
Preparing For Career Satisfaction & Success

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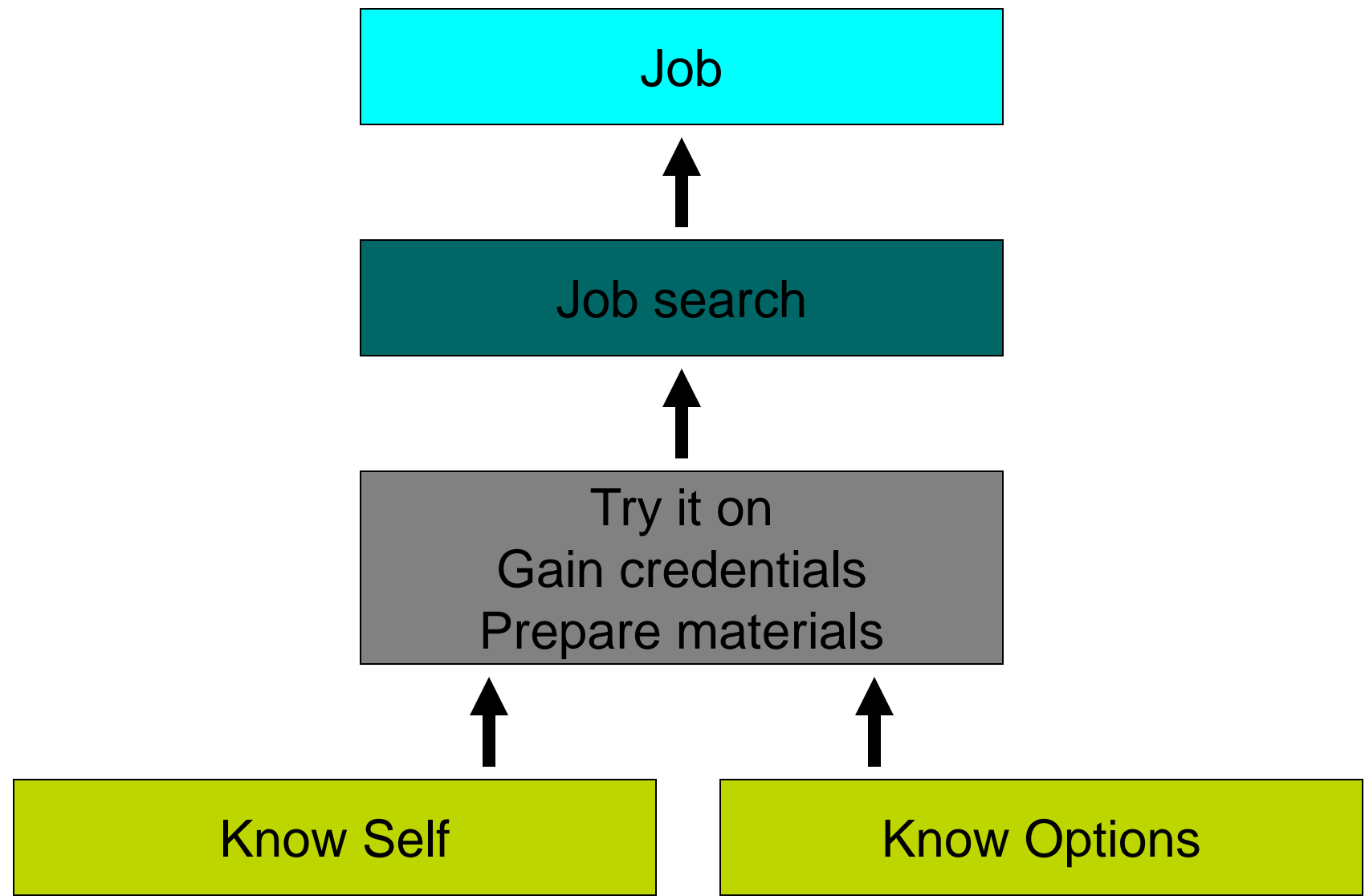


Some Fundamental Truths

- Most of us will face one or more job searches in the future
- Job searches are about transitions and transitions are always difficult
 - We have to let go
 - We have to deal with a lot of uncertainty
 - We face the discomfort of deeply examining ourselves
 - We face the discomfort of being examined by others
- In addition to managing the job search we have to manage the emotions and doubts that go along with it
- Understanding the process is the first step in conquering the process

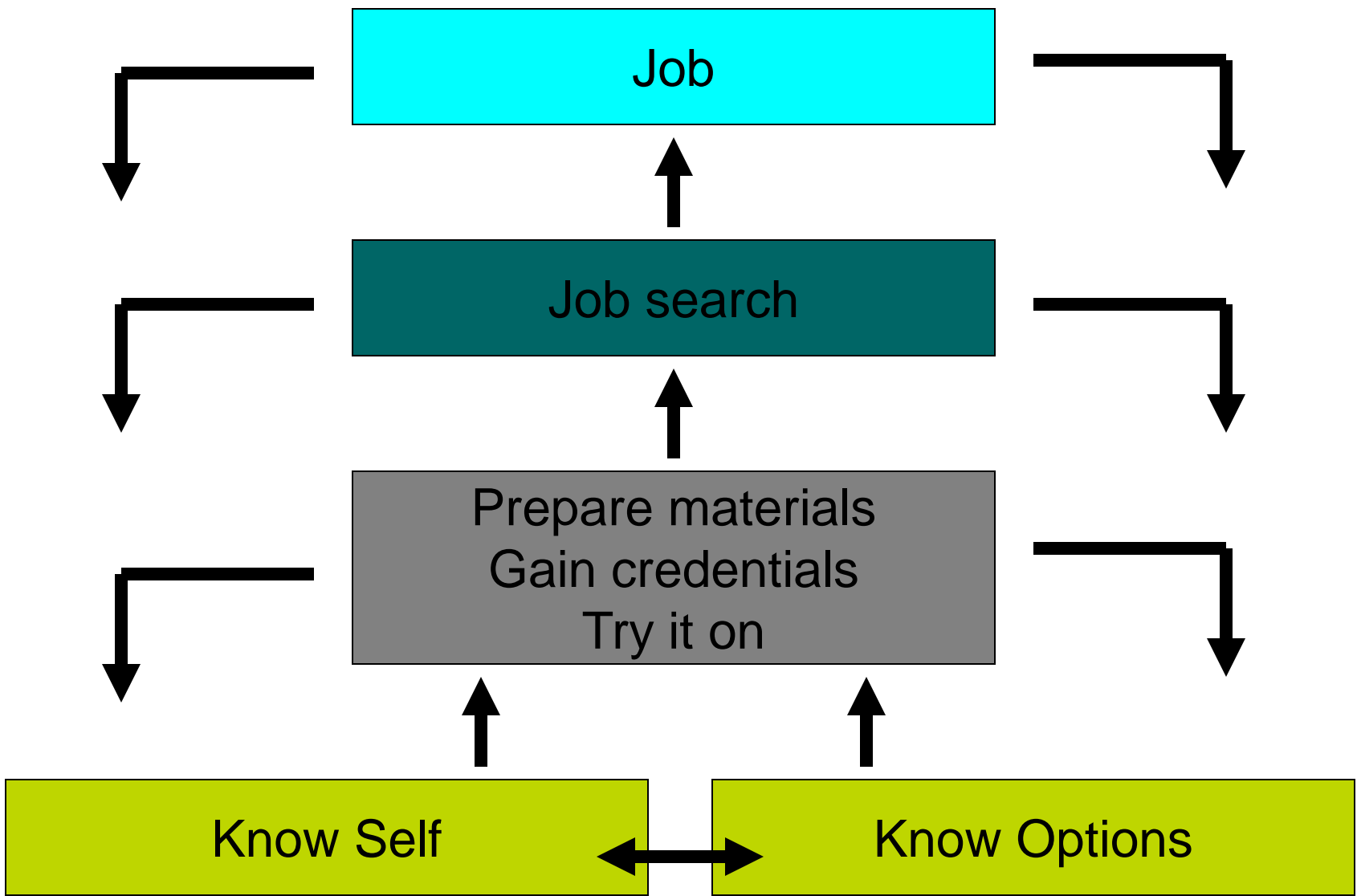


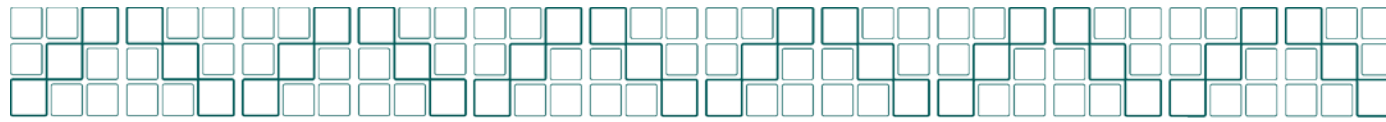
Elements of Career Planning





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Who Can Help In the Process

- NIH mentors and colleagues (find out what your IC training office offers SS/SC)
- Scientific networks beyond NIH
- Friends, neighbors, and family

- Be sure to make contact with your mentors and advocates
- Effective networking is key to career transitions and forward movement



Self Knowledge Means Knowing Your:

- Personality and learning style
- Interests within the field
- Highly developed skills
- Work preferences
- Management [leadership] style and capacity
- Credentials
- Personal and geographic restrictions



Gaining Self Knowledge

- Read books and Web-based resources
- Attend relevant workshops
- Talk with:
 - Mentors
 - Colleagues and friends
 - Career counselors
- All leading to self-reflection and greater self-awareness



Skills You May Have

- Technical
- Analytical
- Learning
- Communication
- Teaching
- Project management
- Budget management
- Self management
- People management
- Leadership

Remember: Skills can be enhanced through coursework and practice



Parsing Your Skills

“ I have developed excellent communication skills”



Parsing Your Skills

“ I have developed excellent communication skills”:

- Can explain complex concepts to lay audiences
- Best when speaking to an expert audiences
- Have an engaging public speaking style
- Can coherently organize material for others
- Can facilitate discussions, even heated ones
- Can influence individuals or groups
- Can think quickly on my feet when answering questions
- Can write for a deadline
- Can edit the work of others
- Can write for lay audiences better than expert audiences
- Excellent at writing highly detailed methods-based document (how-tos, SOPs, etc)



Identifying Highly Developed Skills

- Performance awards and formal recognition in the workplace or community
- Areas where you often receive genuine compliments and positive feedback
- Ask trusted mentors and colleagues for feedback
- Consider times you have felt most energized, confident and capable



Skills Exercise

- Spend five minutes considering your highly developed skills
- Share these with a neighbor, using Q&A to more fully define the skills

- Spend five minutes considering a skill you wish to develop in the coming year
- Share this skill with a neighbor; strategize on ways you might develop this skill



More on Skills

- Can be learned and enhanced
 - But best to identify and exploit natural talents
- Important to define skills as specifically as possible
 - For career exploration and job searching
- For career transitions, it is often important to examine your **transferrable skills**
 - Skills you have acquired during any activity in your life that are applicable to what you want to do in your next job
 - Any activity means at home, in the community or at work



Transferrable Skills

- Identify them by analyzing your current activities
 - At work
 - And more broadly in the community
- Highlight them in three important steps
 - **S**tate it
 - **E**xpand on it [with an example]
 - **C**onnect it [to the new job]



Major Categories of Transferrable Skills

- Communication
- Analytical and problem solving
- Human relations and teamwork
- Organizational management (and leadership)
- Work ethic and approach



Exercise

- Apply the SEC Approach to one of the following job search scenarios:
 - Research position to admin job
 - Research position to teaching job
 - Research position in developmental biology to research position in vaccine development
 - Research position working in a small research group to head of a core facility



Knowing What You Need

- More personal, often ignored, and subject to a variety of cultural, personal, and family influences
- Mismatch between needs and actual job is often a source of job dissatisfaction and stress



Exercise

- Answer the following question:

I am interested in a job that has/includes.....

- Look at how many job requirements you have and work to identify which are **MOST IMPORTANT** to you

Identify your **TOP THREE** job requirements

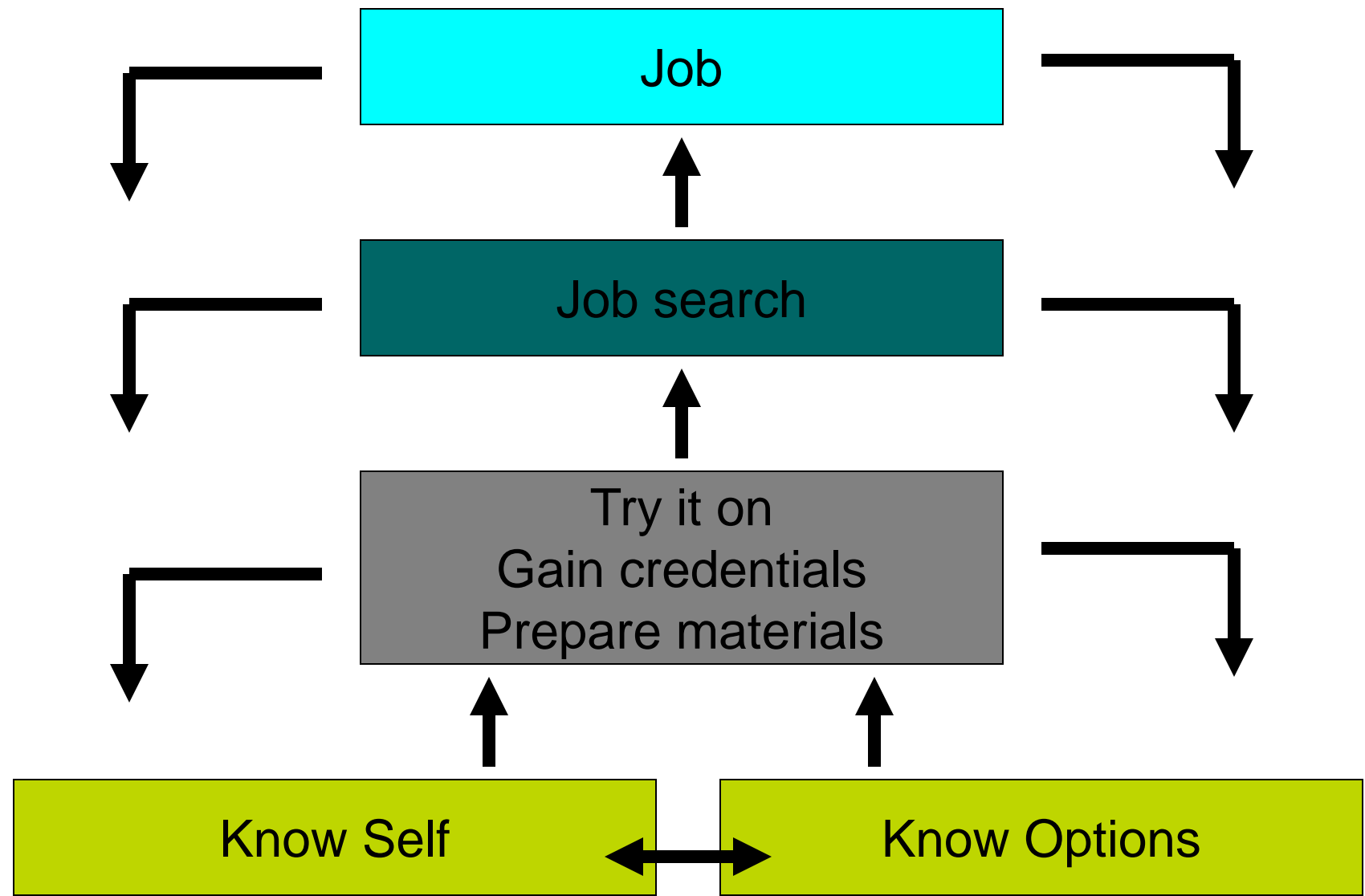


Interests

- What do we think about when we think about work?
 - Problems and broad areas of science
 - Technologies and approaches
 - Communicating outcomes and results
 - People and management
- If we never think about work, what do we think about?
 - A sign that it may be time for a change
 - Time to move away from the bench or time to move away from science completely? Important to consider what to move toward?
- Sometimes, our hobbies and outside interests help inform our science career decisions



Elements of Career Planning





Options Knowledge Means Understanding:

- The responsibilities and duties of an occupation or position
 - Specific job demands and tasks
 - Unspoken “rules of the trade”
- The qualifications and experiences needed to get the job
- Salary, typical benefits, perks, and advancement opportunities
- Down-sides, risks, and typical de-railers



Options

- Have expanded in some areas and contracted in others
- Decision nodes:
 - At or away from the bench
 - Level of responsibility and independence
 - Sector(s) you will target



Non-bench Career Options In:

- Administration
- Education
- Policy
- Business
- Writing
- Law
- Consulting



Gaining Options Knowledge

- Read
 - Books – the OITE has a good career library
 - Blogs – including the new OITE Careers Blog
 - Web sites – find links at the Career Services web site
- Attend workshops
 - Felcom, IC, and OITE programs
 - Local and national opportunities
- Talk with mentors, colleagues and friends
- **INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING**



Why Do Informational Interviews?

- To explore careers and clarify your career goal
 - To expand your professional network
 - To access the most up-to-date career information and access the underground job market
 - To identify your professional strengths and weaknesses
 - To build confidence for your job interviews
-
- One in 12 informational interviews leads to a job offer – the best odds you have!



The Nitty Gritty

- Easiest to make your request by email
 - Keep it short
 - Proof-read it
 - Name-drop
 - Ask someone to make an introduction on your behalf
- Can meet in person or by phone
- Be flexible regarding when you meet
- Bring a current CV or resume
- Plan for no more than 30 minutes
- Open conversation with:
 - Brief explanation of why you requested the meeting
 - Summary of your experiences to date



Finding People To Talk With

- Use all of your networks
- Search Alumni database on OITE webpage
- Ask your IC Training Office for IC alumni contacts
- Watch videos and attend career panels on campus and at scientific meetings



Example 1

Dear Dr. Milgram:

Dr. XXXX suggested I contact you because of your experience in science education at NIH and in an academic setting. I am a staff scientist here at NIH and I am very interested in transitioning from my current position to one where I can use my communication and organizational skills to enhance science education at the undergraduate or graduate level. I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you briefly to discuss your thoughts on how I might make this career transition. I am especially interested in your views regarding volunteer experiences and differences you see in your staff who work with undergraduate vs. graduate students. I can meet at your convenience and greatly appreciate your time.

Sincerely,



Example 2

Dear XXX:

I enjoyed your recent paper on the regulation of ENaC in airway. As a ion channel physiologist I greatly appreciate the combination of biochemical and functional studies and hope you continue to make progress defining the protein interactions involved in this regulatory pathway. I am currently a postdoc at NIH, working closely with Dr. XXX to elucidate pathways that regulate ABC transporter activity in cancer cells. I am now looking to transition to an industry position where I can use my expertise in electrophysiology as part of a R&D team. I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to talk with you about your career progression and how I might make a similar transition from NIH to industry. I will be at the Ion Channel GRC next month and would love to buy you a cup of coffee or a drink. Thanks and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Example 3

Dear XXX:

I am considering a career transition from cancer research to science writing and Dr. XXX in the XXX Communications Office suggested I contact you. I recently completed a short volunteer internship under her guidance and this experience solidified my interest in science writing and editing. I would greatly appreciate an opportunity to talk with you about your current position as an editor of Cancer Cell. I know you are very busy and I am happy to meet by phone anytime that is convenient for you. In addition, I will be in NY October 15 – 20; I could meet in person anytime that week. I imagine you must get many requests like this one and appreciate your consideration of my request.

Thanks in advance,



Things To Explore

- What the job is really like
 - Explore from the perspective of your needs and wants
- Critical skills for success
 - To get a job
 - To succeed in it
- Career trajectories
- Advice on how you should move forward
 - Other useful contacts; feedback on your experiences, CV or resume; professional societies you might explore; insights into possible positions
- Do not ask for a job but be open to any opportunities they put on the table



Knowing What It Takes

- With a partner list 5 – 7 skills needed to excel as a:
 - Patent lawyer
 - Grants manager
 - Assistant Professor at a research university/teaching university
 - Science policy analyst for the Stem Cell Institute
 - Science internship coordinator at NIH
 - High school science teacher
 - Director of research core facility
 - Scientific instrumentation sales rep
 - Director of outreach for a science museum
 - Head of quality control for a pharmaceutical company
 - Director of clinical trials unit at a university or a company
 - Another job of your choosing



Comparing Your Skills to the Job

| MY HIGHLY DEVELOPED SKILLS | SKILLS NEEDED FOR _____ POSITION |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. | 1. |
| 2. | 2. |
| 3. | 3. |
| 4. | 4. |

- Then ask:
 - ❑ Where is there overlap?
 - ❑ Is there enough overlap to begin searching?
 - ❑ Where am I lacking important skills?
 - ❑ What can I do about skills I am lacking?



Gaining Credentials

- Gain hands-on experience by:
 - Volunteering for relevant projects at NIH, in your research group and (or) beyond
 - Doing a formal detail as part of your current work assignment
- Fill in knowledge gaps using adult education
 - FAES and local community colleges
 - On-line and weekend courses
 - Some professional societies offer excellent training opportunities
- The quality of the experience is more important than the quantity
 - Focus on task and relationship
 - Input from individuals observing you in the new role can be critical



This is a Difficult Process

| | Enthusiastic beginner | Disillusioned learner | Cautious performer | High Achiever |
|------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Competence | low | some | moderate | high |
| Confidence | High | Low | variable | High |
| Needs | Direction | Support | Support | Independence |



Finding Support & Guidance

- Use resources at NIH (IC Training Office, EAP, Ombudsmen, FAES, NIH Training Center, OITE)
- Attend other parts of the OITE Job Search Series for SS/SC
- Email me at milgrams@od.nih.gov if you are interested in joining a SS/SC Job Group
- Email me at milgrams@od.nih.gov for a career counseling appointment



Keep In Touch

- Connect with me on Linked-In and join the NIH Intramural Science Linked-In group
- Watch previous OITE career workshops
- Read the OITE Careers blog (“Day in the Life Of” series)
- Join the OITE NIH Training Alumni database if you were a student or fellow here
- Email me at milgrams@od.nih.gov

www.training.nih.gov