

CAREER PLANNING FOR GRAD STUDENTS AND POSTDOCS

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WATERLOO

Centre for Career
Development

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.

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?
- What career decision(s) are you facing?



Let's make this a safer space

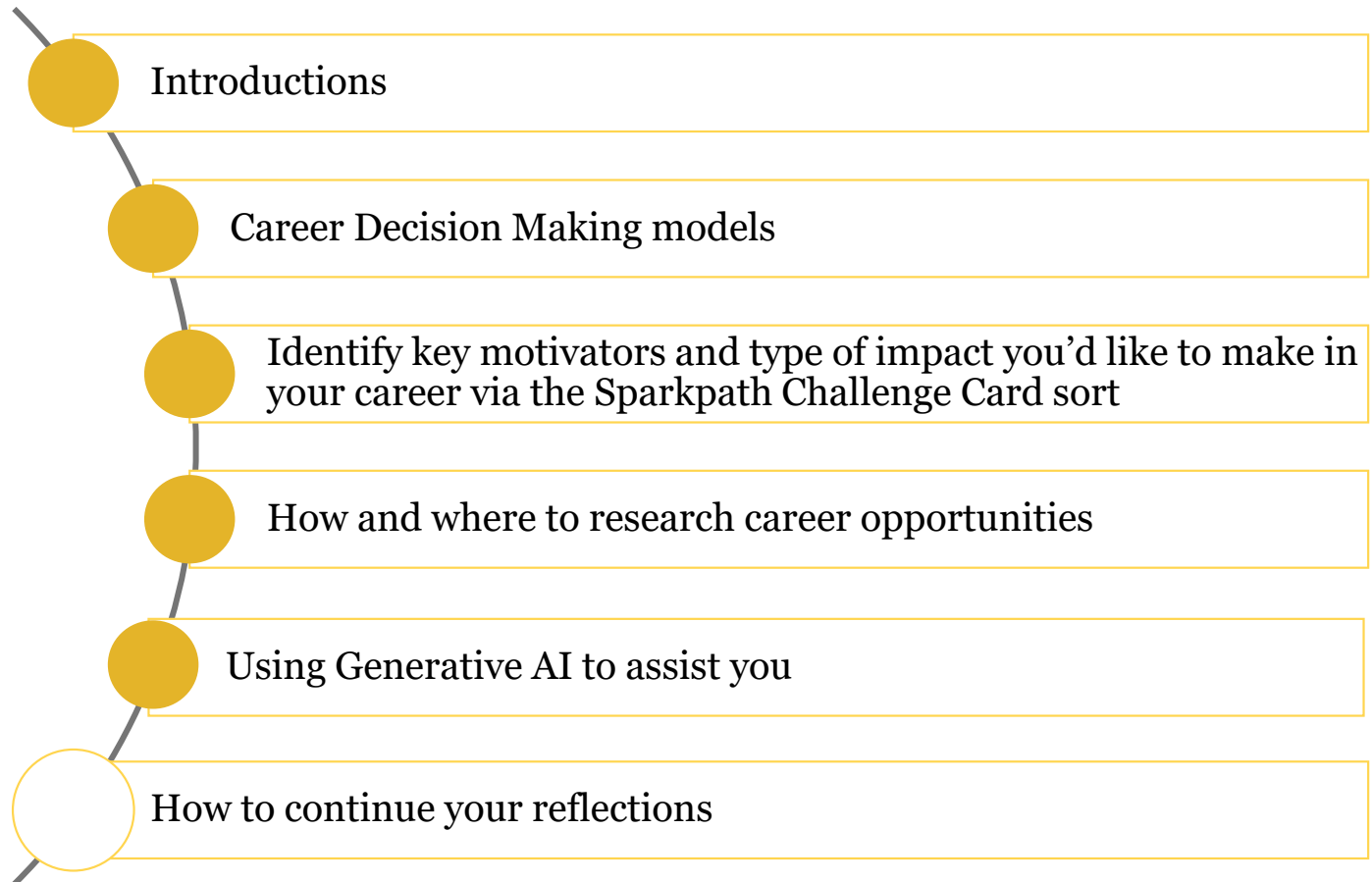
Listen and learn from each other with respect

Participate in a way that works for you!

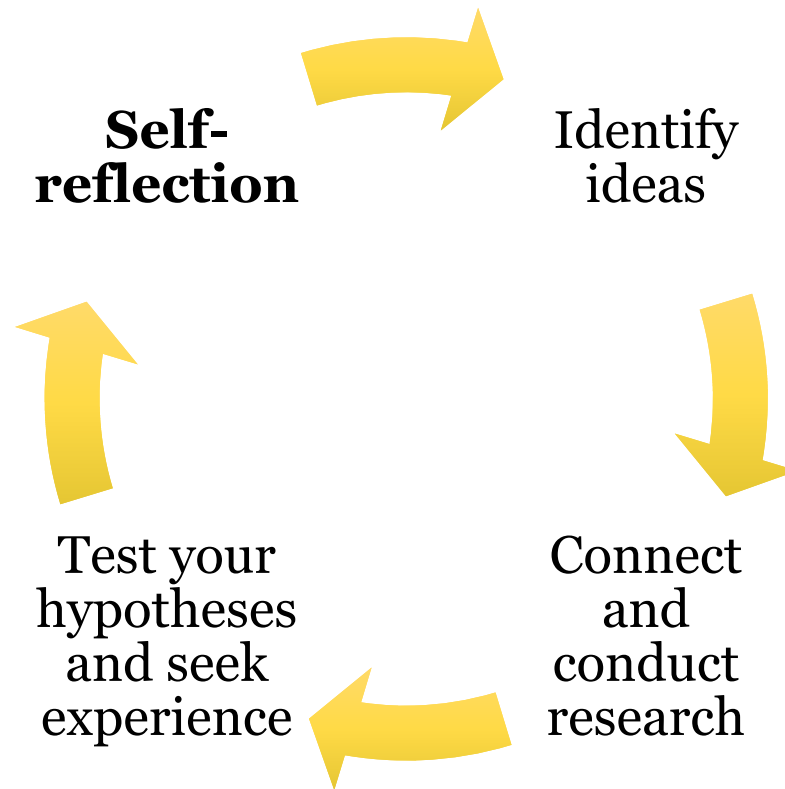
Make no assumptions

Other?

Agenda

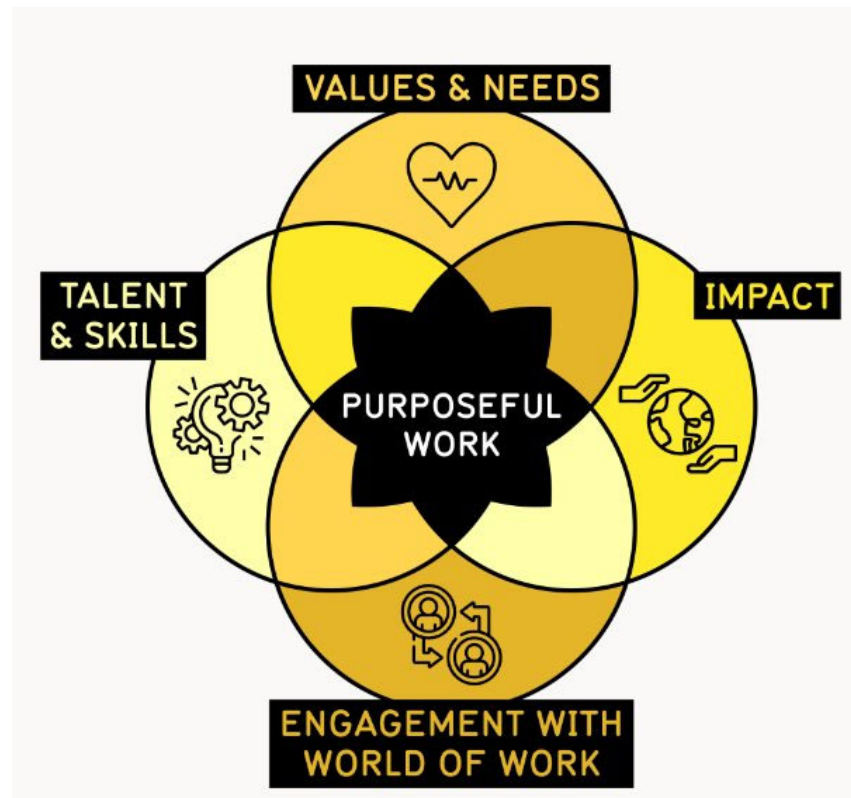


A CAREER DECISION MAKING MODEL



*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?**

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 in the bottom center, a light purple diagonal bar on the right side, and a blue U-shaped bar on the far right. A thin black horizontal bar is at the very top of the page.

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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Challenge Cards Reflection Prompts

Pause before selecting
your top 3



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



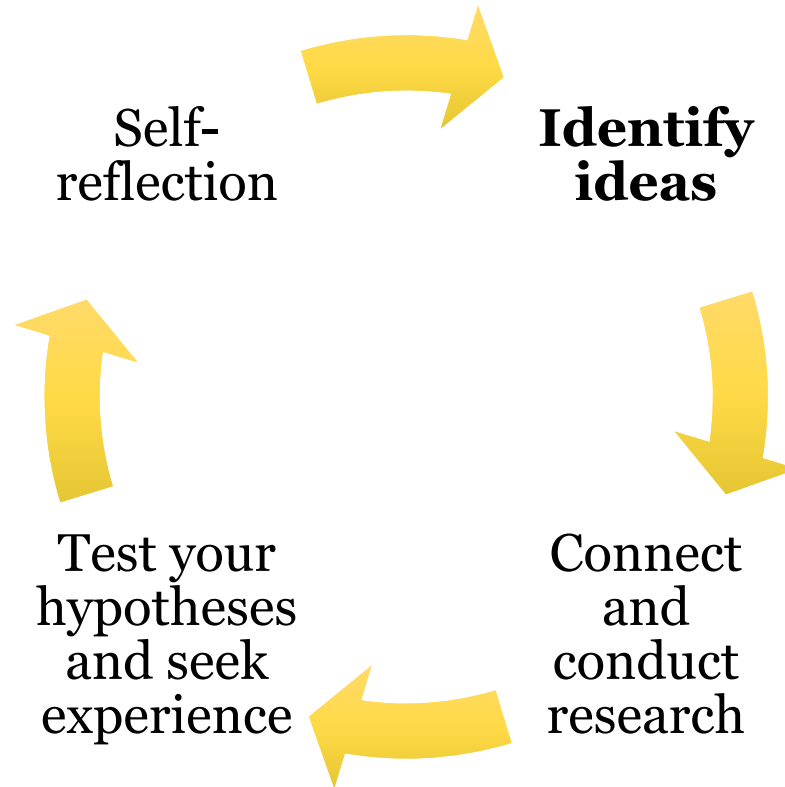
What are
the top
challenges
you
identified?



What
excites you
or
motivates
you about
these?



IDENTIFY IDEAS

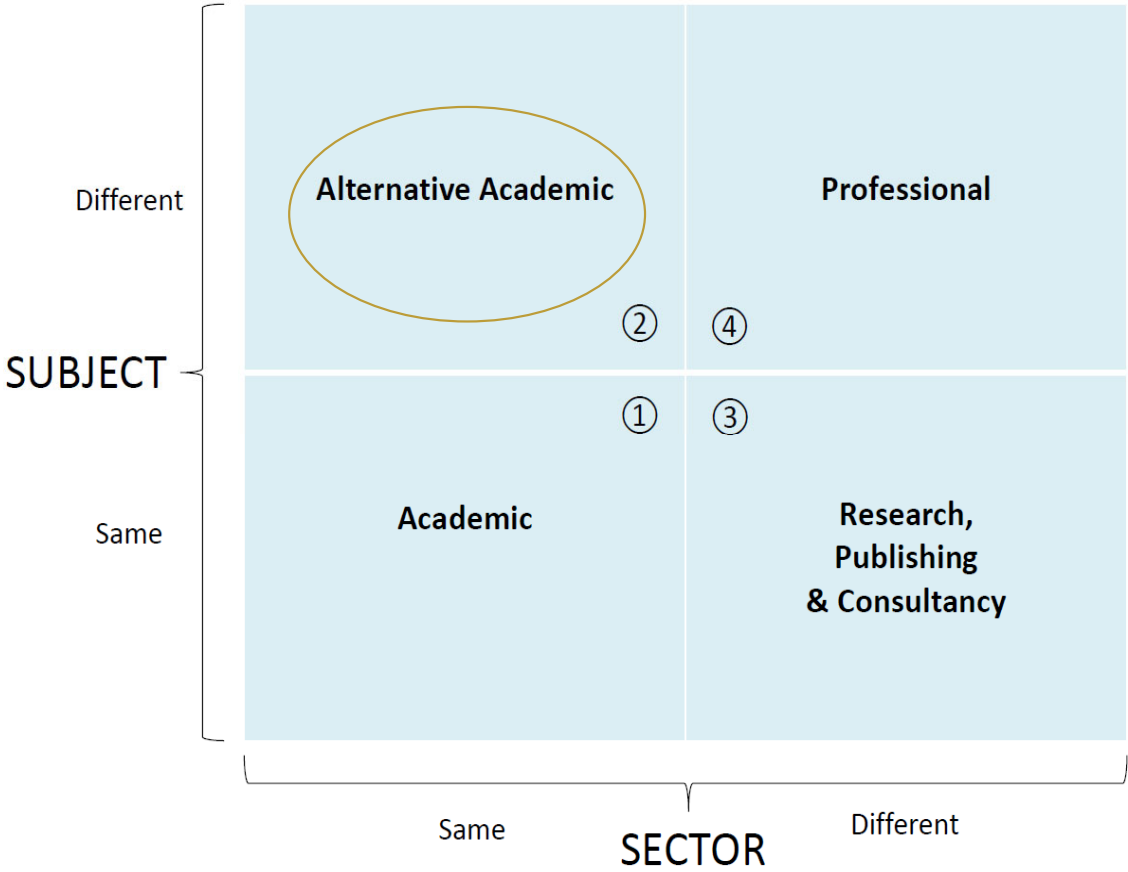


Seeking Out Ideas

- 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



© jobsontoast.com 2013

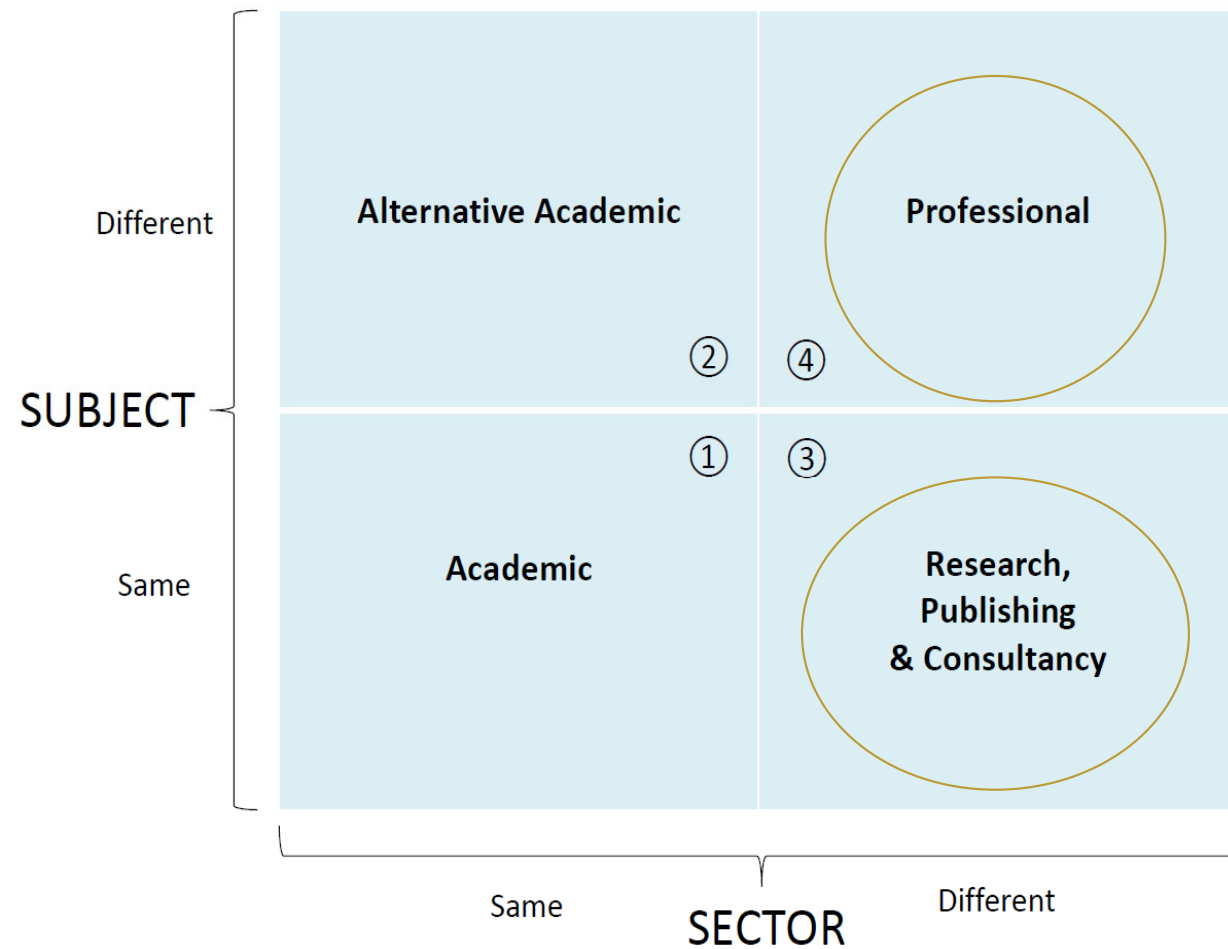
Have You Ever Thought About Alternative Academic Careers?

- 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

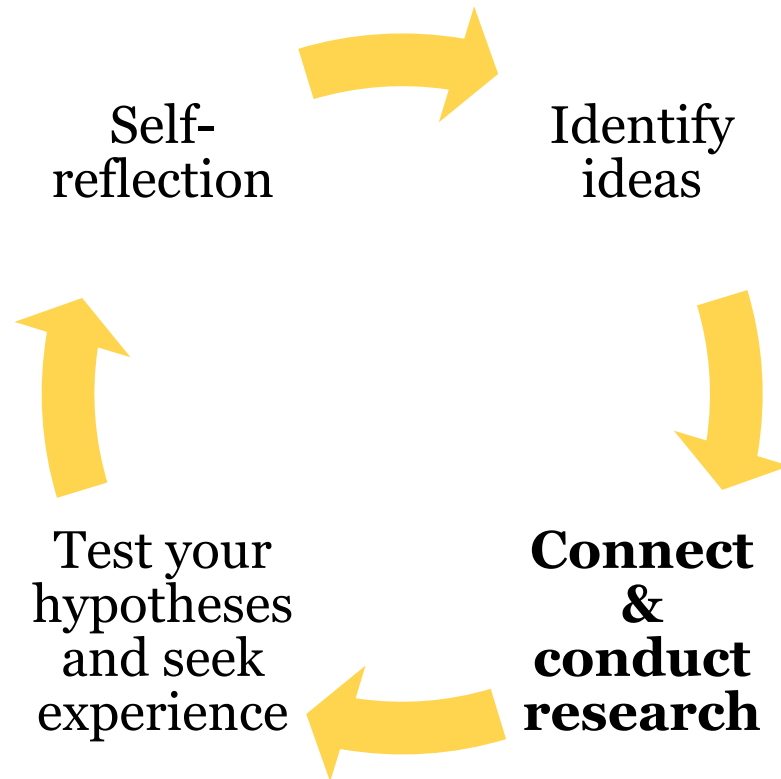
Parallel Planning: A Diagram



Apply Your Expertise

- How can your research be applied to new contexts?
 - Identify niche specialties connected to current field
 - Professional newsletters, 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?



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

✓ Following

We are Canada's most innovative university. #UWaterloo

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Start year End year

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

Previous Next

150,139 alumni

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

Show more

John Cullen · 2nd Sustainability in Canadian Businesses

Susan Wilsie · 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

What is an Informational Interviews

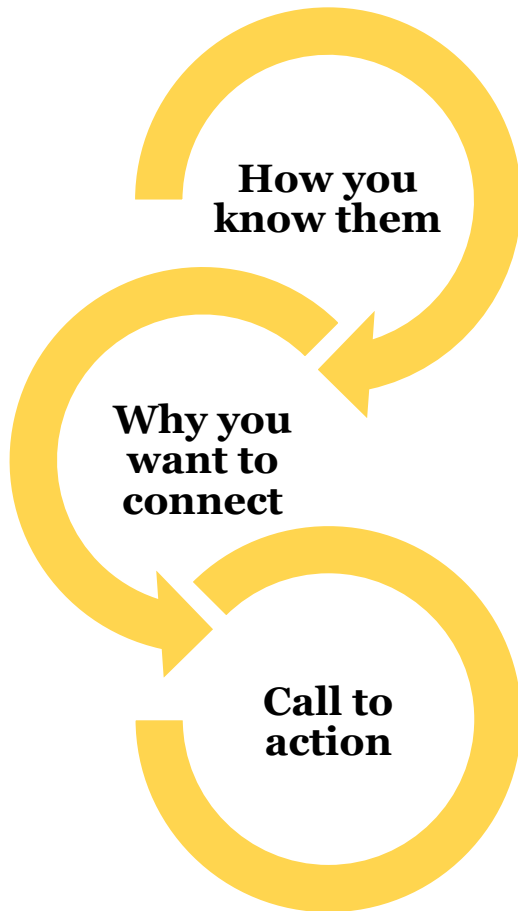


- What is an information interview?
 - Information gathering (i.e., research!)
 - Intentionally growing your professional network
 - Reciprocal
 - You are offering to listen to someone talk about their success, they are sharing information with you

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.”

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"

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. The search bar at the top contains the text "career coaching". Below the search bar, a dropdown menu is open, showing options: "All", "Companies", "Groups", and "Schools". The "Groups" option is circled in red. The main content area displays search results for "career coaching", showing 1,186,048 results. Two profiles are visible: Jayne Greene-B... and Jacquie Ottema. Below the profiles, there are job results for "career coaching" with 24,581 results. Three job listings are shown: Leadership Career Development Consultant at Parkland Hospital, Career Coach (NYC) App Academy, and Graduate STEM Career Development Specialist at Syracuse University. An advertisement for Premium Career is also visible on the right side of the page.

Join groups of interest and ***engage***:

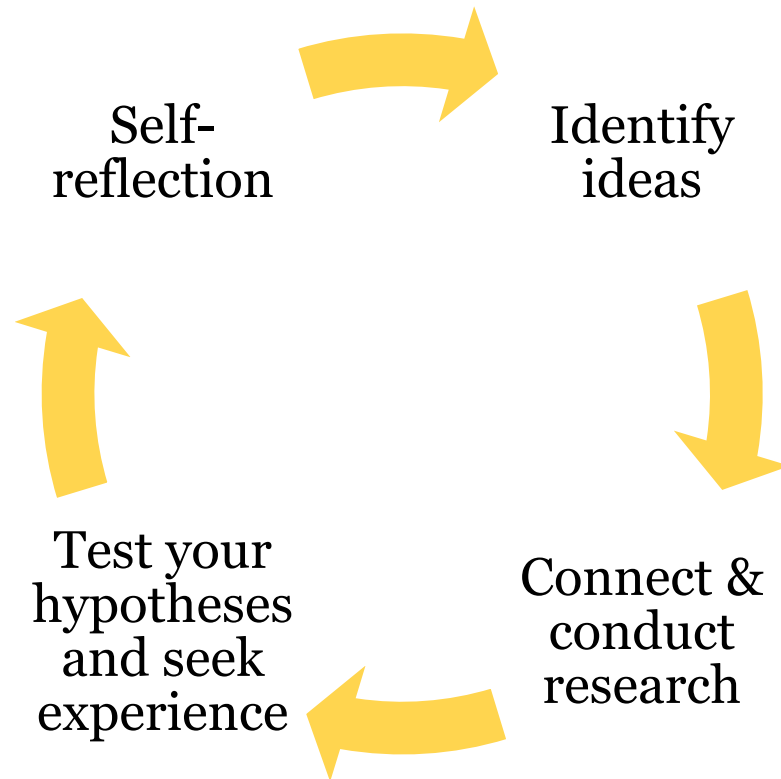
- ✓ Ask questions
- ✓ Post comments
- ✓ Share an article/blog
- ✓ "Like" other posts
- ✓ Connect with people (you can send a direct message to anyone in the grp)

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

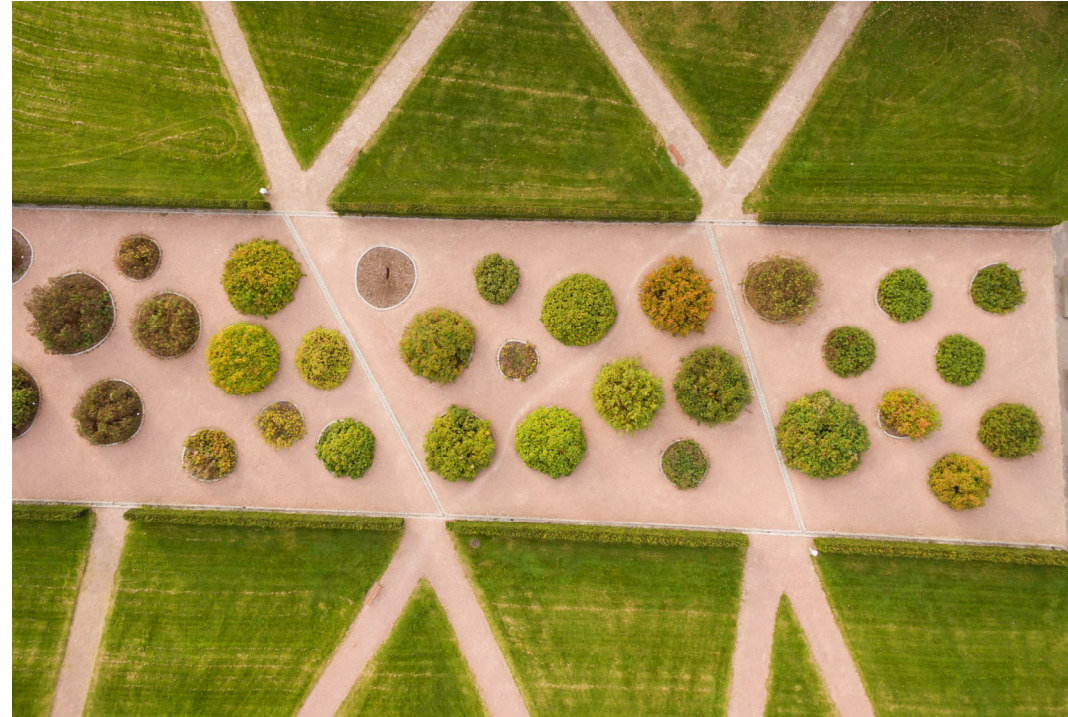
- “I have a degree in [major or field] and my favourite classes and interest areas are [insert here]. Suggest career options that align with my academic background and interests.”

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

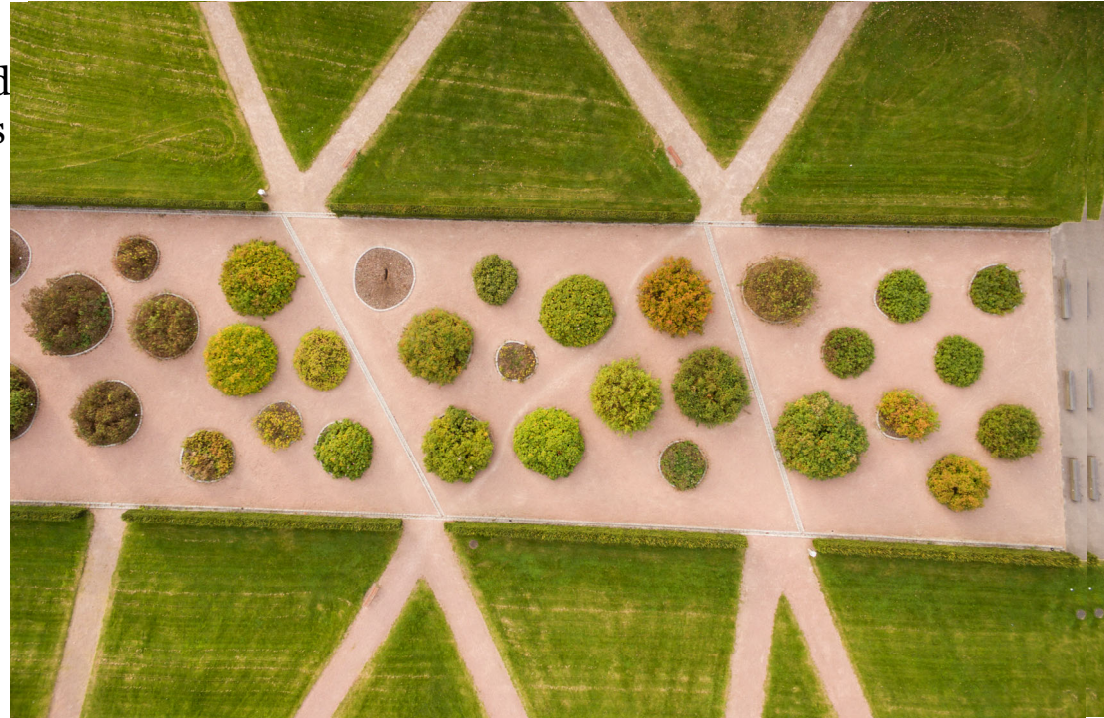
“What are the best employers in British Columbia working on solving X problems?”

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
- www.imaginephd.com
- www.explorephcareers.com
- <https://fromphdtolife.com/>
- www.jobsontoast.com
- LinkedIn Group: PhD Careers Outside Academia
- www.beyondprof.com



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 until convocation:
 - Career planning
 - Résumés, Cover Letters, CVs
 - Work search strategies
 - Mock interviews
 - Managing your online presence
- Workshops, employer panels, etc.





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<https://uwaterloo.ca/career-development/>

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