

# CAREER PLANNING FOR GRAD AND POSTDOCS

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**WATERLOO**

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# Territorial Acknowledgment



- I acknowledge that I live and work on the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishnaabeg, and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, land promised to Six Nations, which includes six miles on each side of the Grand River.
- At UW our active work toward reconciliation takes place through research, learning, teaching, and community building, and is coordinated within our Office of Indigenous Relations.

# Let's make this a safe space

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Listen and learn from each other with respect

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Participate in a way that works for you!

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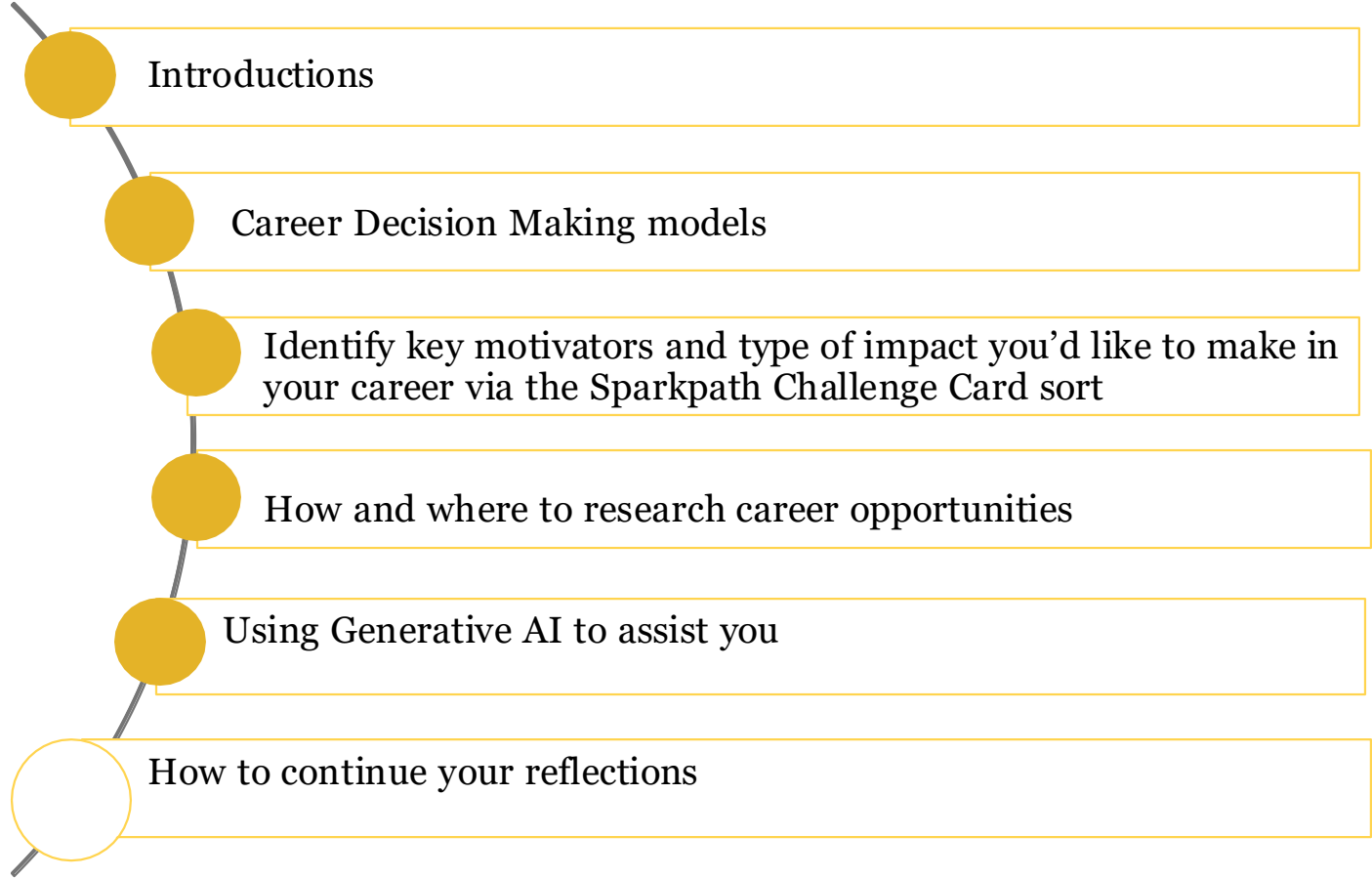
Make no assumptions

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Remain respectful of others



# AGENDA



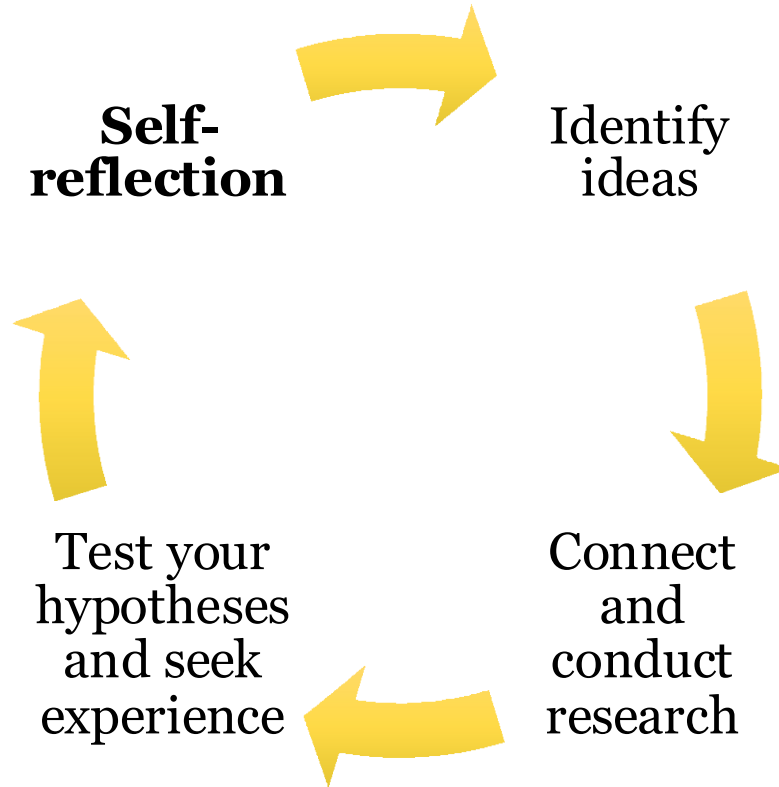
# Introduction – Feel free to share

For example:

- Name
- Program/department
- Pronouns
- Emoji describing how you feel today
- What are you hoping to take away?

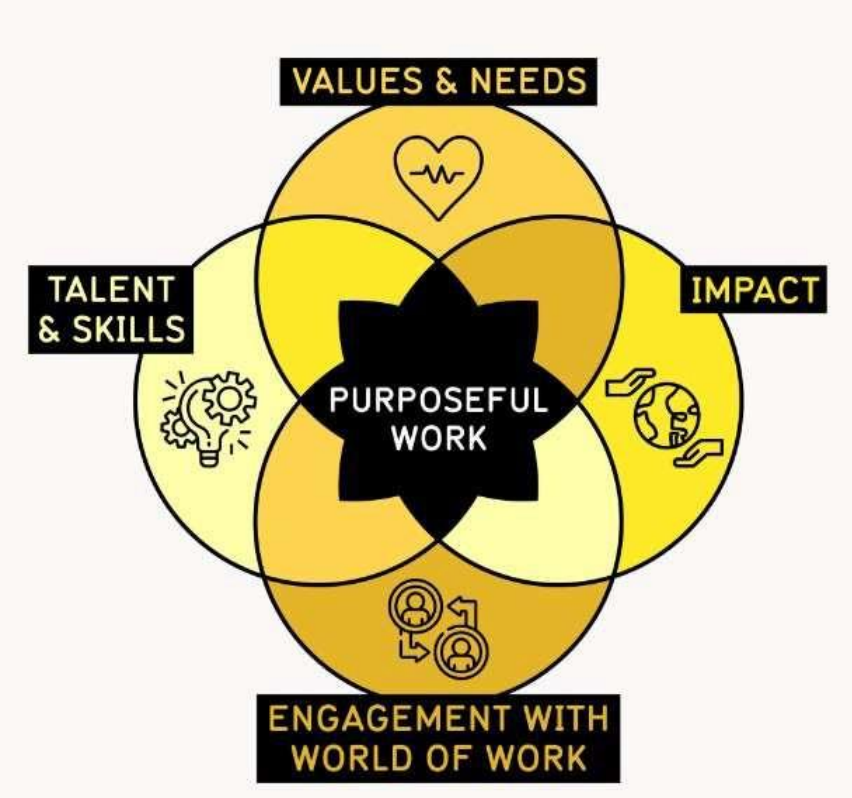


# A Career decision making model



\*Adapted from "So Good They Can't Ignore You" (Newport, 2011),  
"Where Good Ideas Come From" (Johnson, 2011).







# Collect your data (self-reflect)

- Questions to ask yourself to reflect on values, skills, and interests:
  - What problems do I like to solve?
  - How do I like to spend my time?
    - What do I like to do?
    - What do I like to think about?
  - What kinds of projects/ interactions/ activities consistently motivate me? **Why?**



The background is a solid yellow color. It features several thick, colorful geometric shapes: a red L-shaped bar in the top left, a light purple L-shaped bar below it, a light purple horizontal bar at the bottom left, a teal horizontal bar at the bottom center, a blue curved bar on the right side, and a red vertical bar at the bottom right. The text is centered in the middle of the page.

# **WHERE? HOW DO YOU VALUE MAKING AN IMPACT?**

# SPARKPATH CHALLENGE CARD ACTIVITY

- Go to [app.mysparkpath.com](https://app.mysparkpath.com)
- Create an account
- Enter the UW code: SparkChallenge799
- Sort cards (taking note of top cards and then select top 3)



SPARKPATH



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# Challenge cards reflection prompts

Pause before selecting  
your top 3



What words/  
challenges  
stand out to  
you? Write  
them down!



What are  
the top  
challenges  
you  
identified?

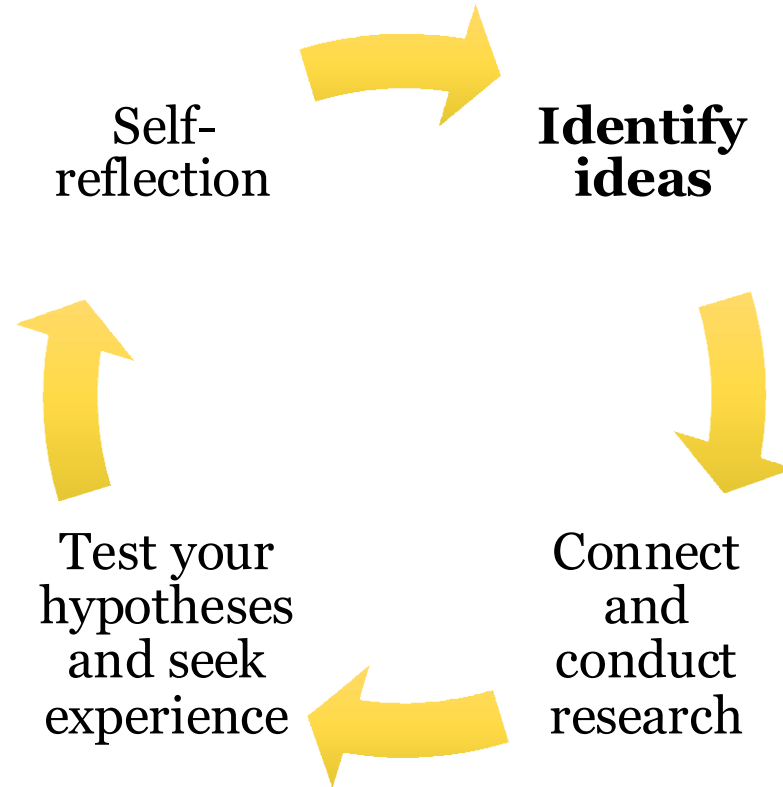


What  
excites you  
or  
motivates  
you about  
these?



List your top choices in your handout

# Identifying Ideas



# Seeking out ideas

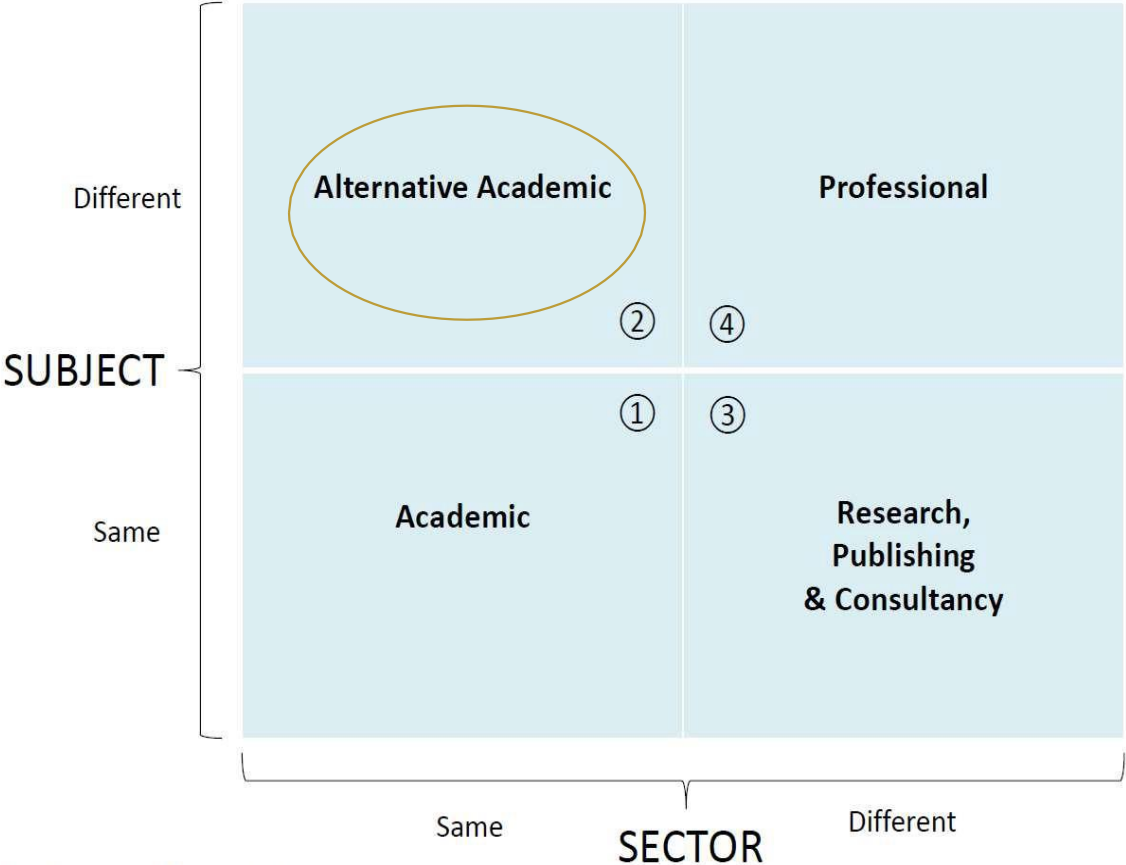
- Find out what other people with advanced degrees are doing
- Talk to your supervisor/peers
- Look up previous students from your lab/research group on LinkedIn
- Join Ten Thousand Coffees networks



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# Parallel Planning: A Diagram



# Have you ever thought about alternative academic careers?

- Administration: Office of the President, Human Resources
- Academic Affairs: Office of Research, Registrar's Office
- Student Affairs: Accessibility Services, Student Success Office, Writing and Communications Office, Centre for Teaching Excellence etc.



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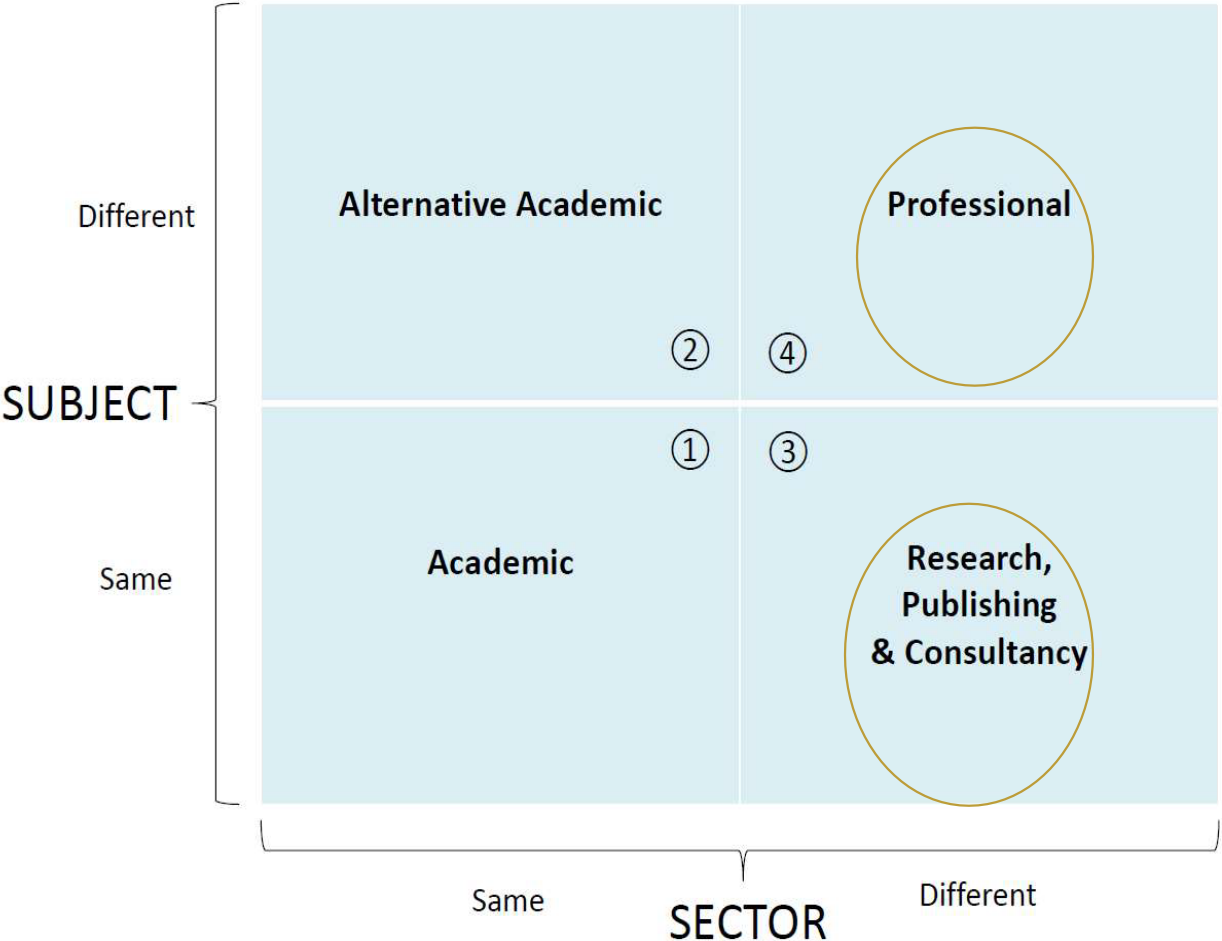


# Example Job titles

- Cooperative and Experiential Education: Analyst, Records Coordinator, Business Developer, Co-op Advisor
- Research Office: Research Data Analyst, Grants and Contracts Manager, Research Equity Advisor, Research Financial Advisor
- CTE: Educational Research Associate, Program Coordinator, Educational Developer
- SSO: Data Specialist/Technology Integration, International Student Experience Manager



# Parallel planning: A diagram

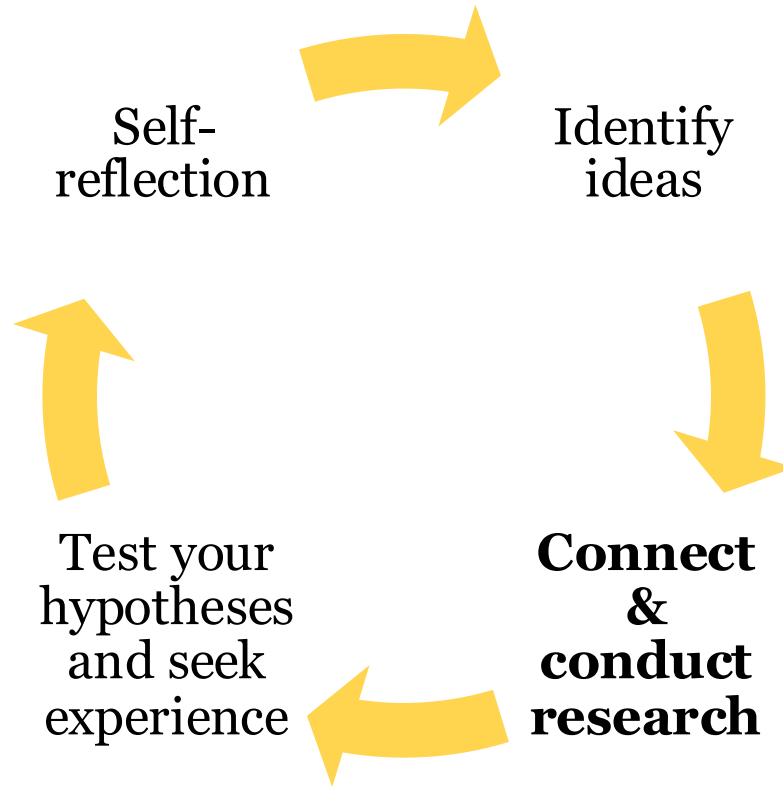


# Apply your expertise

- How can your research be applied to new contexts?
  - Identify niche specialties connected to current field
  - Professional magazines & blogs, professional association sites
  - Attend talks, events, conferences, workshops



# CONNECT AND CONDUCT RESEARCH



# Labour market info

Learn about industries  
in Canada

- <https://www.ic.gc.ca>

Job Boards

- [www.indeed.ca](http://www.indeed.ca)
- [www.communitech.ca](http://www.communitech.ca)
- [www.charityvillage.com](http://www.charityvillage.com)

Top Employer Lists

- [www.canadastop100.com](http://www.canadastop100.com)
- [www.greatplacetowork.ca](http://www.greatplacetowork.ca)



# Do your research

- Some other popular job boards:
  - LinkedIn
  - Indeed
  - Eluta
  - Simply Hired
  - CareerBuilder
- Municipal, Provincial, Federal government job boards



# Do your research

- What kinds of organizations are in your field?
- What kinds of jobs are available?
- What kinds of people do they hire?
- Make a list of organizations you would like to work for
  - Chamber of Commerce website for various jurisdictions
  - Job boards
  - Alumni search on LinkedIn



# Do your Research

- Develop metrics to evaluate those organizations
  - Glassdoor.ca
  - Website/LinkedIn
  - Media
  - Ask around!






# Your turn!

List 3 organizations/institutions/fields that you are interested in learning more about



# What have others done from your department?



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University of Waterloo  
Waterloo, on · 166,306+ alumni · 241,219 followers

✓ Following ...

We are Canada's most innovative university. #UWaterloo

[Visit website](#)

Jay & 60 other connections work here  
[See all 9,662 employees on LinkedIn](#)

Home

About

166,306 alumni

Start year  End year

# LinkedIn: Find Alumni

The screenshot shows the LinkedIn 'University of Waterloo Career Insights' page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with icons for Home, My Network, Jobs, Messaging, Notifications, and Me. Below this, the page title 'University of Waterloo Career Insights' is displayed. A search filter is set to 'Attended' with a 'Start year' of 1900 and an 'End year' of 2018. A search bar below the filter contains the text 'Search alumni by title, keyword or company'. Navigation arrows for 'Previous' and 'Next' are visible. The main content area shows '150,139 alumni' and three bar charts: 'Where they live', 'Where they work', and 'What they do'. Below the charts, four alumni profiles are listed: John Cullen, Susan Willsie, Shari Chantler, and Jennifer Spivey.

Where they live	Where they work	What they do
132,245 · Canada	5,297 · University of Waterloo	22,513 · Engineering
56,000 · Toronto, Canada Area	1,133 · TD	21,687 · Business Development
34,691 · Kitchener, Canada Area	784 · Scotiabank	15,759 · Education

Alumni Profile	Position
John Cullen	2nd Sustainability in Canadian Businesses
Susan Willsie	2nd Organizational & Human Development Coordinator at...
Shari Chantler	2nd Manager '94 Honours Arts
Jennifer Spivey	2nd Positioning people to maximize their well-being through...

**Boolean search in Google!**

**Master's AND LinkedIn AND**

# What is an informational Interview



- What is an information interview?
  - Information gathering (i.e., research!)
  - Intentionally growing your professional network
  - Reciprocal
    - You are offering to listen to someone talk about their success, they are sharing information with you

# Using common values and interests to connect

“Hi \_\_\_\_\_, I am passionate about helping promote equity and inclusion, and I know your department at XYZ organization is a global leader in this arena. I would be interested to learn from you and get some advice on how I can make an impact in my career.”

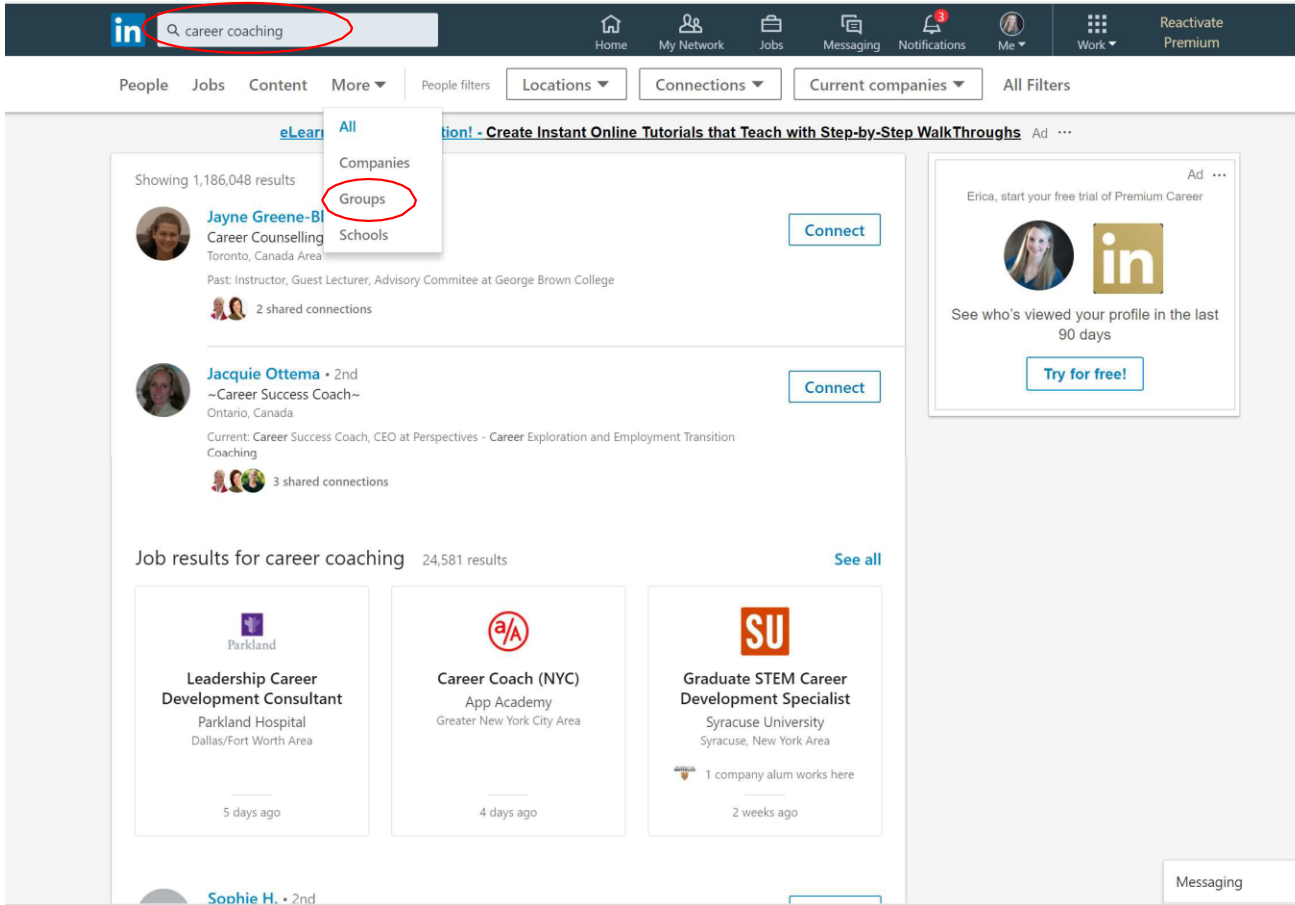


# What are you asking?

- About their background
  - How did you get started in your field?
  - Why did you leave academia?
  - How did your degree in X prepare you for your current job?
- About their day-to-day job
  - What's your average day like?
  - What kinds of projects are you working on?
  - What skills are important in this field?
- About their recommendations for you
  - What skills, training or characteristics are important in a candidate?
  - What can I do to make my resume more competitive?



# LinkedIn: Join groups



The screenshot shows the LinkedIn search interface for 'career coaching'. The search bar at the top is highlighted with a red circle. Below it, a dropdown menu is open, showing filters for 'All', 'Companies', 'Groups', and 'Schools'. The 'Groups' filter is also highlighted with a red circle. The search results show two profiles: Jayne Greene-B... and Jacquie Ottema. Below the profiles, there are job results for 'career coaching' with 24,581 results. Three job listings are visible: Leadership Career Development Consultant at Parkland Hospital, Career Coach (NYC) App Academy, and Graduate STEM Career Development Specialist at Syracuse University.

Join groups of interest and **engage**:

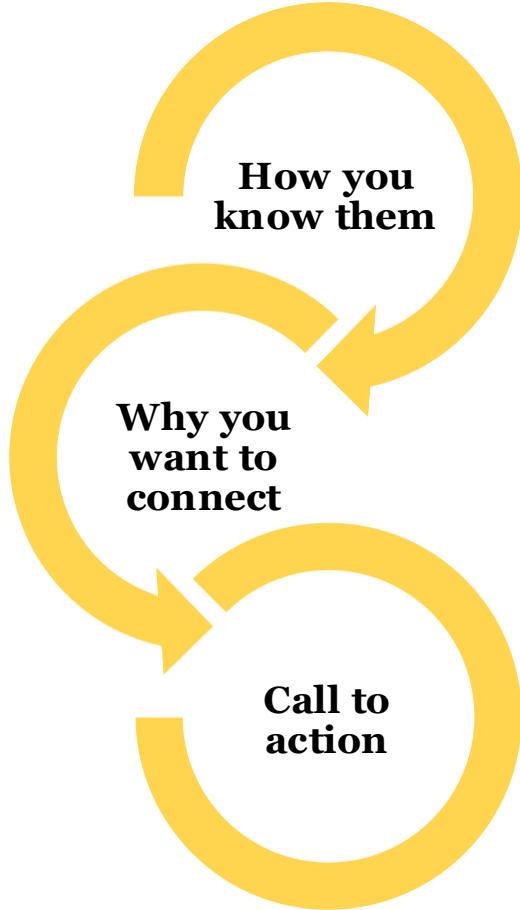
- ✓ Ask questions
- ✓ Post comments
- ✓ Share an article/blog
- ✓ "Like" other posts
- ✓ Connect with people (you can send a direct message to anyone in the grp)



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# How do I connect with someone I do not know?



- 1) **How you know them:** did they take a class with you, co-worker, in same group, referred to you, someone you admire?
- 2) **Why you want to connect:** building your network, following for inspiration, link to someone else
- 3) **Call to action:** do you just want to connect, do you want to meet them, do you want them to share advice with you

- Keri Twigg, "How to write to people you don't know (but want to) on LinkedIn"

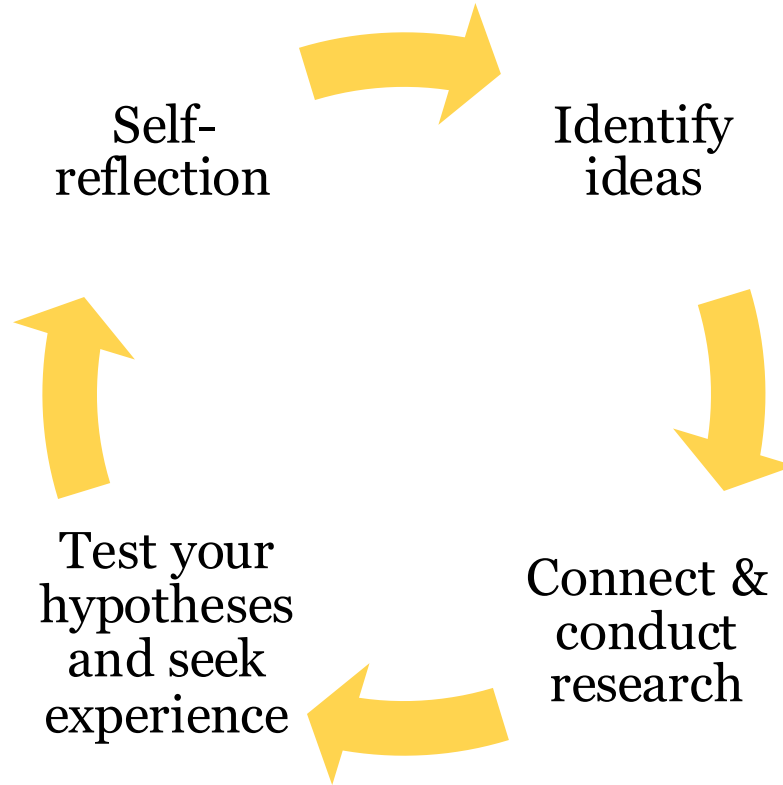


# Your turn!

Jot down questions you could ask in an informational interview



# Return to self reflection often



# Keep track of what you notice...

- For example:
  - Every time you wrap up a new project
  - Every time you've learned a new skill
  - Every time you encounter information that matters to you
- Take the time for you!



# Career Planning and GenAI Prompts

## Analyze academic background

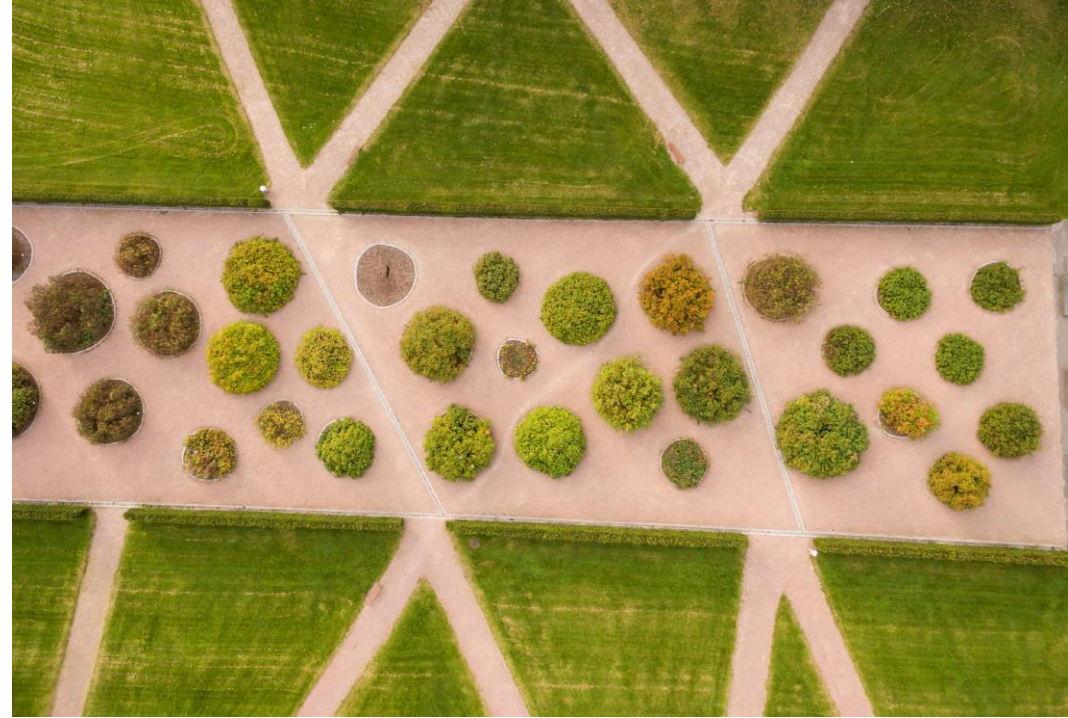
- “I have a degree in [major or field] and my favourite classes and interest areas are [insert here]. Suggest career options that align with my academic background and interests.”

## Combine skills and interests

- “Identify potential career paths based on my skills in [list specific skills] and my interests in [list specific interests]”

## Assess values and goals

- “Assess careers that align with my values, including [list specific values], and help me achieve my goal of [describe career goal].”



# Career planning and GenAI prompts

## Explore industries

“I’m interested in the [industry or sector] field. Could you provide insights into potential career trajectories within this industry?”

## Explore companies

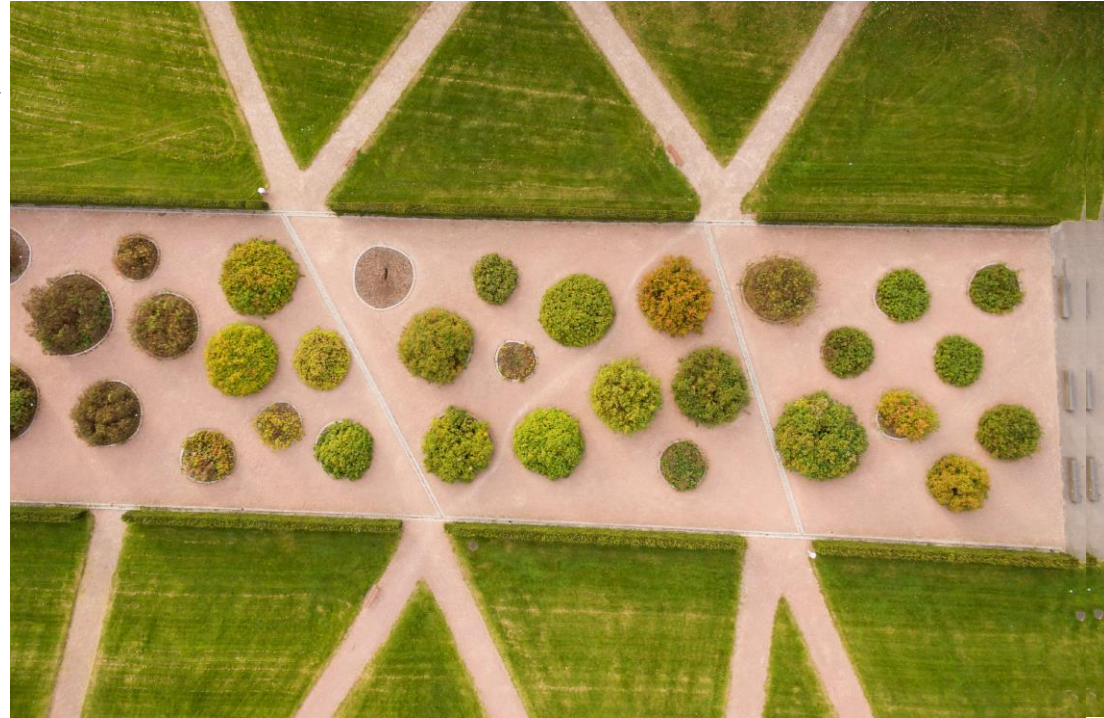
“What are the best employers in British Columbia working on solving X problems?”

## Support a career transition

“I’m considering a career transition from [current academic pathway or career] to something new. What steps can I take, and what options should I explore?”

## Prepare skills assessment

“Prepare me for technical skill assessments commonly used in [industry]”



# Other places to look: Online resources

- CAREER HUB (CCD resource –which will be moved to a new link in December!)
- [www.versatilephd.com](http://www.versatilephd.com)
- <https://fromphdtolife.com/>
- [www.jobsontoast.com](http://www.jobsontoast.com)
- LinkedIn Group: PhD Careers Outside Academia
- [www.beyondprof.com](http://www.beyondprof.com)
  - Annual virtual conference (typically in May)



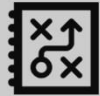
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# Wrapping up with final reflections



What is one thing you're taking away from today's talk?



What is one thing you will try as a strategy for career development?



# How can the CCD support you?

- Graduate Career Advisors and Alumni Career Advisors
- 30-60 minute one-on-one appointments:
  - Career planning
  - Résumés, Cover Letters, CVs
  - Work search strategies
  - Mock interviews
  - Managing your online presence
- Workshops, employer panels, conferences



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