

# Graduate Students: Exploring Careers Outside of Academia

## *How can I find a job outside of academia?*

If you are a Cornell graduate student considering a career outside of academia, this *Exploring Careers Outside of Academia Curriculum* is designed especially for you. This document suggests a 13-step process for your job search, which could involve attending presentations, watching online videos, conducting web research using Cornell's career resources, talking with a career advisor, or speaking with Cornell alumni. You are welcome to follow these steps in any order (although we encourage you to follow them in numerical order if possible) and you may complete as many or as few of the activities in each step as you wish.

If you have any questions about this document or your job search, we strongly recommend speaking with someone in the college career office most closely aligned with your graduate field: <http://www.career.cornell.edu/students/grad/help.cfm>. If your field is most closely aligned with Arts and Sciences, Human Ecology, or the Vet School, your advising services are provided through the university-wide career office in Barnes Hall. Professional students should contact their program's office about career resources for their program.

### **Cornell Career Offices for Research Master's and PhD Students:**

*If you are a professional degree student, please contact your program office for career assistance.*

#### **University-Wide Career Services**

103 Barnes Hall, 607-255-5296

#### **Agriculture and Life Sciences Career Development**

140 Roberts Hall, 607-255-2257

#### **Architecture, Art, and Planning Career Services**

B1 West Sibley Hall, 607-255-7696

#### **Engineering Cooperative Education and Career Services**

201 Carpenter Hall, 607-255-5006

#### **Hotel Administration Career Management**

180 Statler Hall, 607-255-6376

#### **Industrial and Labor Relations Career Services**

201 Ives Hall, 607-255-7816

### **Finding Information About Programs:**

All events mentioned in this curriculum are listed in the Career Services event calendar:

<http://www.career.cornell.edu/career/events/>

Additional events are listed in the CCNet event calendar:

<http://cornell-students.experience.com/experience/login>

Additional professional development programming (such as refining your public speaking skills) is offered by the Graduate School's Office of Inclusion and Professional Development:

<http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/events>

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## Step 1: Understand the Job-Search Process

Attend a job-search workshop, such as:

- **Expanding Your Job Search Skills**,  
*This full-day workshop offered to students within one year of graduation occurs during during fall break, winter break, spring break, and early summer.*
- **Envisioning Yourself Outside of Academia: The First Steps for Humanities and Social Science Graduate Students**
- **Job Search Strategies for International Students**
- **Job-Search Strategies: Full-Time Jobs**
- **Job Search Nuts and Bolts: A Must-Attend Workshop for New MEng Students**

## Step 2: Conduct Background Research to Understand Yourself

Identify your interests, values, strengths, skills, and goals in any of the following ways:

- Meet with a career advisor in your career office or in Barnes Hall.  
*Discuss your career interests and the potential of using a career assessment tool such as Myers-Briggs, StrengthsQuest, SkillScan, or Strong Interest Inventory.*
- Use **ScienceCareers's MyIDP** (<http://myidp.sciencecareers.org/>).  
*Complete an assessment, learn about career paths, and read career articles.*
- Use **SIGI 3 (System of Interactive Guidance and Information)** (<http://www.career.cornell.edu/students/goals/assessments.cfm>).  
*This tool will help you systematically examine your values, interests, and skills.*
- Complete self-assessment exercises in books such as:
  - **Put Your Science To Work** by Peter Fiske  
*e-book available in Cornell Library*
  - **So What Are you Going to Do With That?: Finding Careers Outside of Academia** by Susan Basalla and Maggie Debelius  
*Available in Cornell Library system*

Analyze the reasons why you would prefer a job outside of academia instead of a faculty position:

- On a piece of paper, list the portions of your graduate experience that you enjoyed in one column. Be as specific as possible; if you enjoyed mentoring students, what portion of mentoring did you enjoy (e.g. teaching information in a one-on-one setting, delegating tasks, etc.).
- In another column, list the portions of your graduate experience that you did not enjoy.
- Identify the top three things that you liked and disliked about your graduate experience.
- Do this exercise for additional activities or experiences that you enjoyed (for example, teaching, volunteering, or serving on a committee).
- Analyze your results. Do you notice any trends in what you enjoy and what you dislike? If so, how could these trends influence your career interests and goals?

## Step 3: Develop a Career-Related Hypothesis or Question

Based on your interests, values, strengths, skills, and goals, develop the following:

\_\_\_\_\_ A list of the top five items that are most important to you in your career (e.g. job location, skills you'd like to use, work-life balance, etc.)?

\_\_\_\_\_ A list of the top 5 items that you would *not* like to be present in your career

\_\_\_\_\_ A career-related hypothesis or question, such as "I would like to use negotiation skills in my future career" or "Is consulting a good match for my skills and interests?"

This list will be the set of criteria that will help you evaluate whether a career field or particular job is a good match for your interests, skills, values, and goals.

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## Step 4: Gather Information on Career Options

Attend a career exploration workshop, such as:

- **Consulting Careers Alumni Panel**
- **Putting Your PhD to Work Panel**

Find careers based on specific skills by using **O\*Net**. ([www.onetonline.org](http://www.onetonline.org))

- Search for a career by selecting skills of interest at ([www.onetonline.org/skills](http://www.onetonline.org/skills)) and a range of career options will appear.
- Additional tools can be found at <http://www.onetcenter.org/tools.html>.

Learn what graduate students do with a degree in your field by conducting a LinkedIn search. You do not need a LinkedIn account to complete this exercise.

- To access publicly available profiles, log out of LinkedIn.
- Do a simple Google search by typing in “LinkedIn, PhD (or MS, MA, etc.)” and other keywords such as your graduate field or skills you’d like to use.
- Public profiles of individuals that match these keywords will appear; you can see and see what positions/companies value the degree you have and the skills you’d like to use.
- You may also do this search when you are logged in, but it might give you limited results, depending on the composition of your LinkedIn network.

Find general information about careers by using:

- **Sloan Career Cornerstone** (<http://www.careercornerstone.org/>)  
*This resource highlights career options and resources for different science, engineering, math, and technology fields.*
- **Career Insider (Vault Report)** (subscription required: log in through <http://www.career.cornell.edu/resources/>)  
*This powerful resource includes industry, employer, and career guides.*
- **Versatile PhD’s Premium Content** (log in and create a free account through <http://www.career.cornell.edu/>)  
*See “Premium Content” section to view panel discussions about career options, “Hiring Success Stories” that provide the resume, cover letter, and other materials that people used to get their first job outside of academia; and “Career Autobiographies” that narrate how people explored their career options after their graduate studies*
- The “**Exploring Career Fields**” section in **Career Services Link Library** (<http://www.career.cornell.edu/resources/links.cfm>)
- **Jobipedia.org**  
*Get career advice from employers by asking questions or reading responses to previously posted questions.*
- **EClips Career Corner** (<http://eclips.cornell.edu/themesList.do#>)  
*Get job-hunting advice from industry experts*
- **Put Your Science To Work** by Peter Fiske  
*e-book available in Cornell Library*
- **So What Are you Going to Do With That?: Finding Careers Outside of Academia** by Susan Basalla and Maggie Debelius  
*Available in Cornell Library system*
- Cornell Career Service’s Media Library section “Learn About Career Paths”:  
<http://media.career.cornell.edu/>

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## **Step 5: Gather Information on Jobs and Employers**

Find information on specific employers by using any of these databases to find employers and job postings:

- **Hoover's** (subscription required: log in through <http://www.career.cornell.edu/resources/>)  
*Access company profiles and search for employers by location, industry, etc.*
- **Uniworld** (subscription required: log in through <http://johnson.library.cornell.edu/>)  
*Identify companies that have branches both in the United States and abroad*
- **Career Search** (subscription required: log in through <http://johnson.library.cornell.edu/>)  
*Search this database of domestic and international companies and find contact information for employers*
- See additional **career databases** through <http://johnson.library.cornell.edu/>
- See “**Job and Employer Search**” section in **Career Services Link Library** (<http://www.career.cornell.edu/resources/links.cfm>)

For international students, see:

- **Myvisajobs.com**  
*Search for employers who have sponsored H1B visas in the previous year by keywords such as industry, career, city, and job title.*
- **Goinglobal** (subscription required: log in through <http://online.goinglobal.com>)  
*Look at the United States Country Guide to learn more about the US job search—and look at employers who sponsored H1B visas in the previous year by looking at the “H1B Visa” section.*
- **Career Service’s International Student** section (<http://www.career.cornell.edu/students/international.cfm>)  
*View a searchable Excel spreadsheet with a list of employers recruiting Cornell international students*

## **Step 6: Gather Information from Individuals and Build Your Network**

Attend at least one networking or informational interviewing workshop, such as:

- **The Art of Information Interviewing**
- **Schmooze or Looze**
- **How to Maximize LinkedIn for Networking and Job Search**
- **Mingling and Working the Room**

Create your professional network in any of the following ways:

- Conduct informational interviews with Cornell alumni (you can find them through a LinkedIn search described in Step 4), LinkedIn contacts, or other individuals of interest.
- Create a LinkedIn account, joining LinkedIn groups, and follow employers
- Join a professional society in your graduate field
- Attend on-campus networking events held by student groups, your field, and also those available during campus-wide events

## **Step 7: Evaluate the Information You Gathered**

Analyze the information you gathered on careers, employers, and jobs from your informational interviews and online research. Did you answer your question—did you prove or disprove your hypothesis? If you did not identify a career field or position of interest, revisit Step 2 and formulate a new question or hypothesis.

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## **Step 8: Find Job Advertisements**

\_\_\_\_ Look for jobs that you would like to apply for by consulting the following resources:

- **CCNet**
- [jobs.phds.org](http://jobs.phds.org)
- **ScienceCareers** (<http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/>)
- “**Job and Employer Search**” section in **Career Services Link Library** (<http://www.career.cornell.edu/resources/links.cfm>)
- **Career Insider (Vault Report)** (subscription required: log in through <http://www.career.cornell.edu/resources/>)
- <http://www.usajobs.gov>
- <http://www.phdproject.org/jobsites.html>

## **Step 9: Develop Your Resume**

\_\_\_\_ Attend at least one of these workshops to learn how to create a resume:

- **Build a Better Resume**
- **Learn Optimal Tools for Telling Your Story**
- **CV to Resume (available on CornellCast)**

\_\_\_\_ Create a resume targeted to the jobs of interest by either of the following options:

- Use **OptimalResume** (<https://cornell.optimalresume.com/>)
- Model your resume from those in the **Career Guide** (<http://www.career.cornell.edu/resources/downloads.cfm>)

\_\_\_\_ Get your resume critiqued by any of these means:

- Sign up for an appointment during Resumaniacs/Resume Review days
- Sign up for a resume consultation with industry representatives or the executive-in-residence
- Attend daily walk-in/drop-in hours offered in your career office or Barnes Hall
- Schedule a 30-minute appointment offered in your career office or Barnes Hall

## **Step 10: Create A Cover Letter**

\_\_\_\_ Watch the **Effective Cover Letter** presentation:

<http://media.career.cornell.edu/?p=2077>

\_\_\_\_ Create a cover letter targeted to the jobs of interest by either of the following options:

- Use **OptimalResume** (<https://cornell.optimalresume.com/>)
- Model your cover letter from those in the **Career Guide** (<http://www.career.cornell.edu/resources/downloads.cfm>)

\_\_\_\_ Get your cover letter critiqued during one of the following events:

- Attend daily walk-in/drop-in hours offered in your career office or Barnes Hall
- Schedule a 30-minute appointment offered in your career office or Barnes Hall

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## Step 11: Apply for Jobs

- \_\_\_ Update your CCNet account and apply for job postings
- \_\_\_ Apply for job postings that you found through your employer and job search in Step 5 and 8
- \_\_\_ Attend any employer information sessions of interest listed on the CCNet event calendar
- \_\_\_ Attend a career fair workshop, such as:
  - **Prepare for a Career Fair Visit**
  - **Preparing for the Career Fair: Approaches for Graduate Students**
  - **Master Your Future: How to Successfully Navigate a Career Fair**
- \_\_\_ Attend a career fair that relates to your career interests, such as:
  - **University-Wide Career Fair: General Interest Day and Technical Day**
  - **Non-profit and Government Career Fair**
  - **Engineering and Technical Spring Career Fair**
  - Other career fairs listed at [http://www.career.cornell.edu/events/other\\_fairs.cfm](http://www.career.cornell.edu/events/other_fairs.cfm)

## Step 12: Prepare for Interviews

- \_\_\_ Attend an interviewing workshop, such as:
  - **Interviewing Skills for International Students**
  - **Strengthen Your Interviewing Skills**
  - **Behavioral Interviewing Tips**
  - **Interviewing Via Phone or Skype: Nuances You Need To Know**
- \_\_\_ Conduct background research on employers and the position by looking at:
  - **Factiva** (subscription required: log in through <http://johnson.library.cornell.edu/>)  
*Prepare for informational interviews and interviews by finding the latest global news and business information with this resource.*
  - **Hoover's** (subscription required: log in through <http://www.career.cornell.edu/resources/>)  
*Access company profiles see company-related news.*
- \_\_\_ Practice interviewing by any of these options:
  - Sign up for a slot during Mock Interview Madness
  - Practice interviewing through **Optimal Interviewing** (<https://cornell.optimalresume.com/>)
  - Make an appointment at your career office or Barnes Hall

## Step 13: Negotiate the Job Offer

- \_\_\_ Conduct research on typical salaries by going to:
  - **NACE salary calculator** (<http://www.jobsearchintelligence.com/NACE/salary-calculator-intro/>)
  - **Glassdoor** ([www.glassdoor.com](http://www.glassdoor.com))
- \_\_\_ Learn about negotiation tactics:
  - Watch a negotiation video at the LeanIn website (<http://leanin.org/education/negotiation/>)
  - Read about evaluating offers at the Career Services website:  
<http://www.career.cornell.edu/students/jobs/basics/offers.cfm>
  - Meet with a career advisor to discuss negotiation techniques