

CAREER PLANNING FOR GRAD STUDENTS AND POSTDOCS

Kira Bruschke (she/her)

Career Advisor, CCD



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WATERLOO

Centre for Career
Development

KIRA BRUSCHKE (SHE/HER)

Career Advisor
@ Centre for Career
Development

KBRUSCHKE@UWATERLOO.CA



Territorial Acknowledgement



- 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 safer space

Listen and learn from each other with respect

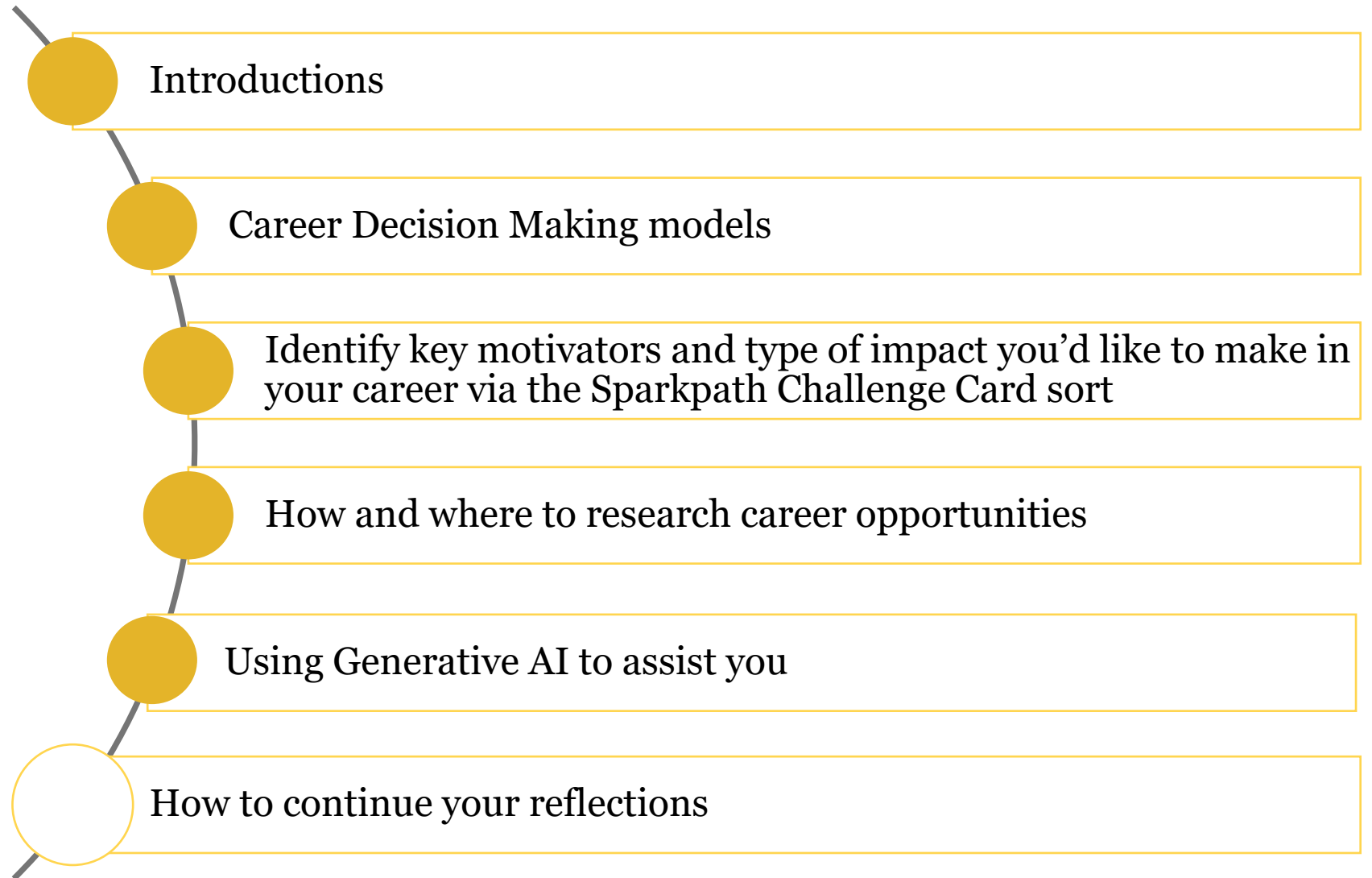
Participate in a way that works for you!

Make no assumptions

Other?



Agenda



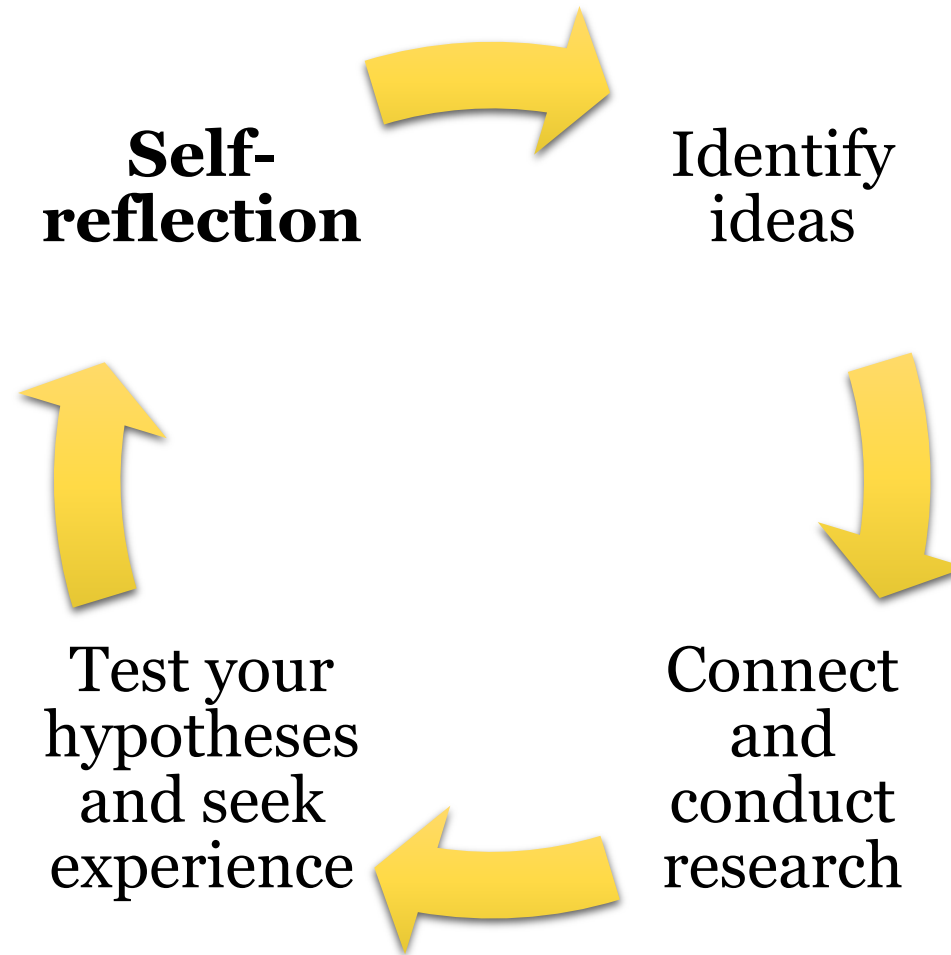
Introductions—Feel free to share what you like

For example:

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

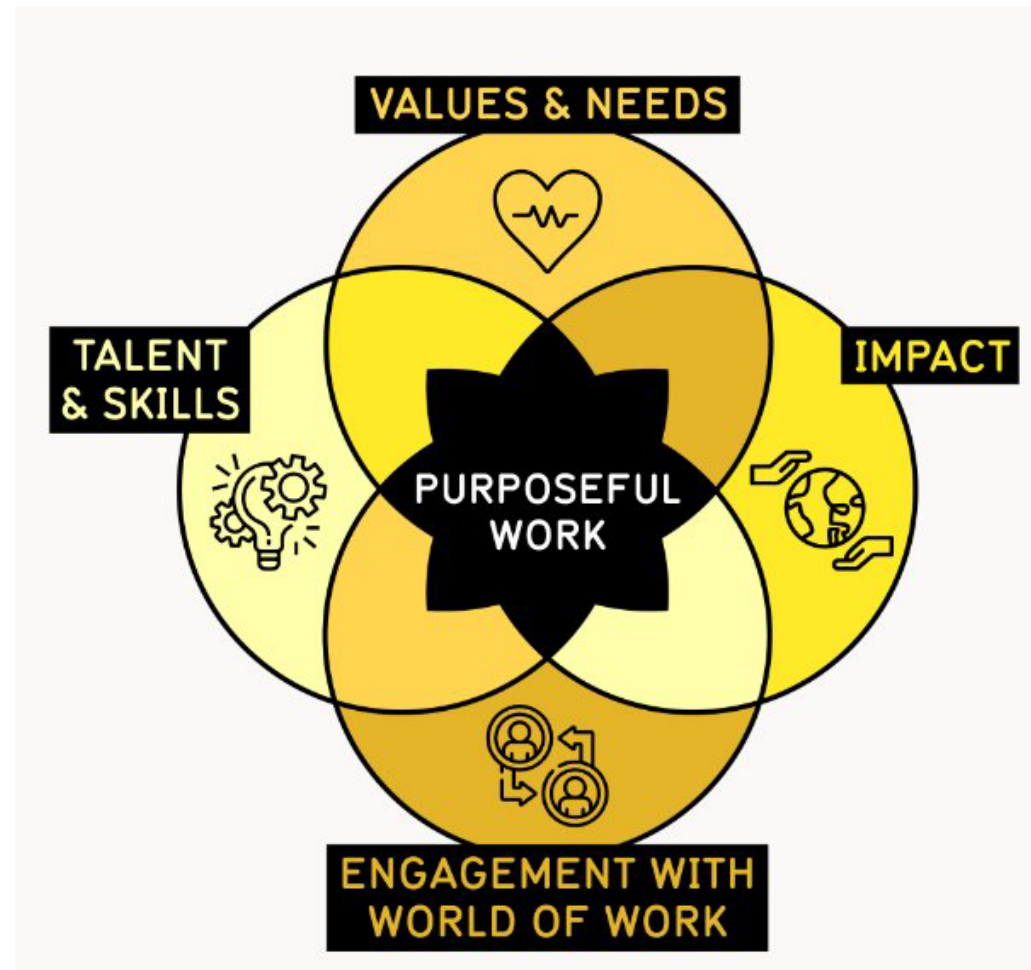


A CAREER DECISION MAKING MODEL



*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 energizes me?
 - What kinds of projects/ interactions/ activities consistently motivate me? **Why?**





WHERE/HOW DO YOU VALUE MAKING AN IMPACT?

SPARKPATH CHALLENGE CARD ACTIVITY

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



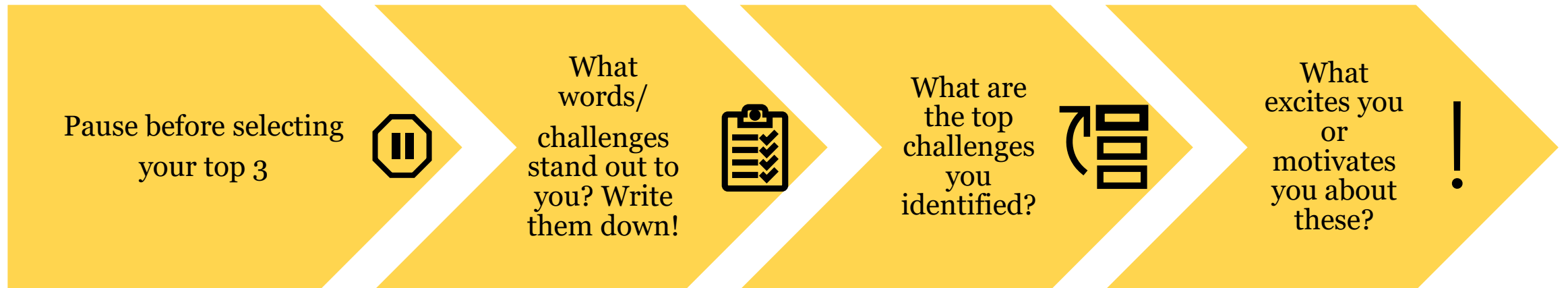
SPARKPATH



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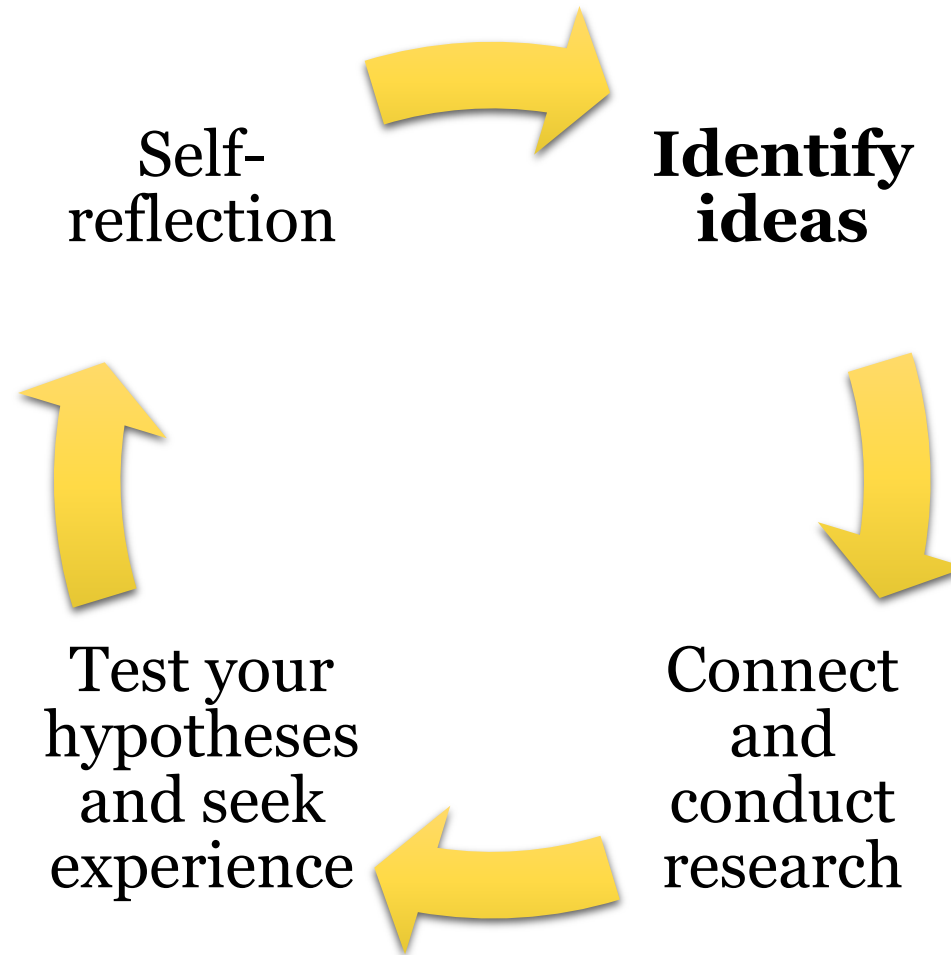
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Challenge Cards Reflection Prompts



List your top choices in your notebook

IDENTIFY IDEAS

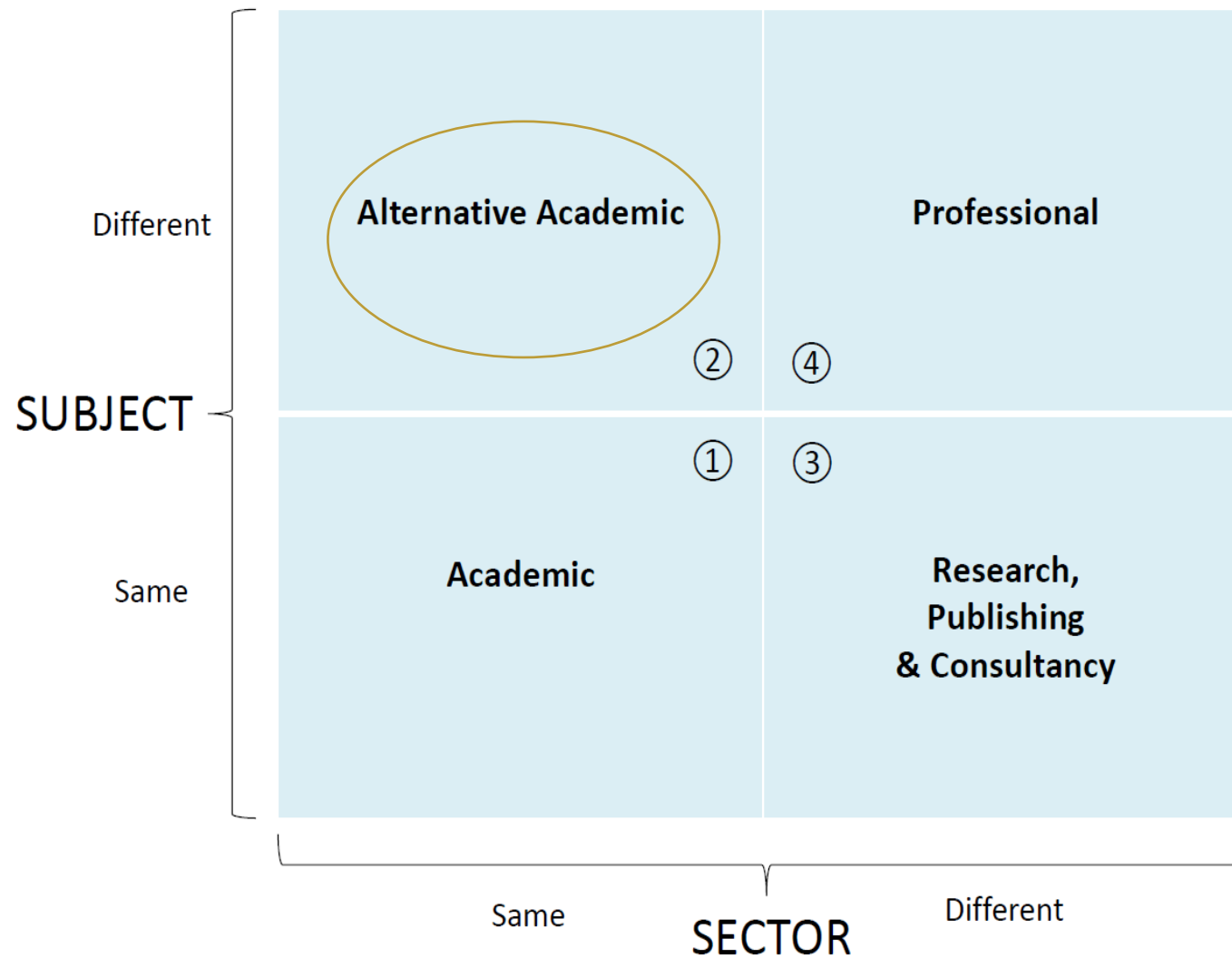


Seeking Out Ideas

- 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



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.

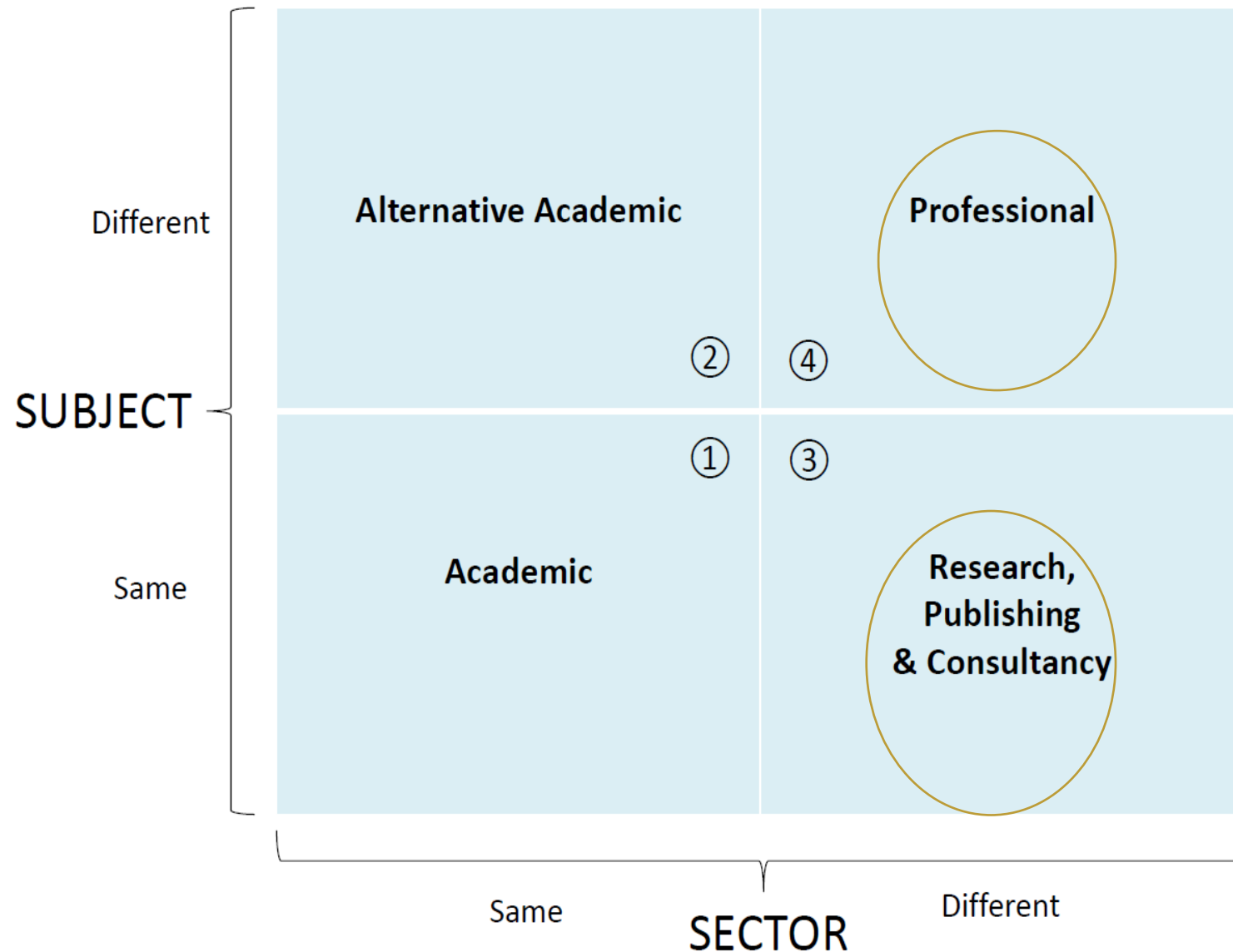


EXAMPLE JOB TITLES:

- 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

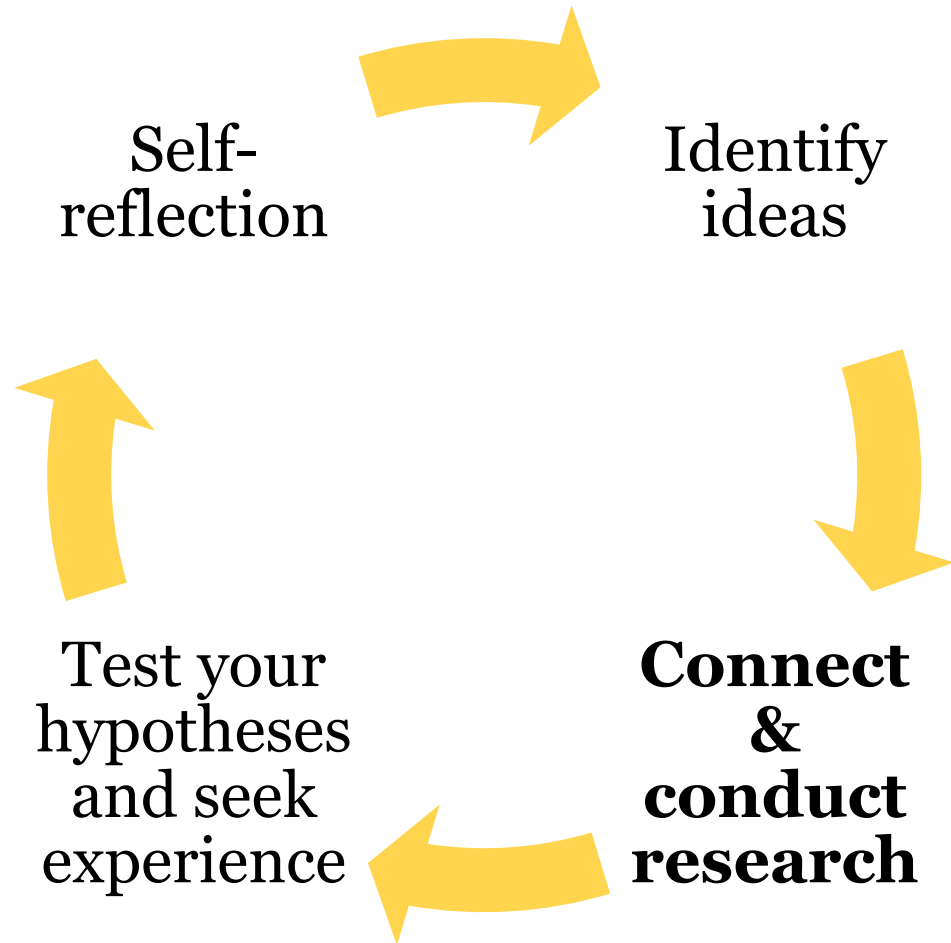


Apply Your Expertise

- 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 & CONDUCT RESEARCH



Labour Market Info:

Learn about industries
in Canada

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

Job Boards

- www.indeed.ca
- www.communitech.ca
- www.charityvillage.com

Top Employer Lists

www.canadastop100.com
www.greatplacetowork.ca



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Do Your Research

- Some other popular job boards:
 - LinkedIn
 - Indeed
 - Check WaterlooWorks for a longer list!
- 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?





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

1900

 End year

2020

LinkedIn: Find Alumni

University of Waterloo Career Insights

Change university

Attended Start year 1900 to End year 2018

Search alumni by title, keyword or company

150,139 alumni

Where they live + Add

- 132,245 - Canada
- 56,000 - Toronto, Canada Area
- 34,691 - Kitchener, Canada Area

Where they work + Add

- 5,297 - University of Waterloo
- 1,133 - TD
- 784 - Scotiabank

What they do

- 22,513 - Engineering
- 21,687 - Business Development
- 15,759 - Education

Show more

John Cullen - 2nd Sustainability in Canadian Businesses

Susan Willsie - 2nd Organizational & Human Development Coordinator at th...

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



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What is an Informational Interviews



- 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 homepage with a search bar at the top containing the text "career coaching". A red circle highlights the search bar. Below the search bar, a dropdown menu is open, showing options: "All", "Companies", "Groups" (highlighted with a red circle), and "Schools". The main content area displays search results for "career coaching", showing 1,186,048 results. Two profiles are visible: Jayne Greene-Bi and Jacquie Ottema. Below the profiles, there is a section for "Job results for career coaching" with 24,581 results. Three job listings are shown: Leadership Career Development Consultant at Parkland Hospital, Career Coach (NYC) at App Academy, and Graduate STEM Career Development Specialist at Syracuse University. The bottom of the page shows a partial view of a profile for Sophie H.

Join groups of interest and engage:

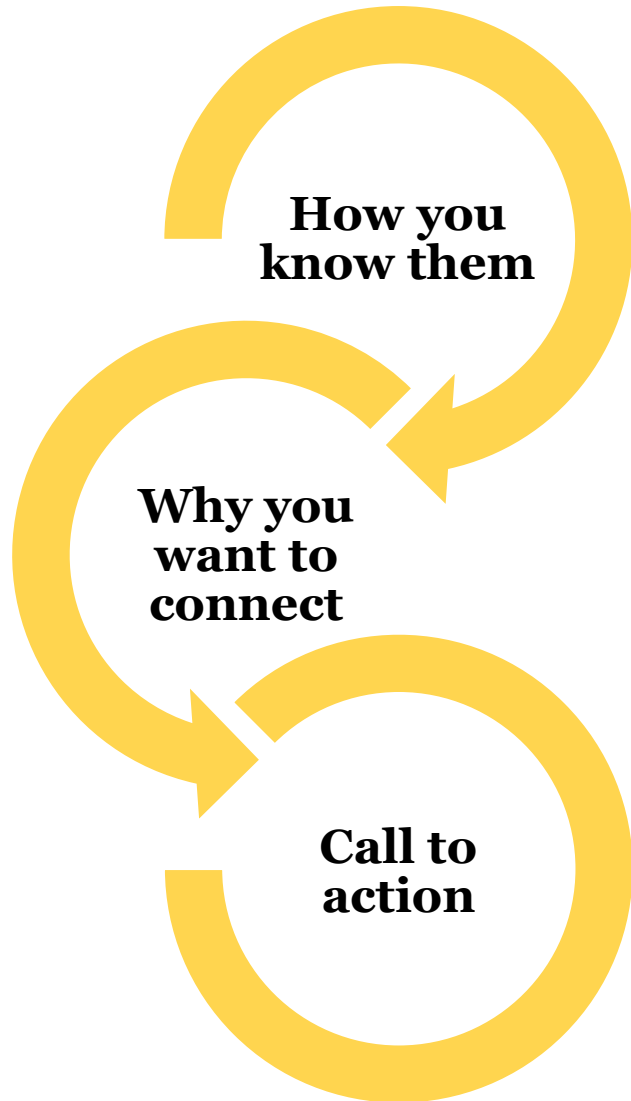
- ✓ **Ask questions**
- ✓ **Post comments**
- ✓ **Share an article/blog**
- ✓ **"Like" other posts**
- ✓ **Connect with people (you can send a direct message to anyone in the grp)**



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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

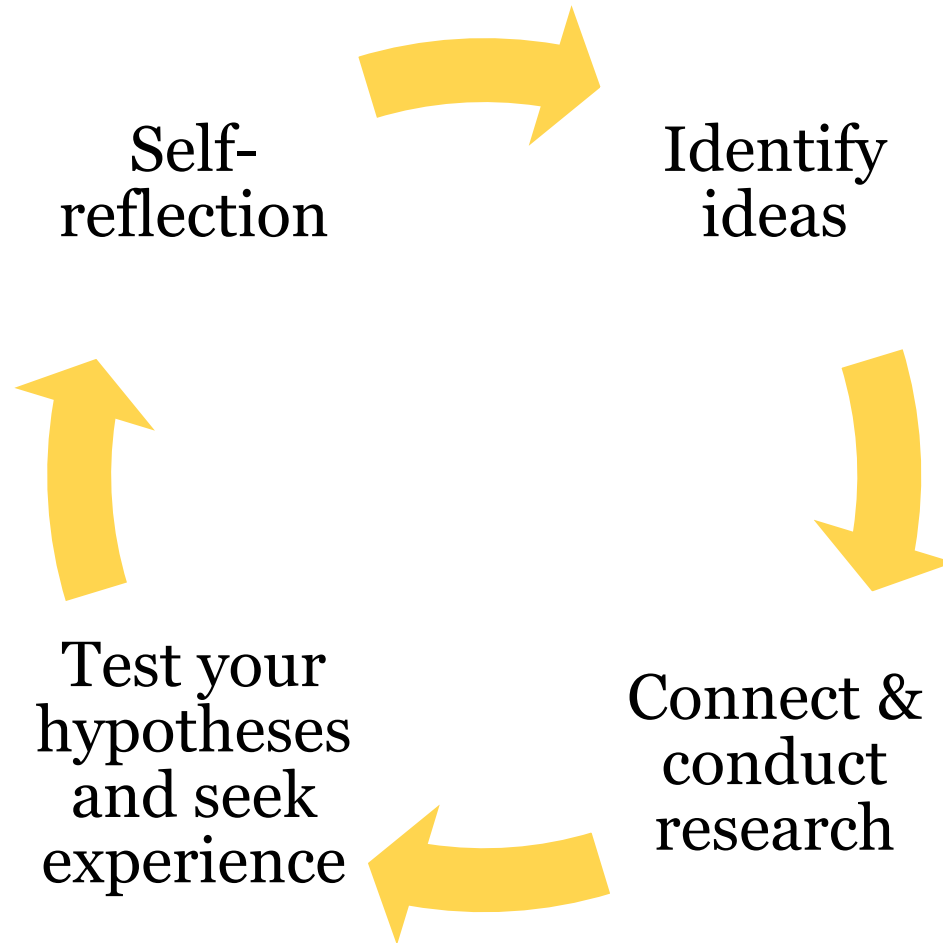
- Keri Twigg, "How to write to people you don't know (but want to) on LinkedIn"

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 & Gen AI: Prompts

Analyze academic background

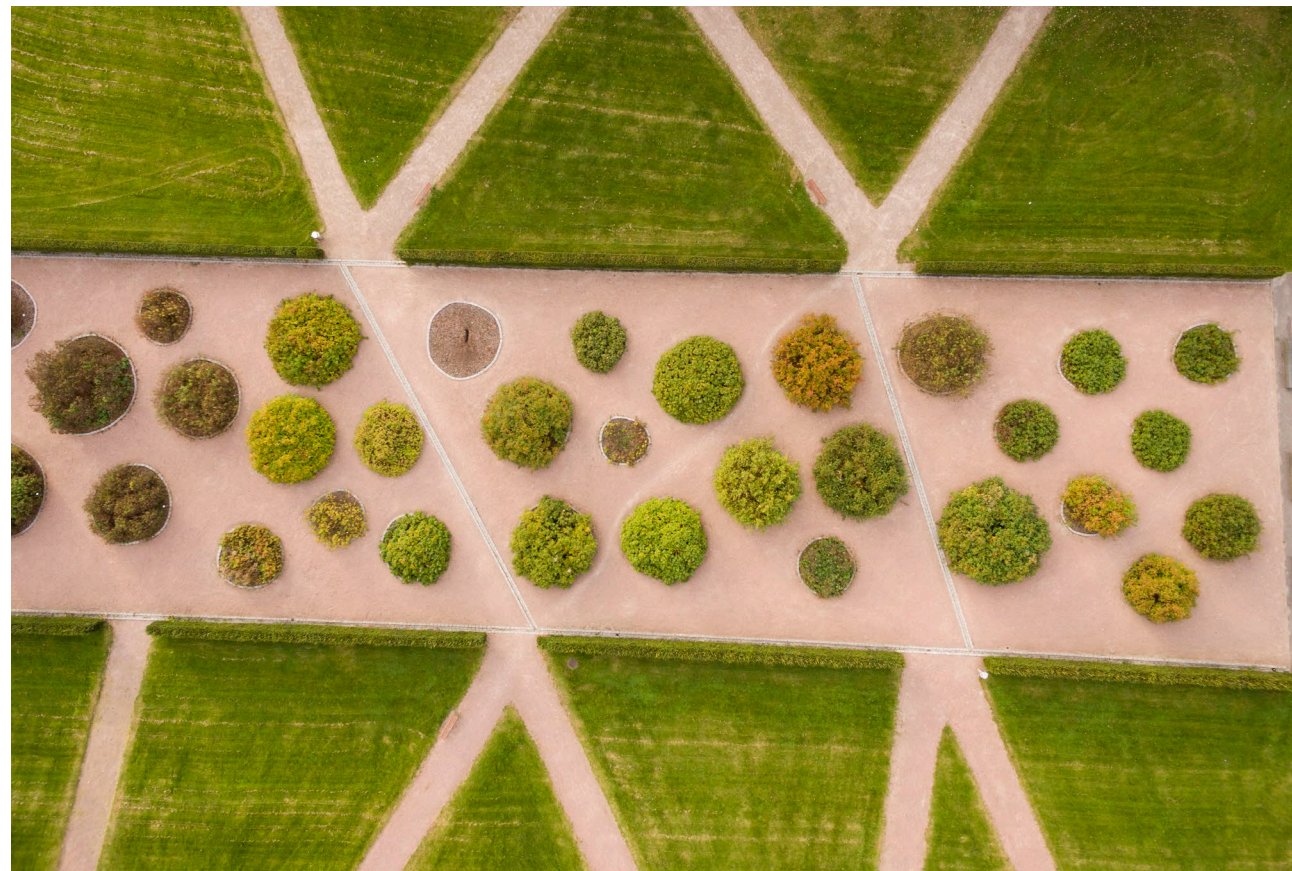
- “I have a degree in [major or field] and my favourite classes and interest areas are [insert here]. Suggest career options that align with my academic background and interests.”

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 & 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

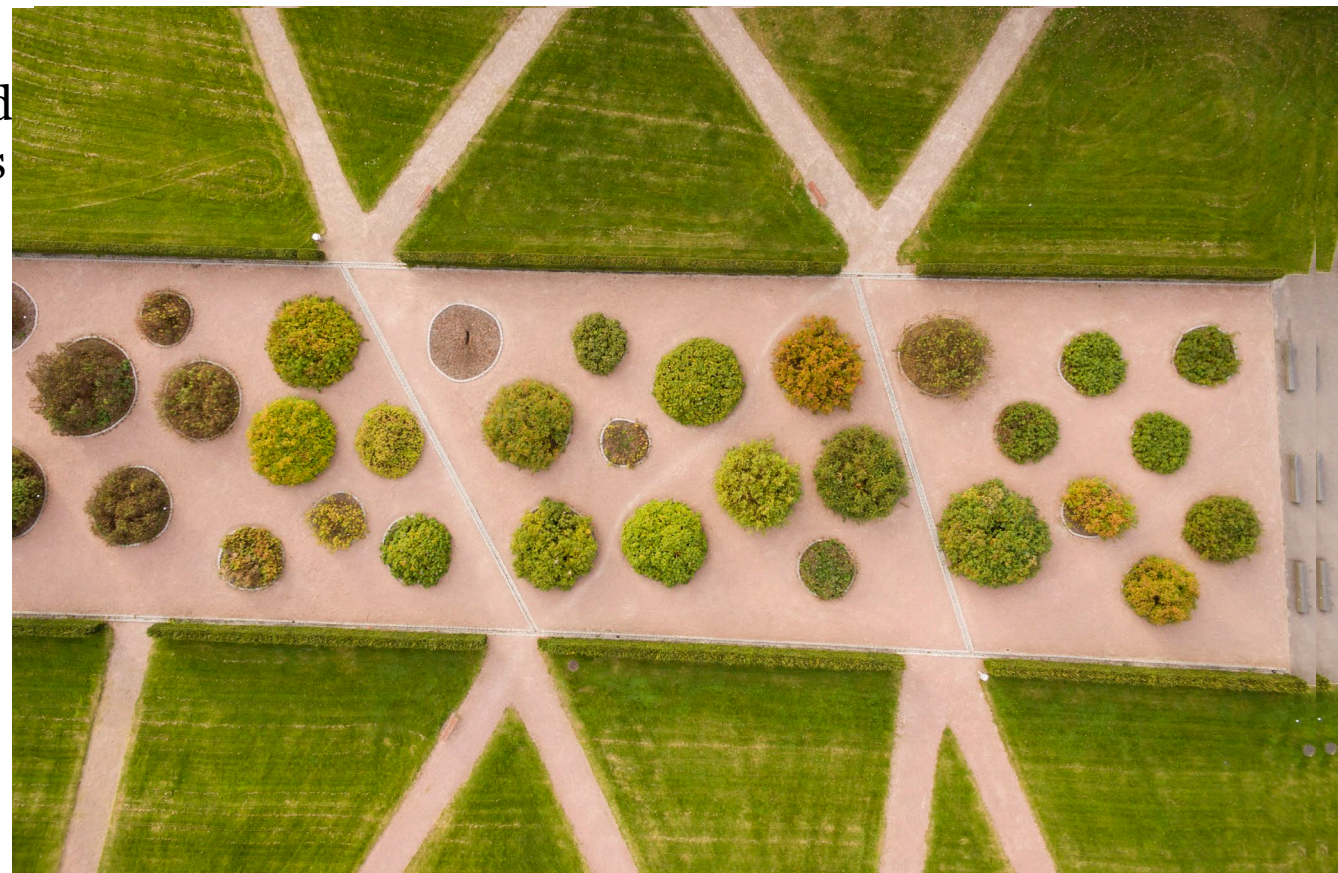
“What are the best employers in British Columbia working on solving X problems?”

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?”

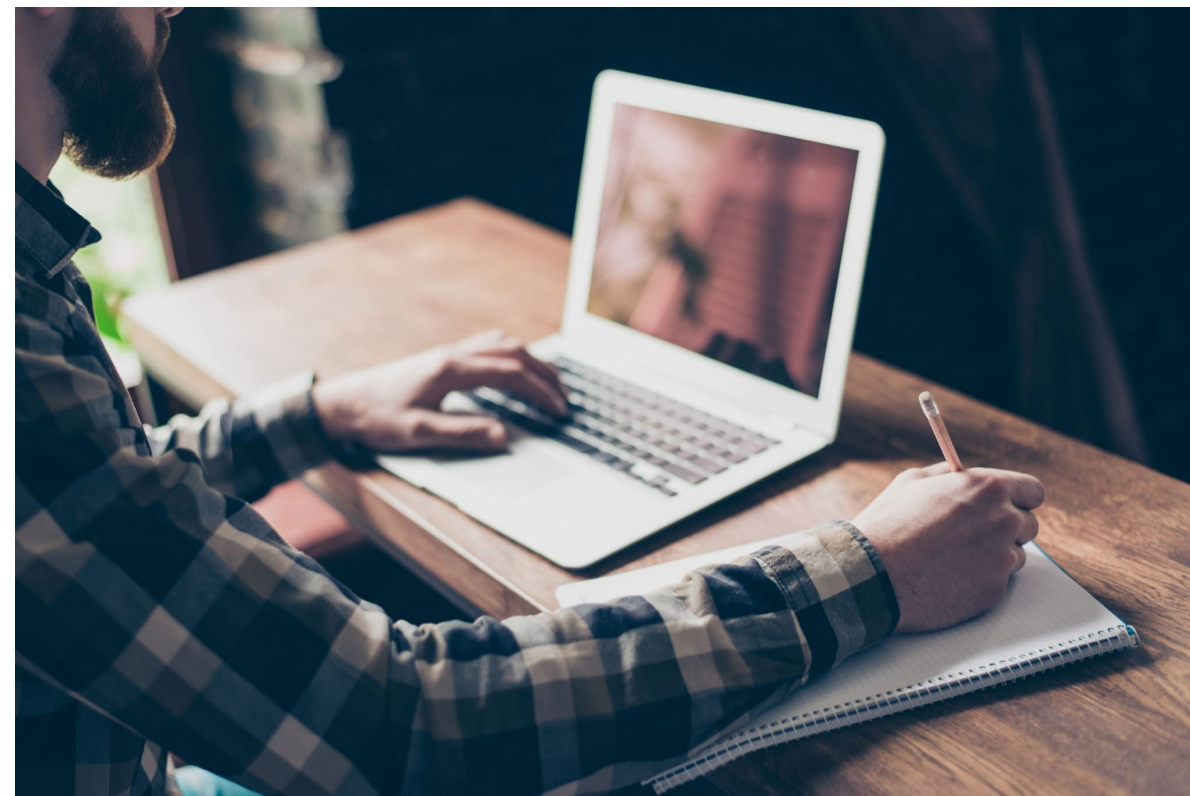
Prepare skills assessment

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



Other Places to Look: Online Resources

- [CAREER HUB \(CCD resource\)](#)
- www.versatilephd.com
- <https://fromphdtolife.com/>
- www.jobsontoast.com
- LinkedIn Group: PhD Careers Outside Academia
- 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?

- Meet with 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, etc.



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