Career Options for Doctoral Students

Latasha W. Lane — Panelist

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Overview

QUASI-PROFESSIONAL SHAKE UP!

1. Period of Re-Assessment and Re-Evaluation
2. Goal Setting – Write It Down!
3. Gaps in Experience
4. Making Deliberate Plans to Kill Two Birds with One Stone
5. Identifying Career Options B through Z
6. Read, Select, Act!
7. Participate in Training Workshops and Self-Improvement Seminars
8. Build Collegial Partnerships and Mentorships
9. Join Relevant Professional Organizations and/or Academic Societies
10. Preparation for Full-Time Employment
MY QUASI-PROFESSIONAL SHAKE UP!

Personal experiences and observations helped me to reassess/re-evaluate what I was doing and why I was doing it.

- 2 of my 3 mentors were abruptly dismissed from their positions.
- They both had families to support and just some real situations to handle.
- This episode significantly raised my anxiety level and opened my eyes to the realities of the harsh realities of even PhD folk
- It was at that moment when I knew I needed to make my degree more valuable and my experience worthwhile.

1. Period of Re-Assessment and Re-Evaluation

- I knew that I needed to use this time to get the experiences and exposure I needed to be successful and knowledgeable
- I needed this experience to help me add to my existing experiences and gain knowledge on unfamiliar topics and different perspectives.
- Identify natural links/connections with my degree program, minor and other interests.
- It was important for me to pinpoint my existing competencies and list those that are missing
- Next, to examine my goals (career and academic) and begin to identify the skills I needed to have
2. Goal Setting – Write It Down!

- Be mindful of your time
- Day-to-day, week-to-week; month-to-month
- Semester-to-semester (Fall, Spring, Summer)
- Year-to-year (and beyond)

3. Gaps in Experience

- Needed to know the KSAs (Knowledge, Skills and Abilities) employers/colleagues where seeking.

  **ACTION**: Looking at job announcements provided a really good perspective of the knowledge, skills and abilities that were sought in ideal candidates.
4. Making Deliberate Plans to Kill Two Birds with One Stone

*Meaning: To succeed in achieving two things in a single action*

Began to think about the connections between my academic responsibilities and experiential roles

*Example*

**Community College Presidential Fellowship Assignment**

- Exposure the Institutional Effectiveness and Research and Educational Affairs
- Community College environments

**ACTION:** Took courses aligned with these topics

**ACTION:** Joined organizations that support and advocate for these areas - Association for Institutional Research and American Association for Women in Community Colleges

**ACTION:** Sought active and highly respected mentors in the field

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5. Identifying Career Options B through Z

- Teaching classes on a college/university campus
- Consulting work/independent business owner
- Tangential work – Corporate, non-profit, government, academia
6. Read, Select, Act!

- Departmental email blasts for opportunities and announcements
- Vacant positions, fellowships, grants and scholarships frequent the email airwaves
- Speakers, workshops and seminars
- Association/organization websites, list serves and print publications

7. Participate in Training Workshops and Self-Improvement Seminars

- Typically are free
- Offered on campus, in the city or regionally (OH, MI, IN, PA, IL, KY)
- Various topics/issues
- Short-term involvement (day-long, half day, or a couple hours)
8. Build Collegial Partnerships and Mentorships

- Fellow students/program peers
- Within your department and at other institutions
- Pay attention to those people and organizations who support you as a student

9. Join Relevant Professional Organizations and/or Academic Societies

- Reduced member rates for students
- Reduced conference fees for students
- Local, regional and national ways to participate
- Opportunities for involvement (volunteering, committee membership, etc.)
- Avenues for exposure (mentoring, presenting, facilitating)
10. Preparation for Full-Time Employment

- Look early (and often) at job announcements in your field to see what the basic requirements and the most favored preferences are
- Save money! (for conference travel, job interviewing, etc.)
- Update resume/CV and cover letters
- Identify geographic preferences

Recap

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Final Thoughts

- Try to relax and rejuvenate
- Be *pleasantly* persistent and patient
- Be flexible in your goal setting
- Find sources of professional and personal nourishment
- **WORK TOOL**: Use the resources and professionals right here at UT!

Thank You!