
Planning For Career Satisfaction & Success

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My Career Path

- Three different jobs
 - Physical Therapist, Welkind Rehabilitation Hospital (1984 – 1986)
 - Faculty, UNC-CH (1994 – 2007)
 - Director, NIH OITE (2007 – present)
- All using similar skills, but to varying degrees and in very different ways
 - Analytical and problem-solving
 - Interpersonal
 - Communication
- Each transition was difficult in the same ways
 - Was I certain I wanted the job?
 - Could I let go of what I already had?
 - Was I “good enough” to get the job, keep the job, and thrive in the job?

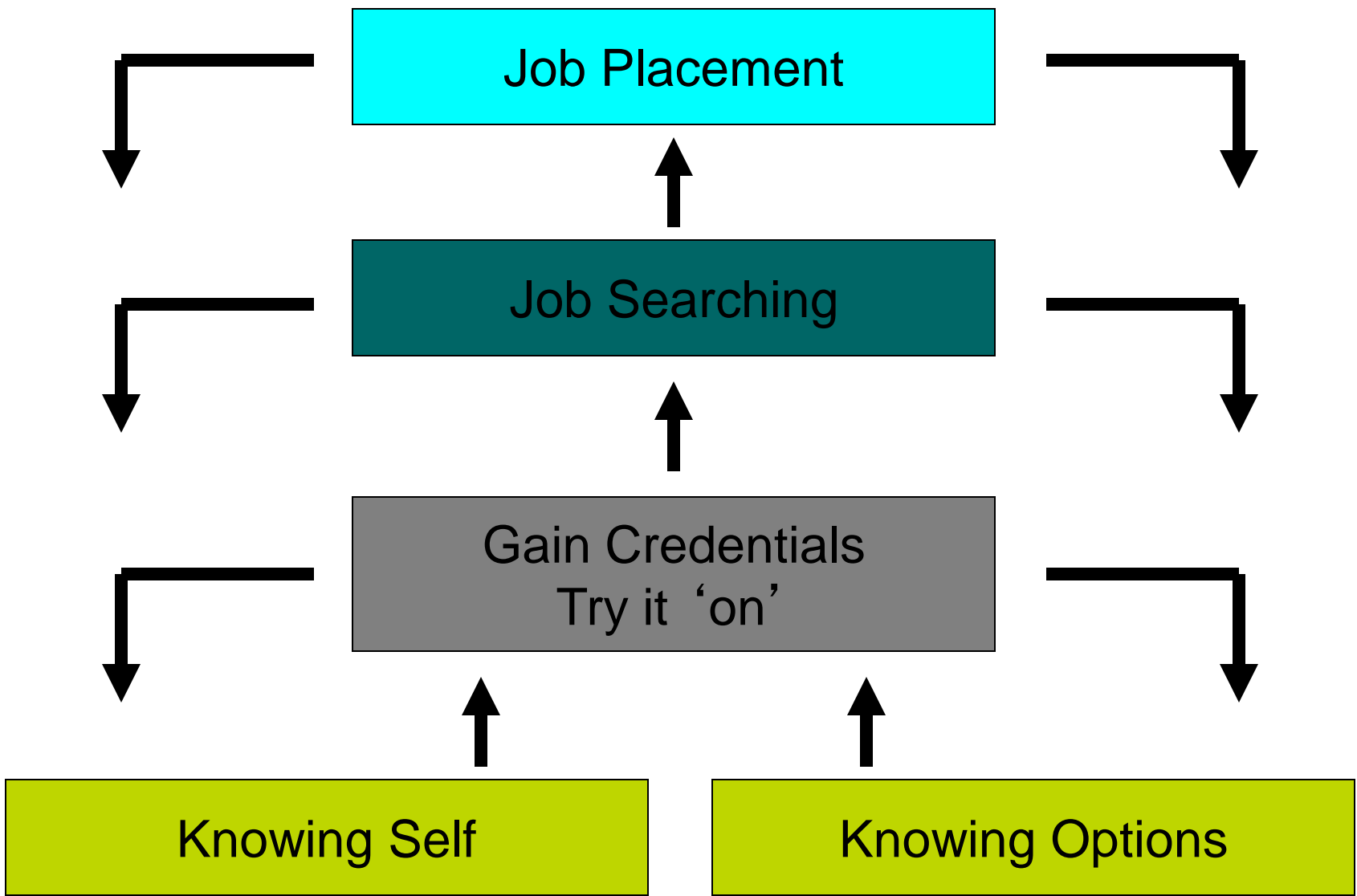


First Principles of Science Careers

- When it comes to choosing a career, one size does not fit all
- You have many options in all employment sectors
- You will likely have multiple career transitions
- You will get a job based on your research accomplishments AND your broader skill set
- Job searches are about transitions and transitions are stressful
- Mentors make a big difference, but research mentors are not always the best career mentors
- Understanding the process is the first step to success

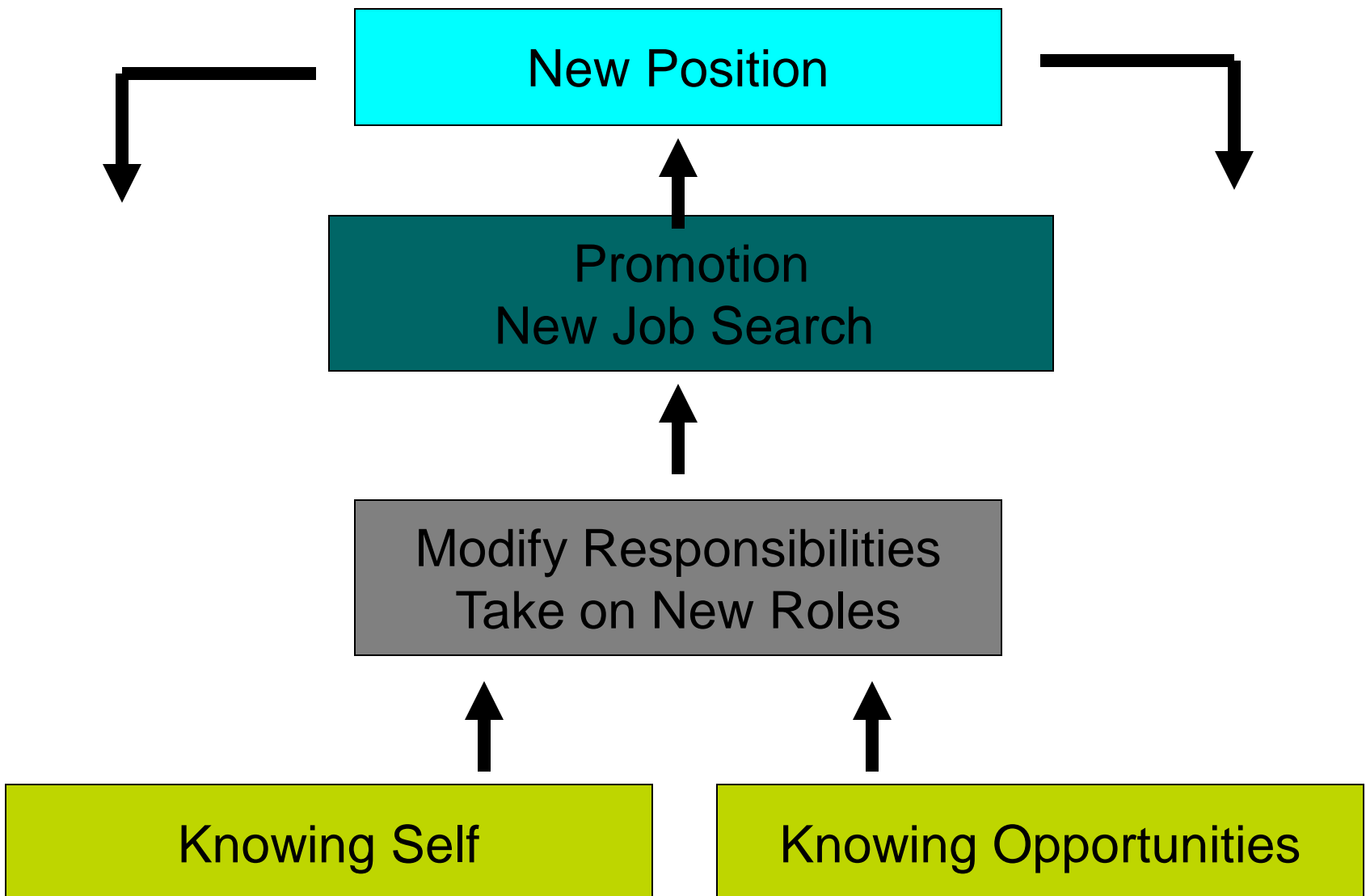


Elements of A Job Search





Elements of A Successful Career





Options Knowledge Means Understanding:

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



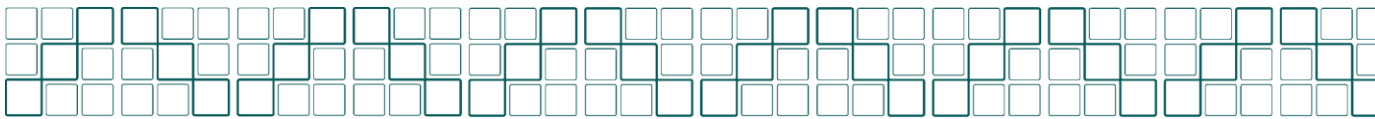
Major Categories of STEM Careers

- Health care delivery and management
- Research and development
- Technology development
- Administration
- Education
- Policy
- Business
- Writing
- Law
- Consulting



Gaining Options Knowledge

- Passive approaches
 - Read books, blogs and websites
 - Attend career workshops and panel discussions
- A more active approach
 - Network and do informational interviews



Informational Interviews

- A unique form of networking designed to collect information about a job, career field, industry, or company
- Useful before and during career transitions

https://www.training.nih.gov/assets/Informational_Interviews.pdf

<https://oitecareersblog.wordpress.com/?s=informational+interview>



What To Explore on Informational Interviews

- What the job is really like
- Critical skills for success
 - To get a job
 - To succeed in it
- Career trajectories
- Advice on how you should move forward
 - Other useful contacts
 - thoughts on coursework and academic needs
 - feedback on your experiences, CV or resume
 - professional societies you might explore
 - insights into possible positions



Finding People To Talk With

- Alumni databases
- The network of your teachers and mentors
- Attend career panels
- Join appropriate professional societies
- E-networking sites (especially Linked-In)
- Personal networks



The Nitty Gritty

- Use all of your networks to find people for informational interviews
- Easiest to make your request by email
- 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



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 fellow 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 some potential 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,



For You To Consider

- What types of networking and informational interviews should I be doing now?
- What do I need to do to prepare for these informational interviews?
- Who can I reach out to for support and guidance during the process?



Self Knowledge Means Knowing:

- Interests within the field
- Personality and learning style
- Highly developed, developing, and under-developed skills
- Work preferences (work values)
- Management and leadership style (and capacity)
- Credentials
- Personal and geographic restrictions



Gaining Self Knowledge

- You may get some insights from books and workshops, but...
- Generally, this is an active process requiring you to look deeply at yourself
- Helpful to have guidance and support from career mentors and/or (career) counselors



Start By Answering These Two Questions

- In my job, I want [to] _____ every day.
- And I do NOT want [to do] a lot of _____.



Defining Your Skills

- From two perspectives
 - Developing or highly developed skills
 - Weaker skills that need your attention
- In sufficient depth to be useful
- With examples to back it up
- And formal recognition that confirms it (= credentials)



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 for your job search
- 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



Skills You May Have

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



Parsing Your Skills

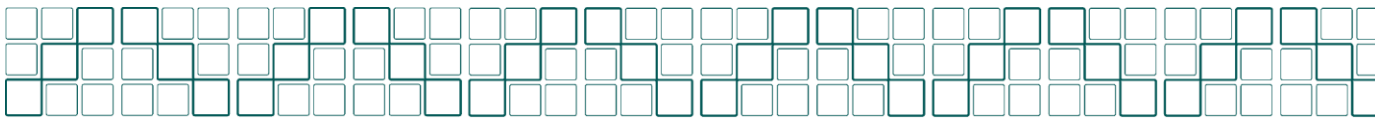
“ I have excellent communication skills”:

- 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
- I easily connect with and engage students in the classroom
- 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



Talking About Your Skills

- Use SAR Technique
 - Situation
 - Action
 - Result
- Quantify things
- Make it relevant to the situation
- No bragging but don't be too modest either



Group Work

- Share one of your highly developed (developing) skills with a neighbor
- Share why you feel this is a strength and what outside input you have that confirms this assessment for you
- Was this hard to do? Easy to do? Why?



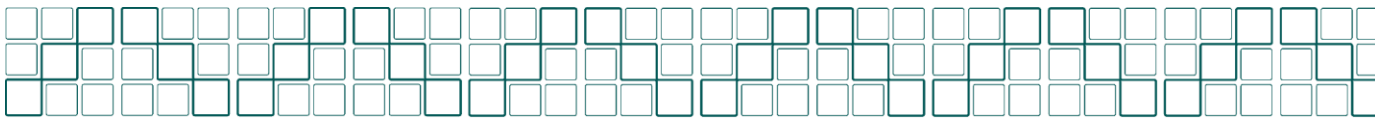
Final Skills Exercise

- A skill I need to continue to develop is _____.
- I am going to work on this by _____.



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



We All Have Different Needs

<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Frequent dealings with the public2. Variety and a changing work pace3. Opportunity for global perspectives and international work4. Substantial teamwork and group interaction	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Friendships and warm working relationships2. Flexibility in work schedule and structure3. Opportunity for significant teaching and mentoring4. Stability and predictability in my job	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Using cutting edge or pioneering technologies2. Making decisions, having power to decide courses of action3. Variety and a changing work pace4. High degree of intensity and competition
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There are Big Consequences for Ignoring This Self-Reflection

- The 90,000+ hours rule
- You can NOT get this from the web, from reading a book, or by asking others
- Provides some rationale for exploring some jobs over others, but this is not proscriptive
- Although our work needs are generally stable in the short-term, they can change substantially over time
- Some of us struggle with the idea that our needs matter

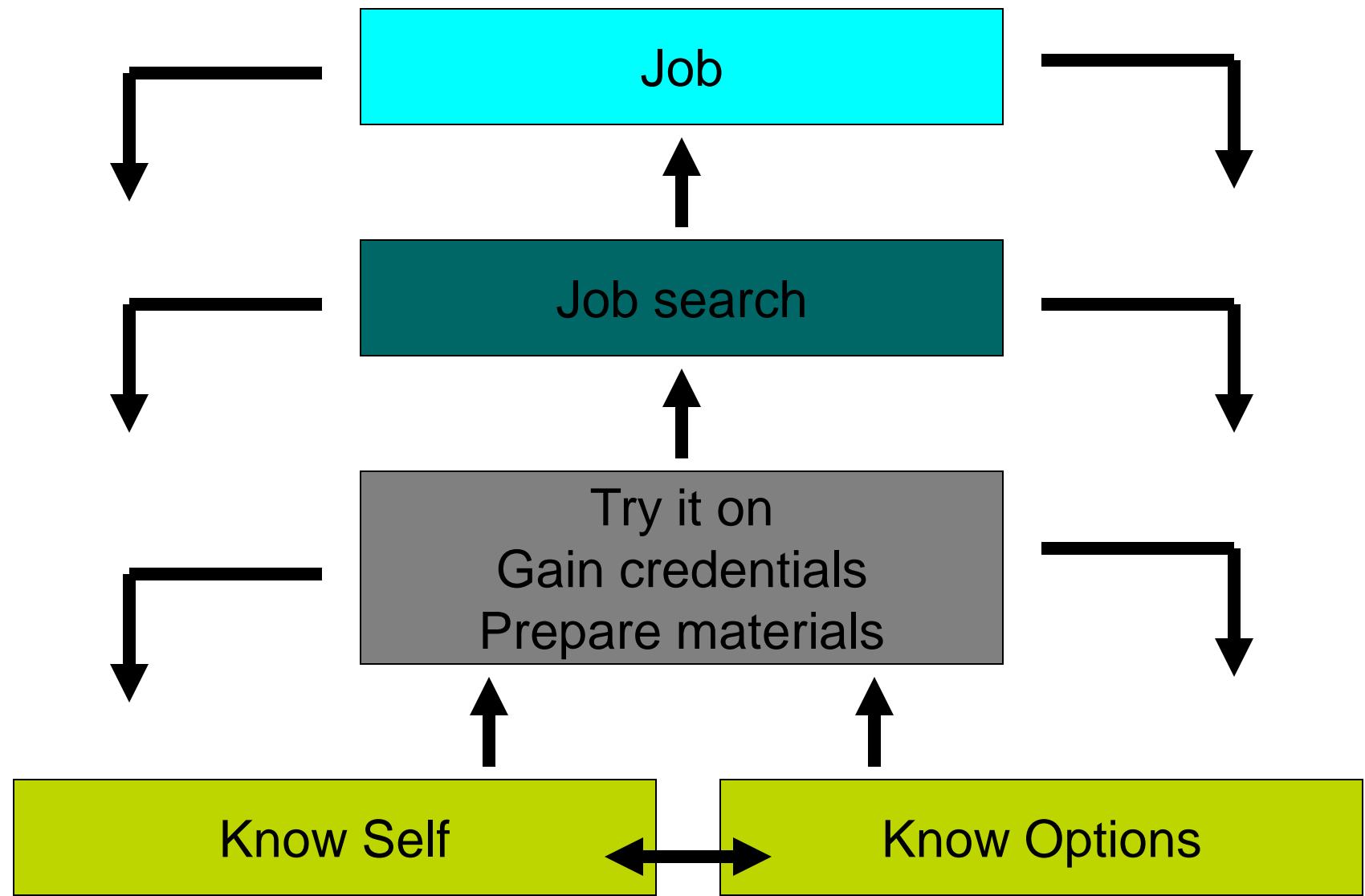


Interests

- What do we think about when we think about work?
 - Our science, in great detail and from many perspectives
 - Problems and broad areas of science/healthcare
 - Technologies, procedures and approaches
 - Communicating outcomes and results
 - People as individuals
 - Teams, groups and management
- If we never think about work, what do we think about?
 - A sign that it may be time for a change
 - Important to consider what to move toward
- Sometimes, our hobbies and outside interests help inform our career decisions and sometimes not



Elements of Career Planning





Addressing Your Needs & Interests

MY NEEDS & INTERESTS	NEEDS & INTERESTS JOB BRINGS
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.



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?



Getting the Experiences You Need

- Start early and start general; increase your focus as you settle on a plan
- Use an Individual Development Plan to track your progress
- Find and engage **career** mentors
- Look for opportunities on your campus, in the surrounding community and in professional societies
- Take evening/on-line courses if necessary
- Be prepared for resistance from your thesis or postdoc supervisors so you can deal with it



Getting Buy-In

- If you don't ask
- But go prepared.....
- Get advice in advance.....
- Be prepared to compromise.....
- And be creative working around any road-blocks



Some Fundamental Truths

- 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



Some Themes

- It helps to cultivate an optimistic approach
- You will need to know how to ‘bounce back’ (be resilient)
- We can be our own worst enemy (negative head-tapes; feeling like an imposter)



Optimism vs. Pessimism

- Optimists tend to see the positive side of situations and expect things to turn out well
- Pessimists tend to see the negative side of situations and expect things to turn out poorly
- Individuals who have worked to develop an appropriate level of optimism, often...
 - See opportunities where others see problems
 - See each event as a “one off” without getting lost in long-term negative interpretations
 - Find explanations that allow them to move on – not just pollyanna happy thoughts, but observations that help modulate the intensity of the negative emotions



How You View Negative Events

- Permanence
 - How long you think it will last how often you think it occurs
- Pervasiveness
 - How widespread you think the is
- Personalization
 - Do you focus on internal or external attribution; do you tend to see problems as about you, about someone else, circumstances out of your control, or a combination of factors?

Martin Seligman *Learned Optimism: How to Change Your Mind and Your Life*; and visit

<http://www.ppc.sas.upenn.edu/publications.htm>



Resilience

- The capacity to rise above adversity and forge lasting strengths in the struggle. At the heart of resiliency is a belief in oneself, a belief that bad times are temporary, and an ability to grow from failure.
- Can be cultivated in many ways, but especially by focusing on maintaining relationships and on self-care
- Helpful to remember the strengths you have:

<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/design-your-path/201305/10-traits-emotionally-resilient-people>

<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/design-your-path/201305/25-ways-boost-resilience>



Resiliency Exercise

- What do I do for self-care? What I am not doing that I should be doing?
- What are some of my “go to’s” when the going gets tough? What sustains me and allows me to keep going?
- Short talk on resiliency and the job search:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fmiBWkqFDe0>



Feeling Like an Imposter

- When successful individuals believe that even though they are successful, their accomplishments are the result of luck or external circumstance
- Three basic signs:
 - If you tend to feel/think that you fooled other people into over-estimating your ability
 - If you have a tendency to attribute success to other factors and not your intelligence or ability
 - If you often fear being exposed as a fraud
- See <http://paulineroseclance.com/> to learn more



To Have A Successful Career, You Need To:

- Define and hone your skills (so you can use them to shine)
- Know your liabilities (so you can improve them or work around them)
- Know what is important to you (so you can put that first)
- Develop your emotional intelligence
- Learn how to deal with set-back and disappointment
- Identify and come to terms with limitations and constraints
- Develop networks in ways that matter
- Develop relationships with advocates and mentors who will promote and support you
- Begin early and use all of the resources available to you



Make a Plan TODAY!

- Use SMART goal strategies
 - Specific
 - Measurable
 - Attainable
 - Relevant
 - Timely
- Consider sections on
 - Specific skills development
 - Obtaining credentials
 - Exploring careers/educational opportunities
 - Readyng job search documents
 - Dealing with personal/psychosocial issues



Keep In Touch (www.training.nih.gov)

- Connect with me on Linked-In (no Facebook please)
- Join the NIH Intramural Science Linked-In group
- Attend OITE career workshops by video
- Visit the OITE You Tube channel
- Read the OITE Careers blog
- Email me anytime at milgrams@od.nih.gov