How to Gain Experience that Employers Value

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COPH Career Services

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Welcome to the College of Public Health’s Career Services!

Services available to students and alumni include:

- Resume review
- Mock interviews
- Career panels
- Career counseling
- Career development educational sessions

Services available to employers include:

- Posting and marketing of open positions
- On-campus recruitment opportunities

For more information about any of these opportunities, or to schedule an appointment, please contact Career Services at brenda.nickol@unmc.edu or 402-552-7226.
COPH Training

- Core Public Health Competencies
- Concentration-specific competencies
- Service Learning/Capstone Experience
**Job Search Stages**

**MPH:** You meet a minimum or preferred qualification.

**Resume & Cover Letter:**
- You possess the skills and qualifications they are looking for.

**Interview:**
- Your experiences demonstrate your skills and abilities to perform the job duties.
- You are motivated to do the job.
- You are a good fit for the organization.

**Job!**
Building the Foundation for your Career

Seek out as many experiences as possible while a student
How do you decide what experience you need?
Stage 1: Information Gathering
Personal Assessment

• First, start identifying what you are looking for in your career

• Write out your Professional Goals & Mission Statement
  – Why did you choose public health? Your concentration?
  – What difference do you hope to make with your career?
  – What classes have you enjoyed most?
  – What jobs have you seen or heard of that appeal to you?
Personal Assessment

- Think about past jobs and what you have liked and not liked about the:
  - People (team dynamic, values)
  - Position (tasks, responsibilities)
  - Place (organizational culture)
Research Possible Careers

• *101 Careers in Public Health* by Beth Seltzer
• Professional Associations
• ASPH websites
  – What is Public Health?
  – This is Public Health
  – I am Public Health
• LinkedIn
• Job Shadow
• Conference presenters
• Guest lecturers
Informational Interviews

• Identify people who inspire you and/or who have careers that interest you

• Schedule informational interview, in person or via phone
  – Prepare ahead of time—do your research and compose questions
  – Make a professional, enthusiastic, genuine impression
  – Send a Thank You note
Example Informational Interview Questions*

• How did you get to where you are now?
• What skills and competencies are required for your job? Is there a typical career path that most people follow?
• What do you like best? What is most challenging?
• What experience do you recommend I get if I am interested in a similar career?
• What resources (associations, journals, etc.) do you recommend?
• What do you wish you had known when you were starting out?
• Is there anyone else that you recommend I speak with to learn more about _____?

*From “Informational Interviews” developed by George Washington University’s School of Public Health & Health Services, Student and Alumni Career Services
Stage 2: Identify a Couple of Viable Career Paths
Gaps Analysis

• Start looking at job postings early
• Compile a list of common requirements and preferred skills
• Make an honest inventory of the skills and experience you have
• Make a plan to gain experience in required areas that you are missing
Stage 3: Get the Experience
How do you get experience as a student?

- Student organizations
- Volunteer
- Community coalitions & Professional Memberships
- Student employment
- Research projects
Student Organizations & Events

- COPH Student Association
- UNMC Student Groups
- Legacy Projects
- Start your own!
Student Orgs & Events: Job Skills

• Strategic planning
• Program planning, implementation, evaluation
• Needs assessment
• Fund development (grants, fundraising)
• Communication skills
• Collaboration skills
• Leadership & management skills
• Conflict management skills
Volunteer

• Legacy Projects
• Coordinate with a group of students
• Look for events of interest
• Volunteer Section on Career Services site
Volunteering: Job Skills

• Networking
• Potential skills—limitless
Community Coalitions & Professional Memberships

• Ask faculty & staff members about relevant groups
• Make this one of your questions during informational interviews
• Look at conference programs, association websites and publications
• Get involved with committees
Community Coalitions & Professional Memberships: Job Skills

- Networking
- Meeting planning and facilitation (schedule, agenda, notes, etc.)
- Communication skills (email, conference calls, in person)
- Strategic planning
- Program planning
- Abstract reviews
- Additional training/professional development
Research Projects

• Class projects
• Work with faculty
  – Data entry
  – Data analysis
  – Transcribing
  – Assist with focus groups, interviews, surveys
• CEESP
• SL/CE
Research Projects: Job Skills

- Research design and execution
- Writing skills
- Collaboration
- Content expertise
- Research methods
- Data skills
- Scientific writing and presentation
- Disseminating information to a professional and/or lay audience
Student Employment

- Assistantships
- Work study
- Hourly
IDP: A Tool to Manage the Process
Why Individual Development Plans (IDPs)?

• People who have a written, structured plan for achieving their goals are more likely to achieve them.
IDP Purpose

• Provide a planning process to address professional development needs and achieve career objectives
  – Identify milestone for achieving specific objectives

• Serve as a communication tool between individuals and their mentors
  – Clearer sense of expectations
  – Identify resources and opportunities

Goals of an IDP

Help individuals identify:

• Long-term career options they wish to pursue and the necessary tools to meet these; and

• Short-term needs for improving current performance
IDP Process

1. Self Assessment & Reflection
2. Review with Mentor
3. Write your IDP
   a) Select 2-3 areas
   b) Determine goals & activities
   c) Timeframes & measures
4. Revise, Review & Modify as needed
Keep track of everything!

• Compile your ‘master’ resume
• Document:
  – Work experience
  – Volunteer experience
  – Presentation titles
  – Grants you work on
  – Major class projects
  – Leadership positions
  – Honors/Awards
Save the Date!

- Monday, March 10th, 1-2pm
  Effective Résumé and Cover Letters

- Tuesday, April 15th, 4-5pm
  Preparing for the Interview Process

Details, handouts, recordings, etc.: http://www.unmc.edu/publichealth/events.htm
Questions?