Ph.D. Career Development Guide
(Non-Academic)
How Career Services Can Help You
Welcome to the Ph.D. Career Development Guide! Learning the crucial components of career development and self-management now, while you are in graduate or professional school, will help ensure a smooth transition later, when you are ready to launch into a meaningful career. Understanding and applying the principles of career management will help you progress in your career and provide you with greater satisfaction and effectiveness as you grow professionally. The purpose of this guide is to develop your understanding of those career management principles. Please contact the Office of Career Services in the School of Public Health at any time throughout your graduate work to seek individual assistance and guidance.

Conducting a non-academic job search takes time, commitment, and organization. The SPH Career Services counselors can help you with the job search process from finding opportunities, reviewing a cover letter or resume, practicing interviewing, to negotiating and evaluating a job offer. Contact SPH Career Services to set up an appointment with a counselor: Barb Laporte (blaporte@umn.edu) or Darren Kaltved (dkaltved@umn.edu).

Starting Your Job Search
Many public health organizations begin recruiting for spring graduates and summer interns fall semester, so get started early! Here are a few suggested guidelines to help you begin your job search:

1. **Assess your own values**
   Be certain you know your own values, skills, strengths, and work criteria. One resource for self-assessment tools is [iSeek Careers](#).

2. **Create your own marketing materials**
   Develop a [portfolio](#), [write a resume](#) and [cover letter](#) and [script an introduction](#) you can use to "sell" yourself in two minutes or less.

3. **Gather information**
   Network in professional associations,(consider [the Minnesota Public Health Association](#), [the American Public Health Association](#) or other association specific to your area of interest), conduct informational interviews, or "try on" a position through volunteering, job shadowing, or part-time employment.

4. **Apply for positions that match your qualifications**
   Apply for positions for which you possess most of the required qualifications - even if you don't possess all of the skills listed in the job description. As long as you meet the "essential qualifications" you may be invited to interview, where you can sell yourself and begin to get networked into the employer community.”

5. **Interview**
   Even before you are invited to interview, begin preparing. Think about and practice your responses to the most commonly asked questions. Sharpen your interviewing skills using [Interview Stream](#), an online practice tool.

6. **Career development is a lifelong process**
   After you land a position continue to network, be active in professional associations, and consider becoming a mentor and signing up for the [alumni networking directory](#). You will discover how rewarding it is to help new public health professionals begin their own career development process!
Market Knowledge
Understanding the job market and trends in your field are essential to wise decision-making about career options and professional development. Seek out information about your field of interest: educate yourself about industry trends, the relationships between competitors and collaborators in your field, implications of the economy in your area of expertise, geographic considerations for your work and so on. To get started:

- Talk to your network. Through conversations with alumni, other professionals in your field, faculty, and career counselors, gather information about current labor market conditions and future prospects of the field you hope to enter. Explore and join professional associations in your area of interest to meet new colleagues and mentors who can be sources of market information. Find out:
  - Emerging and important issues for this field
  - Leading employers, funders and associations in the field
  - Skills and background that these organizations are seeking in employees
  - Average salaries and benefit packages
- Understand where your abilities, interests, and values fit within your profession.
- Stay abreast of change. Read professional publications for information about trends in the field; get connected to people in the know by volunteering on committees for your professional association.

These activities will help you build your knowledge of employers that you want to target. These will also help you network in your field.

Guiding Questions in Your Search
- What trends (industry, economic, political) are expected to affect my field and how can I position myself to be ready for the resultant change(s)?
- How might I leverage my skills and experience to be marketable in areas I hadn’t previously considered?
- What are the effects of globalization, if any, on my marketability?

Networking
- Obtain networking contact leads from SPH faculty or advisors. Use the Online Alumni Resource Directory to establish connections (http://www.sph.umn.edu/alumni/dir/index.asp)
- Use LinkedIn; Ask your mentor about contacts in other cities
- Similar to how you would conduct informational interviews with companies or organizations that interest you in Minnesota, there are often similar organizations in your targeted city. Here are a few examples:
  - State Departments of Health
  - Local / National Public Health Associations (Join these organizations in your new city!)
  - MPHA: Minnesota Public Health Association or APHA: American Public Health Association
  - MEHA: Minnesota Environmental Health Association
  - SOPHE: Society of Public Health Education
  - ASA: American Statistical Association
  - CSTE: Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists
  - APHL: Association of Public Health Laboratories
- Public Health events (i.e. March of Dimes, AIDS or MS Walk, other fund-raising events)
- Attend national, state, or local conferences to network with other professionals
- Once you have relocated, volunteer on a committee of a public health or community organization to get to know people in your new location.
- Join the UMAA (University of Minnesota Alumni Association) or the alumni associations of other colleges and universities you have attended - they often offer events or directories that can help you find networking connections.
- Many colleges and universities allow individuals to join their alumni association and receive the same alumni member benefits, such as discounts on career services, travel benefits, and invitations to social events.

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http://www.sph.umn.edu/careers/csc/index.asp
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Job Search Resources
The following websites offer public health related career information and postings. The School of Public Health does not necessarily endorse or promote the content of these sites, and recommends discretion whenever you convey personal information electronically.

Job Postings
- Public Health Job Postings - the SPH job postings site. All positions specific to public health.
- GoldPASS – the University of Minnesota's Job and Internship database.
- U of MN Graduate Assistantships – competitive graduate assistantships with the University.
- University of Minnesota Employment – job opportunities with the University of Minnesota.

Government Job Links
- State and Federal Government Job Sites - web sites that display state and federal government positions.
- City and County Government Job Sites - links to the most populated cities and counties for all fifty states.
- State of Minnesota Jobs – the #1 Minnesota state government job site (including MDH).
- Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) – job opportunities with MDH

International
- Overseas Job Opportunities – Indeed provides job postings for overseas jobs. Use keyword “Overseas”.
- International Careers & Jobs
- Going Global – GoldPASS (the University of Minnesota's Job and Internship database allows students free access to country guides, employment opportunities, visa guidelines, and much more. Once you have logged in to GoldPASS, click on the “Going Global” banner.

Other Job Links
- Public Health, Academic, and Research Jobs - national and international public health related career information and information specific to jobs in education and research.
- Local, National, & International Internships; Fellowships
- Diversity and Disability Resources - diversity job resources.
- LinkedIn internship and entry level job search
- Nonprofit Jobs - links for local and national nonprofit organizations and job boards.
- Non-US citizen CDC Positions - Information about CDC positions for non-US citizens.
- International Student Resources
- Tip sheets - review these tips on resume writing, informational interviews, and more.
- Reference the U of MN Libraries - Careers & Jobs Development Resources for information on researching companies, salary guides, and more.
- Watch videos on a variety of career-related topics through CareerTV.
- Twitter – students can follow job leads around the world.

Salary Information
- http://www.salary.com - provides basic salary guidelines by zip code
- http://www.homefair.com/homefair/calc/salcalc.html - cost of living comparisons by location and articles related to relocating
- Most state employment agencies have labor market information (in Minnesota, the website is http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/tools/oes.htm

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RESUME vs. CURRICULUM VITA

Your resume or CV is an important tool to market your experiences to prospective employers. It is a professional written document that communicates your education, work experiences/research experience, and skills related to the type of position you are seeking.

Do you need a Resume or a Curriculum Vita (CV)?

- Most PhD’s will need a resume at some point in their careers; but most will require a CV.
- Those seeking a position in medicine, academia, or a scientific profession will need a CV.

What is the difference between a Resume and a CV?

- A Resume is a required marketing tool in most professions. Typically it is one to two pages in length and gives the reader a summary of how the applicant can benefit the company or organization. You must decide which style of resume is best for your particular job search. The styles range from the traditional reverse chronological resume to a more contemporary functional or combination resume. The style must remain consistent throughout the resume. Resumes focus on the last 10 years of work history or the five most recent job positions. There are two types of resumes:
  - **Functional**: A functional resume focuses on your skills and experience, rather than on your chronological work history. It is used most often by people who are changing careers or who have gaps in their employment history.
  - **Chronological**: A chronological resume starts by listing your work history, with the most recent position listed first. Your jobs are listed in reverse chronological order with your current, or most recent job, first. Employers typically prefer this type of resume because it's easy to see what jobs you have held and when you have worked at them. This type of resume works well for job seekers with a strong, solid work history.

- A Curriculum Vita is used in place of a resume only if you are seeking a position in an academic, scientific, or medical field. It is often longer than a resume. The length depends on the number of publications, presentations, and academic or other professional experiences. The general format of a CV is patterned after reverse chronological resumes but with more detail and information. A major difference between resumes and CVs is that a CV grows in length as your career matures. Items are continuously added and occasionally re-arranged to showcase your work history and accomplishments.

Reminders:

- Your needs may change as your career progresses. Re-visit your resume or CV annually to see if it still suits your needs. Make the necessary updates so you always have a current resume or CV.
- Read the job description carefully. Target your resume or CV to each particular job.
- List the most important and relevant information first on your resume or CV.
- Resume screening software scans for specific terminology, or for keywords. For positions that require specific skills, use the same language from the position description to list your skills on your resume.

To Get Started

1. Make a list of experiences you’ve had: education and training, jobs, internships, research, projects, volunteer, leadership, student organization, etc.
2. Think about what you contributed, what skills you used and developed, and your significant achievements.
3. Begin to craft your resume or CV by organizing these experiences into sections.

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Converting a CV into a Resume

Having a detailed curriculum vita (CV) listing everything you have accomplished professionally and throughout your educational career is a good idea. It helps you remember all you have done, and it is nice to have it in an organized record. However, there may be situations when a resume would better suit your purposes, and then you want to consider how the skills and accomplishments from your CV are transferable, and convert your CV into a resume. Here are some helpful ideas:

- Try to think about your research in broad terms. Your willingness to wade through a stack of British periodicals from 1823 can testify to your ability to process information quickly, and produce written synopses of that information.
- Completing a dissertation indicates your capacity to independently manage a complicated, long-term project.
- Your dissertation can also be a testament to your talents in writing, grant-getting, and managing complex relationships (between feuding committee members, for example, or between yourself and the individuals who are the subject of your research).
- You may have presented at international meetings or organized panels, conferences, or speaker series. You may have been active in graduate-student government or on other campus committees. Such experiences can indicate leadership potential, public-speaking skills, initiative, and organizational ability.
- Use your teaching experience to your advantage. Many people outside academe do not realize the intense amount of work that goes into college teaching. Be sure that your résumé makes clear that you have gained excellent public-speaking and organizational skills through your teaching. Use numbers to support your claims. For example:
  - Taught British and American literature twice a week to 2 classes of 25 students each.
  - Developed and delivered presentations on a variety of topics for audiences ranging from 25 to 150 people.
  - Built Web site that contained links related to course material and student needs (including help on how to do research and write papers).
- If you have a specific nonacademic career in mind, pick up a bit of related experience to put on your résumé. If you are interested in teaching at the high-school level, volunteer at a local museum to work with students from that age group. If you would like to put your science skills to work in intellectual-property law, seek out an internship with your university's technology-transfer office. Those types of experiences can make your desire to change fields credible to employers.
- Read other people’s résumés when you can. Find out how they articulate their skills and accomplishments.
- Conduct informational interviews to get a sense of what hiring managers in a particular career are looking for.
- Finally, look carefully at job postings in the nonacademic fields that interest you. How do employers phrase both the responsibilities of a given job, and the qualifications they are looking for in candidates? Be mindful of that language as you craft your job-search materials.

Adapted from Mail Call / Chronicle / http://chronicle.com/jobs/news/2007/05/2007051701c
By Jennifer S. Furlong and Julie Miller Vick
INTERVIEWING 101

Preparing For the Interview Process
An interview is a conversation with a company to help both you and the organization determine if you’re a good fit. It’s important to prepare for an interview because it will help you feel more confident and comfortable. Interviewing is a learned skill and the more practice and preparation you do the easier it becomes and the more competitive of a candidate you’ll be. Below are some ways for you to gain knowledge and practice:

- **Online Workshop**: [https://umconnect.umn.edu/interviews/](https://umconnect.umn.edu/interviews/)
- **Interview Stream**: This online resource allows you (with the use of a webcam) to record yourself answering interview questions: [http://www.sph.umn.edu/careers/intskills.asp](http://www.sph.umn.edu/careers/intskills.asp)
- **Schedule a Practice Interview with a Counselor**: Gain practice answering interview questions and get feedback from a career counselor. Contact one of the following counselors to schedule an appointment.
  - Barb Laporte: blaporte@umn.edu or 612-626-5443
  - Darren Kaltved: dkaltved@umn.edu or 612-626-4448

Types of Interviews
Every interview is different, before your interview ask the company representative about the structure—how many interviewers and their job titles, location, time, length of interview, format of interview. Some employers as part of their hiring process will give candidates knowledge tests and/or personality assessments. These assessments are conducted to gain a better sense of your abilities and your work style. Keep in mind that many employers will have more than one interview as part of their hiring process.

- **Phone Interviews**: These are typically “screening” interviews with the purpose of determining whether the company wants to bring you in for an in-person interview. Make sure that you have a good phone connection and a quiet place for your interview. Since the interviewer can’t see you, it is even more important to speak clearly and to verbally communicate that you are interested in the position and company. Watch our online workshop about Phone Interviewing on our website: ccse.umn.edu.
- **Group/Board Interviews**: When more than one person is interviewing you be sure to introduce yourself to everyone. Regardless of who asks you the question, make eye contact with and engage each interviewer. Bring enough copies of your resume for each person.
- **On-Site Interviews**: Interviews occurring at the company, especially if they are second round interviews, are often a few hours long. Your visit may include a tour, lunch, the opportunity to meet potential co-workers, and interviews with multiple staff members and supervisors.

Interview Attire
- Dress professionally—a suit is appropriate if you have one, otherwise wear a button-up dress shirt and dress pants. Make sure your clothes are clean and wrinkle free.
- Wear comfortable dress shoes with matching color dress socks.
- For men, if you have a tie - wear it.
- For women, if you wear a skirt make sure it is at least knee length.
- Keep your hairstyle simple and facial hair groomed.

Additional Information
For more detailed information about how to prepare, sample questions, and much more please visit: [http://www.sph.umn.edu/careers/tipsheets/interviews/](http://www.sph.umn.edu/careers/tipsheets/interviews/).