

Finding Your Career

MENTORING365™

This curriculum track is designed to guide you through the process of finding the right career. Below are a few suggested discussion prompts and resources. Use only those resources that are relevant to you and will help you to make progress on the goals you have set with your mentor.

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Finding Your Fit

Whether you are a recent graduate or considering a change in your career, the first step to finding a new job is to develop a job search plan. Ask yourself these questions: “What type of job is the best fit for me?” and “What job positions are currently available that are related to my ideal job?” Finding your fit can be challenging but also rewarding. You want to find a job that combines your interests, skills, and motivations. The goal is to narrow down your job objective to be more specific about what sector you want to work in (non-profit, academia, government, industry, and research) and the type of job you would like to have.

Careers in Industry

Employment in industry is very competitive. Applying geoscience knowledge in industry touches almost all sectors of employment opportunities. Particularly, for scientists with a bachelor’s or master’s degree, this can be an exciting avenue to build career experience. Learn about the various industrial positions, skills needed to work in industry, and how you can find your fit to determine if it’s the right career path for you.

Careers in Academia

Employment in academia is very competitive with limited opportunities for tenure-track positions. Securing a position in research or teaching may seem overwhelming. When pursuing a career in academia, prepare a plan to demonstrate how you are a stronger candidate than others with similar degrees and limited experience. There are a few avenues to consider when seeking employment in academia: what type of job position is the right fit for you, what type of higher education institution aligns with the job fit, what is the work culture, etc.?

Resume 101

A resume is a marketing tool that communicates how your experiences and strengths demonstrate your alignment for a particular job. It is a way for you to highlight your assets as a positive first impression. The quickest way to be rejected in a job search is to have a misdirected, or non-specific resume. A targeted resume should be created for each job application. Your resume should only contain those experiences that demonstrate how you will address the needs expressed in your potential employer’s job listing. Any other experiences are unnecessary to include on your resume but possibly can be introduced during interviews.

Employers will likely receive hundreds of applications for any given job. Therefore, they use resumes as a tool to quickly screen candidates and eliminate those that don’t fit. Research shows that they spend no more than eight seconds before making the decision to keep or toss a resume. In that short amount of time, it is unlikely that a recruiter will make it past the top half of the front page, so you need to put your best stuff there! Catch their attention and give them a reason to read through the rest of your resume.

CV 101

Employment in academia is very competitive. Whether you seek a research or teaching position, you will need a *Curriculum Vitae* (CV) rather than a resume. A CV is a detailed record that communicates how your skills, knowledge, and experiences demonstrate your alignment for a particular job and higher education institution. Additionally, if you are applying to international jobs, a CV may be required.

The main difference between writing a resume and writing a CV is the length. Resumes are concise and limited to two pages. CVs are detailed about your extensive accomplishments and may be 5-20 pages or longer. CVs do not need to be customized for each job application but will need to be updated regularly so you remember all publications, presentations, awards, etc.

Interviewing 101

An interview is a conversation where both parties need information about the other. Both sides must engage and exchange information for the interaction to be successful. During your interview, you will have some information that you want to push towards your interviewer, and you should be ready to pull information out of your interviewer.

You will be pushing your best attributes toward the interviewer through stories that demonstrate your strengths and competencies, and you will pull essential information about how you will be evaluated as an employee and the potential work environment from your interviewer.

You should aim for a balance in the conversation, where the flow of information transitions smoothly from you to them and back again. To gain that flow, you will need to prepare for the interview by researching your potential employer and preparing thoughtful responses to the questions they are likely to ask.