

# Non-Academic Job Search Strategies for Humanities and Social Sciences PhDs



Feel free to turn  
off video



Use the chat for  
questions



“Raise hand” if  
you want to  
unmute

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\*We will be recording the session for accessibility purposes.\*

\*Slides will be distributed following the session\*

# Learning objectives

- Become familiar with the steps of the job search process
- Learn to approach career exploration with a researcher mindset
- Develop a plan for approaching your job search

# Job searching: where do you start?



- **Self-Assessment**
  - *Identifying Priorities*
  - *Evaluating Translatable Skills*
- **Research**
  - *Industries & Fields*
  - *Job Types*
- **Networking**
  - *Building relationships*
  - *Informational Interviewing*
- **Applying**
  - *Searching*
  - *Crafting Job Documents*

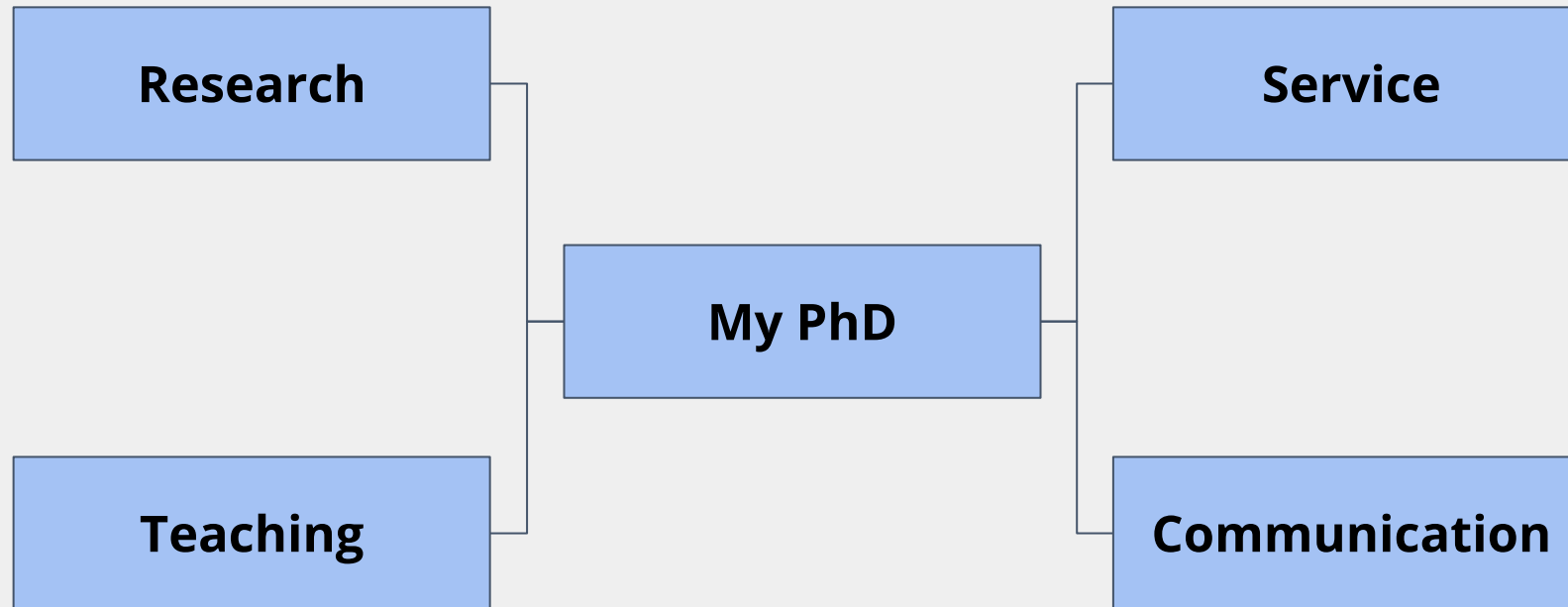
# Self-Assessment: Identifying Priorities

- *Academia often prioritizes different things than industry*
  - Time in lab/writing vs. targeted skill building
  - What you know vs. what you do
- *To get a job outside of academia, you will have to shift your priorities as well*
  - You need to dedicate time to career preparation and job searching
  - Consider careers or fields that don't necessarily relate to your scholarship
- *Make yourself a priority in this search process*
  - Leaving academia is hard, and there are a lot of emotions associated with the process
  - Remember, it is ok to prioritize with your values in your search

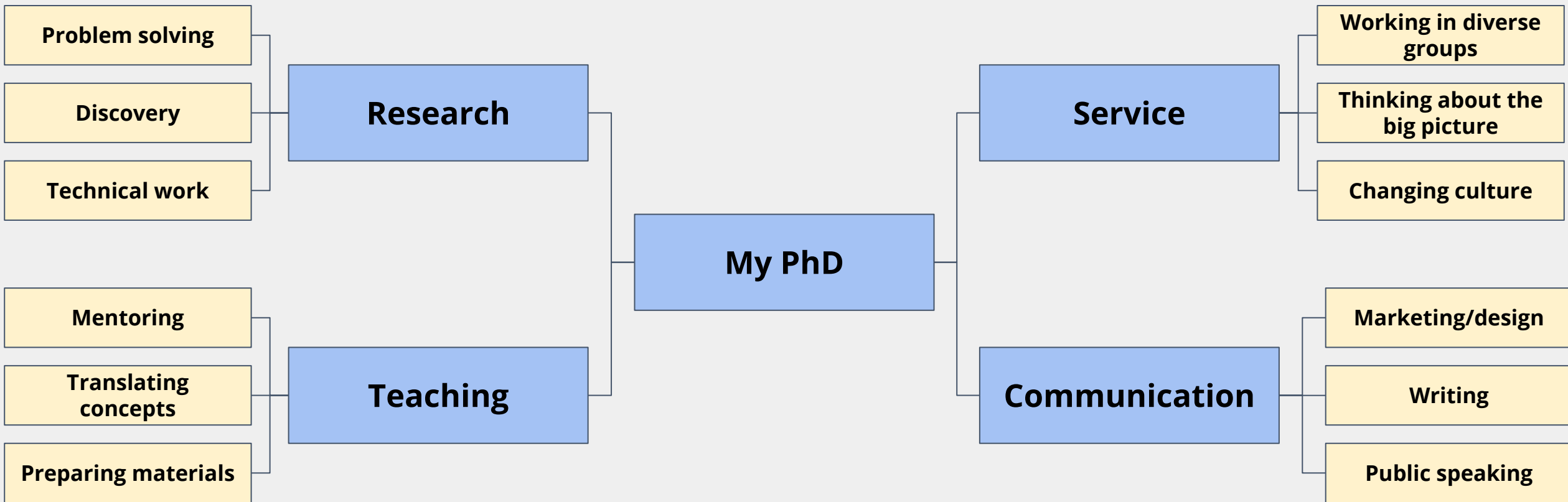
# Self-Assessment: Value of a PhD

- Top skills desired by industries across the disciplines are
  - **Critical thinking**
  - **Complex problem solving**
  - **Collaboration**
  - **Communication**
- PhDs know how to learn from failure and rejection
- You have dealt with challenging colleagues (and mentors)
- PhDs create knowledge rather than regurgitate it

# What do you love about your PhD?



# What part of your work energizes you the most?



# Self-Assessment Tools

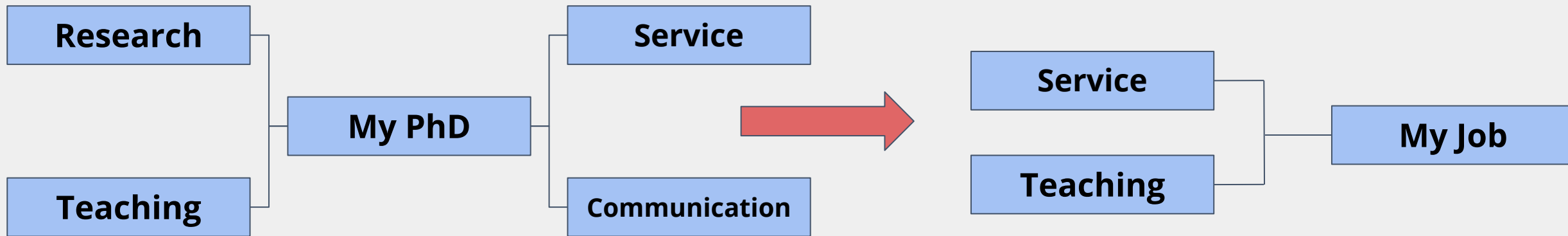
## ImaginePhD

- Complete the Skills, Interests, and Values Assessments
- Use the skills assessment to help you identify your translatable skills

Other Assessment Tools via PDPA and CCD

# Value of Identifying Your Transferable Skills

- A way to identify trends in your experience
- Helpful approach for finding career paths that are well-aligned with your skills
- Determine skill areas you want to develop further
- Skills and experiences can be framed in various ways to create a variety of “stories” in your job application documents



# Research: Industries & Career Fields

*This is a new field, you might not be the expert here - start with what you're good at!*

- Explore the Imagine PhD Job Families Resources
- Learn about job descriptions and training opportunities
- Find events to attend (BU, Professional Associations, Regional Meetings)

## Create a system for tracking your research

- Industry
- Job Type
- Company/Organization
- Contacts

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A1 Organization/Company (Link)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Organization/Company (Link)	Mission/Values	Contacts/Connections	Jobs (Open/Of Interest)	My Aligned Skills	Date of Contact/Application	Date of Follow Up
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# Research: Job Types

Start with aggregates just to see what jobs are posted and begin to read descriptions

- [LinkedIn Career Explorer](#)
- [Indeed](#)
- [Academic Careers](#)
- [HigherEd Jobs](#)
- [Chronicle Jobs](#)
- [80,000 Hours](#) (Impact/Research)
- [Idealist](#) (Non-Profits)
- [Candid](#) (Non-Profits and Foundations)
- [American Alliance of Museums](#) (Museums)
- [USAJobs](#) and [GovJobs](#) (Government)
- [Harvard Think Tank Search](#) (Research)
- [GoinGlobal](#) (International Jobs)

- Higher Ed Administration
- Project Management
- Training and Development
- Publishing and Editing
- Communications and Marketing
- Secondary School
- Diplomacy/Mediation
- Human Services
- Advocacy
- Organizational Management
- Development

# Research: Informational Interviews

## Who:

- Personal, Academic, and Professional Contacts

## Where:

- LinkedIn (Connections and Groups)
- BUConnects
- Department, Alumni Organizations, Professional Associations

## What:

- Outreach to ask for a conversation (30 mins) about their job/career path and advice

## How:

- Stay organized: keep track of who you contact and when
- Follow up if you don't hear back for two weeks
- Prepare questions, but mostly prepare to **listen**
- Follow up after you speak to thank them for their time
- Connect on LinkedIn

# Networking

## *Tips*

- Everyone is a potentially helpful contact: share your story
- Stay organized: keep track of who you contact and when
- Prepare your elevator pitch (who you are, what you are looking for)
- Be prepared for conversations about leaving academia
- Follow up, follow up, follow up

- Networking should be about building relationships (not collecting contacts)
- Building networks takes effort
- Reliance on networking is not an inclusive or equitable job search standard (often additional challenge for first-gen, international + URM students)

# Applying

*Job application process is a PROCESS - and it does not start with an application*

- Set aside time for the process
  - Searching (checking posting boards/groups)
  - Applying (finding connections, tailoring documents, submitting applications)
- Maintain your comprehensive CV and Resume
  - Keep them up to date with new experiences
- Tailor all of your documents (Resume, Cover Letter)
  - Map your skills to what they want
  - Mirror their language (you may have to re-work some of your language)
- Think of job descriptions as writing prompts



# Applying

## *Keep in mind*

- Approximately 70% of jobs are never posted anywhere
- Do not rely on job boards/sites as your primary means of finding jobs
- Most sites will not list PhD as a search term
- Recruiters and Hiring Managers are useful contacts to maintain
- Stay organized: keep track of where and when you apply
- Always apply on the company/organization website when possible
- Use a neutral, professional, non-bu email address

# What next?



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# Final Take-Aways

- This is a process, **processes take time**, persistence and commitment
- **Rejection** is part of the process (get comfortable and learn from it)
- Focus on what you **do** rather than what you **know**
- Your first job is not your last job

## *Reminders:*

- Update your LinkedIn (and online presence) and use it!
- Network, network, network
- Quality over quantity
- **Customize** all of your documents

# Additional Resources

## Web:

- *Inside Higher Ed* [Carpe Careers](#): A weekly career advice column in one of the top news outlets in higher education
- [Jobs on Toast](#): A blog focused on providing resources for job seekers with a PhD
- [Beyond the Professoriate](#): Blog and training site for PhDs looking to transition outside of academia
- [Free the PhD](#): Private organization focused on helping science PhDs transfer into industry
- [Columbia University](#): Career Exploration for Humanities and Social Sciences
- [From PhD To Life](#): Career resources for PhDs seeking careers outside of academia

## Books:

Caterine, C, 2020. *Leaving Academia: A Practical Guide*.

Linder, Kelly, and Tobin, 2020. *Going Alt-Ac: A Guide to Alternative Academic Careers*.

Basalla and Debelius, 2015. *So What Are You Going to Do with That? Finding Careers Outside Academia*. 3rd ed.

Fruscione and Baker, eds., 2018. *Succeeding Outside the Academy: Career Paths beyond the Humanities, Social Sciences, and STEM*.

Kelsky, 2015. *The Professor is In: The Essential Guide to Turning Your PhD into a Job*.

# Upcoming Workshops & Events

## April

- April 23 - Summer Strategies: Planning for Productivity

## May

- May 12 - Project Planning for Dissertations
- May 19 - Concrete Steps for Writing Abstracts
- May 26 - Strategies for Literature Reviews

## June

- June 2 - Structural Elements: Sentences, Paragraphs, Transitions
- **June 3 - CV to Resume**
- June 9 - Incorporating Feedback into Your Writing
- **June 10 - Cover Letters**
- **June 17 - Interviews (Informational and Important)**
- June 24 - Teaching Statement

*Monthly events include*

### **PDPA Tuesday Trivia**

for some lighthearted fun and competition

### **PhD Drop-In Office**

**Hours** to discuss career planning, job documents, mentoring, or anything PhD



**VITAMIN PHD**

A "SUPPLEMENT" TO DOCTORAL STUDY



# Questions