take-Charge Career Guide for Scientists* by Peter S. Fiske.
- *So What Are You Going to Do With That? A Guide to Career-Changing for M.A.'s and Ph.D.'s* by Susan Basalla and Maggie Debelius.

- *Putting Your Graduate Degree to Work: The Canadian Career & Employment Guide* by Career and Placement Services, University of Alberta.
- *Consulting for PhDs, Lawyers, and Doctors* by Wetfeet Press Inc.
- *The Wetfeet Insider Guide to Careers in Biotech and Pharmaceuticals* by Wetfeet Press Inc.
- *The Networking Survival Guide* by Diane Darling.
- *Information Interviewing: What It Is and How to Use It in Your Career* by Martha Stoodley.
- *The Smart Woman's Guide to Networking* by Joyce Heidley and Betsy Sheldon.

Websites

- ▶ <http://career.ucla.edu/PHD/NonAcademicJobSearchLinks.asp>
- ▶ www.phds.org/jobs/nonacademic-careers/nonacademic-employers-that-hire-phds/
- ▶ http://career.ucsb.edu/gradstudents/nonacademic_social.html
- ▶ <http://career.berkeley.edu/Phds/PhDhuman.stm>
- ▶ The Conference Board of Canada's Employability Skills 2000+ at www.conferenceboard.ca/education/learning-tools/pdfs/esp2000.pdf

Here for you at the...

Career Resource Library

- **Career tipsheets** — over 40 topics available in the library and online.
- **Career research tools** — over 1,000 occupational books, *Careers by Degree* series, Career Cruising database access, and graduate school resources.
- **Job search resources** — Résumé, cover letter, and interview guides; *Informational Interview Contacts*; and employer directories.
- **Additional services** — word processing, Internet access, free local faxing, photocopier, and video terminals.

416-978-8002