The Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services

University Researchers and the Job Market
A Practical Career Development Resource for Research Staff

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Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

As a researcher, you have a range of skills and abilities that many employers, both inside and outside academia, will be keen to utilise. This booklet was first published in 2001 and aimed to offer realistic and practical advice on all aspects of making career decisions and on the job hunting process from recognizing your skills to articulating them to employers in written applications and at interviews. The author, Liz Schofield, a Careers Adviser at University College London, at what is now known as "The Careers Group", University of London stated in her introduction: "I hope it will offer you support and encourage you to take a step forward." This latest edition has been updated by members of the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services Task Group for Research Staff. They are all currently working as careers advisers for research staff at various UK universities and endorse Liz's original statement that the booklet is intended to offer support and encouragement to researchers who are considering their next career move whether it is inside or outside academia. The work done by Professor Sir Gareth Roberts (Sources and Resources) on the career development and training needs of academic researchers is gratefully acknowledged here and the direct result of his work can be seen in the number of careers advisers and staff developers who are now employed to offer specialist support to research staff. This 2009 edition of University Researchers and the Job Market reflects the growing body of work in this field and is part of the range of resources researchers have access to.

We also look forward to the benefits to the career development of Research Staff anticipated by the issue of the new Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers (The Concordat) in June 2008 (Sources and Resources) to be implemented over the coming months and years.

The booklet, available as a set of PDF documents, can be read from cover to cover, or you may dip into chapters as they become appropriate to your needs. It is set out in three volumes with Sources and Resources section which brings together all sources used throughout.

Volume I	The Career Plan
Volume II	The Effective Job Selection Package
Volume III	The Support
Sources and Resources	Background, Employer Information, DVDs , Reading and Websites

Most chapters contain quotes and case studies from former researchers, chosen to illustrate successful career transitions and to inspire you to take your next step. Every effort has been made to include comments and examples from a range of academic disciplines, although there can be an emphasis on science, technology and engineering as many researchers are employed in these research areas.

It is also worth noting that the advice contained in the booklet is primarily concerned with job hunting in the UK job market. Your university careers service may hold resources suitable for those of you who are considering international careers. The Internet is another useful source of information (see Sources and Resources).

Who Is This Booklet For?

This booklet is for Research Staff many of whom are employed on fixed term contracts who work in a university environment. Although some of the case studies and examples used may not exactly reflect your own experiences, the majority of the text is deliberately non-specific in order to be relevant to as many of you as possible.

Research Staff are defined in the Concordat (see Sources and Resources for more detail) as follows:-

"Researchers are broadly defined as individuals whose primary responsibility is to conduct research and who are employed for this purpose. It is recognised that this broad category of staffing covers a wide range of staff with different disciplinary backgrounds, levels of training, experience and responsibility, types of contract (fixed or open ended, full or part-time), and different career expectations and intentions."

The Academic Research Careers for Scotland 2001 (ARCS) project identifies three broad categories of research staff:-

Career Starters – who see their first two or three contracts as stepping stones to a longer term career, either as permanent academic staff or in a research position outside academia.

Career Researchers – who have already completed a series of short-term contracts but want to remain in academia. Some individuals in this category have been promoted and gained new levels of responsibility, while others remain in similar roles as they go from contract to contract. This latter group may have difficulty finding employment, as they become more 'expensive'. Individuals in this category may have world-class reputations in their field.

Job Entrants – who simply see research contracts as another job opportunity and don't have any particular ambition to remain in academia.

For more information about this project, see the Institute for Employment Research website at **http://www.warwick.ac.uk/ier**. Hasluck, C, J Pitcher and C Simm (2001). *Academic Research Careers in Scotland: A Longitudinal Study of Contract Research Staff, Their Jobs and Their Career Patterns.* Edinburgh/Coventry: Scottish Higher Education Funding Council and Institute for Employment Research.

http://www.sfc.ac.uk/information/info_circulars/shefc/2001/he5401/researchcareersins cot.pdf

What Does The Booklet Offer?

Many of you have chosen academic research because you enjoy the work, and several surveys show that many of you would prefer to remain in academia.

Surveys and Reports

There have been a number of studies and reports into employment patterns of researchers, the source cited here provides an excellent starting point for researchers who may wish to access information relevant to overall trends as well as discipline specific information.

Employer's views of researchers' skills

A comprehensive review of the existing literature into employers' views of the skills of early career researchers (2007) The Rugby Team.

This report reviewed studies dating between 1998 and 2006, it brings together both a comprehensive list of surveys and reports which researchers can access and offers an overview of the studies.

The UK academic profession has increased in numbers over the past decade or so partly in line with the growth in undergraduate numbers with total academic staff up by 29% from 127k in 1995/6 to 165k in 2005/6. (source HESA quoted by UCU Higher Education Employment Data) Nevertheless the competition for permanent or open-ended posts is extremely keen. Research staff, the vast majority of whom are on fixed-term contracts have no automatic career progression to the higher level research leader positions or teaching and research jobs presently and competition for research funding show now sign of becoming any easier. Whether you decide to continue to develop an academic career or to leave as soon as possible, I hope there will be something in this booklet for you.

The booklet aims to:-

- Increase your awareness of the options open to you outside academia.

- Highlight the skills you already have and suggest ways of developing them further.

- Suggest ways of gaining new skills.

- Give you some practical advice about the job search process.

- Give you an insight into the attitudes of employers.

- Provide an index of useful information sources.

The booklet touches on a number of subjects that are covered in more detail in other publications. The Sources and Resources section lists several references which may be of interest to you, as well as full details of all publications referred to in the text.

University Researchers and the Job Market
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VOLUME I
The Career Plan

Chapter 2 MAKING CHOICES

There are a number of publications, available in your careers library or from good book shops, which attempt to take you through the career choice process (see Sources and Resources 2). They suggest several approaches, all based around the core steps represented by the following career management model.

```
        Assess and
          Review
Take Action       Research
         Set Goals
```
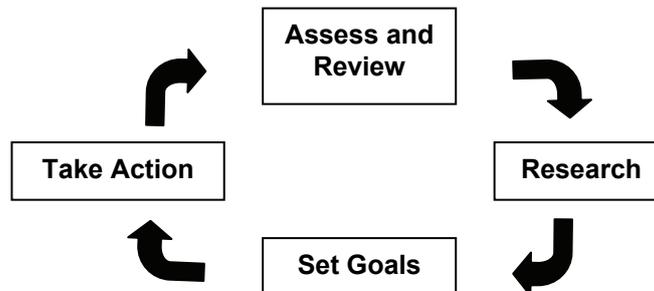
The four stages provide a structure that you can use throughout your working life and are equally valid whether you are considering a career inside or outside academia.

This chapter provides a menu of approaches to career choice, catering for different styles and preferences. There are also several references in Sources and Resources 2 which include further suggestions.

Assess and Review

This part of the process involves assessing yourself and what really matters to you. For example, if working with people is important to you, exactly what aspect appeals? Is it working with the general public, negotiating or advising, being one of a team or having a supervisory role? If you hate working in the laboratory, consider which aspects of that environment really put you off. It is also important to consider what motivates you and look carefully at any constraints. For example, are you motivated by money and status or is contributing to the community more important? Are you tied to a particular geographical location? Don't be tempted to miss this step, as it will enable you to make a more informed decision when you start considering specific jobs.

Research

This stage involves investigating the occupations that satisfy your requirements. Researching options is a key element of this and something which may seem daunting. Throughout the booklet there are references to resources that will help you with this aspect of your career development and decisions. Chapter 5 'Researching Options' offers a number of sources of information and the next sections of this chapter on computer-aided guidance and 10 ways to generate options will also be useful.

Set Goals

In most cases the ideal job is unlikely to fall into your lap. It may take some time to achieve your ambition, especially if it involves a complete career change. Setting short or medium-term goals can make the process more manageable. For example, you may need to complete a training course before you can apply for jobs in your chosen area. Obtaining a place on an appropriate course might be your medium term goal.

Take Action

This stage includes practical actions such as making networking appointments, producing CVs and filling in application forms. For more information see Chapter 5 'Researching Options' and Chapter 7 'Making Applications'.

You may find that you sometimes skip stages. For example, if you unexpectedly come across an attractive position and decide to apply for it, you will move straight from 'research' to 'take action'. Some stages may take place subconsciously. But generally, self-assessment and research at each stage of the job hunting process will ensure that you are better prepared for setting goals, both long and short-term, and taking action.

Case Study

Following a Social Psychology degree and a PhD in Media and Communications, Denise worked as a research associate on several short-term contracts. A 10-month temporary lectureship made her realise that she didn't want to combine researching with teaching, so she decided to look for a research role outside academia. *(Assess and Review)*

Her background led her to commercial research so she obtained a copy of *The Research Buyers Guide*, a directory of market research companies, and sent speculative CVs to those specialising in qualitative, media and social research. She also spoke to current practitioners so that she would be more informed at interview stage. Her strategy was successful. *(Research, Take Action)*

Her advice is 'Try to choose employers who have some relevance to your previous experience and talk to someone who works in the area that interests you'. In a commercial environment 'you need to be realistic and prepared to let go of certain things, such as spending time on your research'.

Assess and Review

This section includes questions and exercises which are intended to help you to focus on this stage of the process.

Consider the following questions:-

- What aspects of my life (inside and outside work) provide the most satisfaction?
- What are my top achievements in the last five years?
- What motivates me?
- Who have I enjoyed working with and why?
- How do people I trust see me?

Exercise 1

You are an expert in research, so you may find it useful to approach the whole issue as you would a research project. Start with the hypothesis that there must be other jobs that will use your skills, interests etc.

Remember, career choice is not an exact science and there may be several different options open to you.

Obviously this process can take a significant amount of time and effort. However, your daily work involves research techniques and procedures, and if you apply those familiar tools in this situation the prospect may seem less daunting.

Treating your career search with the same seriousness as you would a research project and keeping good records will also make the task easier.

Case Study

Rebecca's aim was to get out of academia. She wanted to work in '**a more team-oriented situation with clear goals and relatively frequent new challenges**.' She was constrained by the fact that the job she applied for had to be '**compatible with a 3-month notice period**' and with '**leaving at a suitable time within the academic year**.' She also wanted to '**get a job relatively fast**', one which would give her '**the flexibility to move again at short notice**' if necessary. (*Assess and Review*)

Rebecca looked into three occupational areas based on activities she had enjoyed in the past: museum exhibit design, TV science programming and information architecture for the Internet. She researched each area and discovered that opportunities in the first two areas '**come up unpredictably when an appropriate project is initiated**.' This was not compatible with her constraints. She then spent a lot of time finding an employee in information architecture who was willing to help, and says '**it became clear that it was something I might enjoy and be good at**'. It also met her practical requirements. (*Research*)

Rebecca's first goal was to gain some more evidence for her interest in this career area. '**I spent a week learning HTML and working on some half finished web pages for our research group**'. She then sent her CV to several employers recommended by her contact. The CV was '**a pared down version of my normal academic CV**' and had little success. Consequently, she took a step back and set her next goal – to get some relevant advice and improve her CV. (*Set goals, Take Action, Assess and Review, Set Goals*)

Her friend in the business helped her to rewrite her CV and formulate a covering letter, she says '**It was really helpful to have someone on the inside to tell me how I appeared. I think that this is really essential for an academic wanting to undergo a significant career shift**'. All the companies she submitted the new version to wanted to see her. After three interviews, she was offered two jobs. (*Take Action*)

Exercise 2

Consider the following points and create lists of skills that fit into each category:-

- **Skills that I already have and know I want to use.**
- **Skills that I would like to develop in my work.**
- **Skills that I have but that I do not wish to dominate in my work.**
- **Skills that I have but do not want to use.**

From the first two lists, choose your top three skills and list all the occupations you can think of that use those skills. Ask colleagues, friends and relatives to add their ideas to your list. Reject those that involve too many of the skills you would rather not use.

Skill assessment is an important aspect of career choice, but there are also other factors to consider. There may be 50 jobs on your list, but many of them will be inappropriate for you. For example, the salary may be too low, the work environment may be unappealing or the employer may operate against your personal code of ethics. In order to narrow the field, you must include several other factors in the decision making process.

- **Consider your interests at work and during leisure time.**

  Weekly evening classes may not be compatible with a job that requires regular overtime.

- **Consider your beliefs, values, and guiding principles.**

  What would constitute success for you? Wealth, publications, a sense of fulfillment?

- **Consider your ambitions.**

  Do you crave a structured career with a clear path for promotion and progression?

- **Consider your constraints.**

  Do your childcare commitments make flexible working hours an imperative? Maybe your partner's commitments mean a geographical move would be out of the question?

Once you have discarded the roles that don't meet your criteria, you can start to research the ones that really catch your eye. See Chapter 5 'Researching Options' for sources of information.

Exercise 3

Computer-Assisted Careers Guidance

If you prefer to be guided through the process electronically, there are several computer programmes available. One example, widely used by higher education careers services, is Prospects Planner. This is 'a computer-based guidance tool designed specifically for use in Higher Education. It comprises self-analysis, comparison of self with career options, the exploration of occupational information and help with the tactics of making job applications.' Prospects Website**, www.prospects.ac.uk**

Another such program is SORTIT an on-line careers guidance programme from The Careers Group University of London, which has key sections on Self Analysis, Options Generation, Research etc. SORTIT website **www.careers.lon.ac.uk/sortit**

Once you have completed the self-analysis stage, there are various methods for generating ideas other than those already mentioned, see below for some ideas. Choose the method(s) that you are most comfortable with.

10 ways to generate career ideas

1. What information and know-how do you pick up easily? How could you capitalise on this?

2. What did you want to be when you were a child? What did your parents think you should be? Would you still consider those options?

3. List everyone you know in a different job from your own. Ask them what else they have considered doing and add that to the list. Pick out the 10 most appealing possibilities.

4. List everyone you come into contact with through your current job, lab manager, equipment sales representative, departmental administrator etc. Do their jobs seem preferable to your own?

5. Read as many job adverts as you can without worrying about qualifications. What appeals to you? Why? Your University Careers Service will have occupational information which you could use for your research (see Chapter 10 Visiting the University Careers Service) and the Prospects website also offers an on-line information source on many occupational areas.

6. Choose something you enjoy doing and generate a list of occupations that are connected to it. For example, you enjoy writing – how could you earn a living from writing, teaching others to write, selling written material, promoting it etc?

7. Using the Yellow Pages or a career directory, pick out 10 headings that attract you.

8. Find out what previous researchers from your department have gone on to do.

9. Don't try and research every possibility. Start with a few ideas and work out rationally from there.

10. Ask everyone you know for ideas of what you could do.

Research

Although research can never tell you exactly what a job will be like, it can give you a more informed idea.

Consider the following questions:-

- Is my view of the job stereotyped?
- What are growth employment areas?
- What is in my local library?
- How can I test the reality of this idea?
- How much will it cost me (in time, money, emotional energy, effort)?

For information on where to find occupational, training, employer or vacancy information, and advice on how to network effectively, see Chapter 5 'Researching Options'. To find out what your university careers service may be able to offer you, see Chapter 10 'Visiting the University Careers Service'.

Set Goals

You may need to go through various stages before you can start making applications. You might have tangible goals, such as gaining a place on a training course or obtaining advice on how to restructure your CV. However, other goals may be less tangible, such as finding a satisfying career. If you can break this down into measurable and achievable goals, setting time scales for each stage, you may find the process easier.

Consider the following questions:-

- Have I tested the feasibility of this goal?
- What distinguishes the goals I have achieved from the ones I haven't?
- How will I know when I have achieved this goal?
- Which course of action feels right?
- Have I got enough information?

You might find it helpful to produce an action plan, for example:-

Long-Term Goal	Short and Medium-Term Goals	Actions Required	Constraints	Who or What Can Help Me?	Target Date For Actions
Move into University Administration	*Short-Term:* Find out what roles are out there	Identify and make contact with administrators in other departments	Amount of free time available	Personal contacts, networking with friends, colleagues etc	Immediate
	Medium-Term: Brush up IT skills	Look at jobs advertised	Fees	www.jobs.ac website	Immediate
		Collect course information	Time	Staff Development department	Start research now, do course next year

Take Action

Although generating and researching ideas is a vital process, simply reading and thinking through your options is no substitute for actual experience.

If you follow the networking tips in Chapter 5 'Researching Options' you could make some useful contacts. Talking to current practitioners can be very valuable, but visiting the premises of a selection of employers can really give you a sense of whether this environment will suit you. You may be able to organise some work-shadowing (observing the work of a particular employee for a specified period of time), or offer to help out with some administrative tasks for a short time. Employers will appreciate your motivation.

One former researcher who comes across many hopefuls in the science-writing industry advises:

> "... really work out what it is you want to do and get some experience which proves it to your potential employer. It's amazing how many people think they want to be science writers but have never actually done any popular writing in their lives!"

Gaining work-shadowing experience will also allow you to reject the career options that are not right for you.

Once you have collected sufficient evidence to demonstrate your commitment and enthusiasm, the next stage is to start making applications. See Chapter 7 'Making Applications' for advice on CVs, applications forms and covering letters.

Making career decisions can be challenging, even when you are well informed. The suggestions in this chapter may help to make some stages of the process easier, but if you want to explore alternative methods or look into the topic in more detail, see Sources and Resources for a list of relevant publications.

Chapter 3 IDENTIFYING SKILLS

The aims of this chapter are to demonstrate the powerful set of skills you already have, suggest ways of developing them further and to give you some ideas about gaining new skills.

Many of the skills discussed in this chapter are common to all academic researchers. Of course, you will also possess the knowledge-based ('hard') skills that are associated with your particular field of study, but it is important to realise that employers outside academia are often more interested in your transferable ('soft') skills. This may come as a surprise when you are so familiar with an environment in which subject knowledge is paramount. Transferable skills can be defined as 'an ability learnt in one context, which can be applied in another'. For example, your ability to explain complex technical issues could be used in a training role.

Some examples of the skills which are common to most researchers:-

SKILLS	RELEVANT EXPERIENCE
Communication	
Oral	Teaching, explaining research to those without specialist knowledge, presenting papers, interviewing (particularly social scientists).
Written	Publishing papers, writing project reports.
Interpersonal	
Supervisory	Explaining and advising, establishing work schedules which will allow students to meet the needs of the course.
Counselling	Supporting, facilitating, listening.
Negotiating	Preparing grant applications, negotiating contracts.
Teamwork	Collaborating with fellow researchers, sharing equipment, bench/desk space.
Administrative	
Time management	Meeting deadlines, successfully completing work while under pressure.
Organising	Dealing with the collection of large quantities of data/information and processing it efficiently.
IT	Using word processing, statistics, spreadsheet packages etc.
Business awareness	Financial budgeting, fund-raising and contract negotiation.
Research Skills	
Practical	Identifying resources, performing experiments, collecting data.
Analytical	Analysis of data, breaking problems down into manageable units.
Learning	The ability to learn quickly and grasp new concepts.
Debating	Articulating ideas, peer group discussion, supporting your position with logic.
Personal characteristics	
Perseverance	A capacity for sheer hard work in the face of difficulties.
Resilience	The ability to maintain your commitment to a project despite future uncertainty.
Adaptability	Regularly taking on different projects and roles throughout your career.
Self motivation	Working without supervision, to your own timetable.

The relevance of your specialist skills and knowledge will obviously depend on the roles you apply for. For example, an application for an academic position will rely heavily on your subject specific knowledge, whereas an application for a job in a bank may require more evidence of your team-working and communication skills. The amount of emphasis you should give to different skills in your job applications is discussed in Chapter 7 'Making Applications'.

Some examples of skills which may be subject specific.

Your subject-based skills will be wide ranging. The following examples illustrate the different strengths you might have:-

Life Science	Statistics	English	Social Science
Health and Safety awareness	Data collection and handling	Written communication	Interviewing
Laboratory techniques	Statistical analysis techniques	Proposing ideas and theories	Market research Techniques
Use of specialist equipment	Use of IT to interpret data	Arguing, debating	Survey design and Analysis
Numerical analysis	Problem solving	Logical, lateral Thinking	Demographic research techniques
Field work experience	Numeracy	Creativity	Statistical analysis Techniques

Requirements of Employers Outside Academia

Other than for specialist research posts, the employment market outside academia doesn't differentiate much between graduates and postgraduates. However, university research experience will demonstrate that you are bright, learn quickly and have good work habits. Employers who don't mention a requirement for research experience or a PhD in their advertisements are not rejecting those who have such qualifications, they just aren't vital for the job. So don't overlook these vacancies.

Survey Extracts

In a survey, 'University Researchers, Employers' Attitudes and Recruitment Practices' (Wright, 2000), a number of employers were asked a series of questions. Some of those questions and their responses are listed over. The particular industries these employers represent may not be of interest to you, but they all recruit people who have been university researchers and so have some useful points to make.

What are the benefits of recruiting people with academic research experience?

"Analytical thinking, report writing and the ability to work independently."

"They have a high academic profile which is advantageous when presenting their CVs to prospective clients and their research skills are crucial to our client teams."

"Highly developed research skills combined with an intellectual approach. Good communication and presentation skills demonstrated by teaching experience."

"Good learning skills, their commitment to task and the need for minimum supervision."

These comments reinforce the fact that you already have a number of marketable skills, which you should highlight on your job applications. If you can demonstrate that you understand the employer's needs, this will give you an advantage over those who are concentrating more on their academic knowledge.

What are the drawbacks of recruiting such candidates?

"Lack of commercial awareness/experience and lack of career motivation."

"lack of exposure to the commercial world and limited team-working skills. Also limited experience of working on short-term tasks."

"Lack of experience of meeting deadlines and the lack of awareness of the different aims of academia and industry."

"These candidates tend to become focused on their subject area and don't emphasise their transferable skills which actually make them more employable."

Some of you may be thinking 'that's unfair, I have all those skills', and this highlights one of the problems. Employers may simply not know what the work of a university researcher involves and it is up to you to make the relevant aspects of your role very clear when you apply for a job. If you are thinking 'they're right, I haven't got any of those skills' it is not too late to do something about it.

What messages would you wish to give to academic researchers about what they should emphasize when presenting themselves to employers?

"Convince the employer that they are able to translate their ideas into commercial reality and that the commercial world is not their second option because they cannot achieve a career in academia. Can they prove they have thoroughly researched the position and recognise the differences between such a position and that of their current post in academia?"

"Don't over rely on academic achievement. Stress transferable skills such as team-working, report writing and leadership."

> Focus on skills and competencies and relate them to the commercial environment if possible."
>
> "Emphasise the more rounded individual rather than the researcher. Are you a self-starter? Do you have leadership qualities?"

As you can see from the 'benefits' question, many of the skills, such as written communication, self-motivation and analytical skills, are ones you already have.

The 'drawbacks' mainly concentrate on a lack of commercial awareness and a narrow view of working styles and environments. It is therefore important to emphasise to potential employers your awareness of the differences between working in academia and working outside it, and to demonstrate your willingness to adapt to a new environment.

The final comments confirm the importance of 'transferable skills' to employers outside academia. The Empress Survey, Employer's perceptions of recruiting research staff and students published by the University of Leeds in 2005 mentioned in Chapter 4 Career Direction confirms the above ideas and concepts five years later than Wright and there is no significant evidence available at present to show that things have changed by in 2008.

How to Gain the Skills You Need

Although you may be very busy with your research, if you want to change your career you may need to make time to develop the skills that other employers require. Here are a few suggestions:-

Commercial awareness may mean understanding the priorities of a commercial company, being aware of the economic factors affecting businesses or even comprehending a profit and loss account. You can improve your commercial awareness by:-

- Getting more involved in financial issues such as grant applications.

- Regularly reading the business pages of a national newspaper.

- Raising money or keeping accounts, perhaps for a local charity.

- Arranging work-shadowing in a commercial or customer-care role.

If you feel there is a lack of **teamwork** in your department, consider:-

- Organising a team event or workshop.

- Joining a relevant working group, or setting up a support group for colleagues.

If you need to improve your **communication skills**, consider:-

- Networking with colleagues, both internal and external.

- Volunteering for tutoring or teaching responsibilities.

- Representing your department on a committee.

Case Study

Following post-doc positions in the UK and the US, it became obvious to Alan that there was only a limited career structure for university researchers. So he made a conscious decision to try to gain other skills and experiences that might help him to change his career.

He says: 'Over the years, I started to volunteer for teaching duties and to be a representative on various committees. I went on staff development courses to improve my computing, management and supervision skills. I basically did a lot of tedious jobs that academics did not want to do or did not have time to do.'

He made himself indispensable and was offered a 2-year contract to run his department's honours course. When the university failed to renew his contract, Alan obtained a job with the NHS as a programme manager. He feels that the management experience he gained in his last academic role was vital in getting him the job.

You will not necessarily gain all your transferable skills from your full-time employment. For example, there will be opportunities during your leisure time, an obvious example of teamwork being participation in a team sport. Voluntary experience, involvement in a Parent-Teacher Association or amateur dramatics will all provide useful skills, which are equally valid on an application form or CV providing they address the employers' needs.

Requirements of Academic Employers

We have covered, in detail, the skills that employers outside academia are looking for, but many of you will be looking for ways to improve your chances of finding permanent employment within academia. Although your research experience is of paramount importance, employers will also be looking for evidence of your teaching and administrative skills.

In a series of adverts for lectureships taken from Times Higher Education - the following requirements were repeatedly expressed:-

- related expertise and knowledge;

- evidence of research achievement in the form of published output;

- university teaching experience;

- administrative experience;

- evidence of motivation;

- IT literacy.

How to Gain the Skills You Need?

In order to build your **research** reputation, you might consider the following suggestions:-

- Investigating the reputation of potential colleagues before accepting a short-term position. If you work with well-respected researchers, this will look more impressive on your CV.

- Trying to get some peer-reviewed practice before presenting a paper at a conference. Preparation will increase your confidence and allow you to project a more professional, competent image.

- Ensuring that your publications are of a high standard.

- Trying to win prestigious awards.

To build your **teaching** experience, you might consider the following possibilities:-

- Contributing to the supervision of PhD students.
- Demonstrating to undergraduate and postgraduate students.
- Training colleagues in particular techniques that you are familiar with.
- Running tutorials.
- Giving papers at inter-departmental or inter-university level.
- Attending 'teaching skills' courses run by the staff development department at your institution.
- Accessing information and resources from the Professional Development and Recognition section of the HE Academy **www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/professional**

To increase your **administrative** experience, you might consider the following ideas:-

- Becoming increasingly involved in funding/budgeting issues by looking for opportunities to assist colleagues with related administrative tasks.

- Gaining some project management experience by volunteering for supervisory roles.

- Volunteering for unpopular administrative tasks.

- Offering to be responsible for ordering equipment/materials.

- Organising licences etc for experimental work.

- Organising a symposium/conference.

Other useful activities might include the following suggestions:-

- Networking with colleagues both inside and outside your own institution to build your oral communication skills.

- Obtaining extra qualifications, if appropriate. For example, you might consider a course in management skills or a computer programming language.

- Familiarising yourself with quality assessment procedures and understanding higher education issues, perhaps through involvement with a relevant committee.

Case Study

Following a first degree in Chemistry, a period of school teaching and a PhD in Biochemistry, Greta became a postdoctoral researcher funded by a cancer research foundation. Her ultimate aim was to become a lecturer and obtain a permanent contract.

Her first move was to ensure that she had a supportive manager. Consequently, she was encouraged to produce sole publications, ghost-write grant applications, jointly supervise several PhD students and visit other scientists, giving papers at conferences whenever she had the opportunity. This allowed her to build a good reputation and make vital contacts. Such exposure also led to several important collaborative projects, which promoted her reputation further afield.

There were limited teaching opportunities in her department and Greta knew that teaching experience would be vital. She took on extra responsibilities as an Open University tutor, working in the evening and at summer schools, in order to gain this.

When a permanent job eventually came up, Greta's experience and dedication ensured that she was the best candidate.

Chapter 4 CAREER DIRECTION

The aim of this chapter is to help you review some broad employment options that you need to be aware of when planning career direction that is right for you now and in the future. Your current role as a skilled researcher can be a springboard for many career areas. You also need to decide whether you are currently prepared to take the short, medium or long-term view. For more advice on how you might generate ideas and make career decisions, see Chapter 2 'Making Choices'.

There are three main career directions you might choose:-
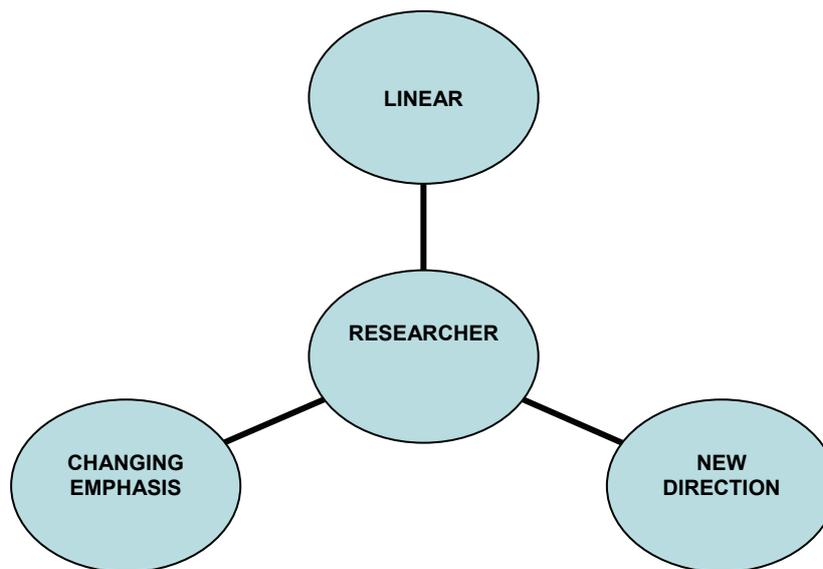
Linear progression – continuing your research career. This could be developing your research career within the academic sector, Universities or Research Institutes or in a commercial or public sector organisation outside academia.

In essence continuing to use and develop your research skills, as those at the core of your career but also go on to develop, in the case of current academic permanent roles, a mixture of teaching, admin and third mission skills. The latter includes innovation and engagement with wider communities, links with industry and knowledge transfer. If you were In a commercial research setting going on to develop a different range of other skills and experience. For example, you might extend your current contract or obtain a new one, gain a permanent academic post or find employment with a research organisation.

Changing emphasis – developing an existing area of expertise. For example, you may move to another occupation related to your knowledge or subject base, or take up some relevant further training.

New direction – choosing to make a complete career change to something entirely different. For example, you may make a career from an outside interest or hobby, build on some voluntary experience, take a full-time vocational training course or start your own business

Destinations

As a researcher you may have entered the profession with a PhD or a Masters Degree with research training, have moved in from another career e.g. Social Work or teaching for social science research or IT or engineering for those scientific areas or taken a junior research assistant post as a first move following your degree. The skills and experience you have amassed along with your understanding of career success will have an impact upon your future plans. It is therefore very useful to review the destination information for research staff, PhD postgraduates, Masters postgraduates and graduates. This can help with both making decisions) and exploring the labour market. (see Chapter 2 Making Choices).

Research Staff Destinations

Official HESA (Higher Education Statistics Agency) Destinations data collected from academic leavers across the university sector is brief for research staff when they finish their contracts or leave research posts. Whilst useful background these statistics do not however provide the detail of the occupations entered. This data is drawn from the whole population, not distinguishing by discipline or research area. The return for 2006/7 has information covering just over 4,550, 45% of the 10,210 leavers. Over 29% moved to another Higher Education Institution either in the UK or overseas continuing an academic career whilst the option of working in a variety of fields in the private sector was taken by 16%. Others are split between health services, other public sector jobs and other jobs or further study. There were 8% staff not in regular employment.

PhD, Masters and Graduate Destinations

The PhD postgraduate, Masters postgraduate and Graduate destination information is specific on subject or discipline areas. The Labour Market section of the Prospects Website (see below) links you to destination trends, labour market trends with links to the publications What do Postgraduates Do? and What do Graduates Do?. Updates of this information is done annually. For the PhDs, just over 40% have entered educational professionals and general research. In addition there are also some interesting analyses in What do PhDs Do - Trends? A very revealing review of the destinations from 2003, 2004 and 2005 as a whole and by subject. If you wish to look in further detail there are some longitudinal data studies in the web list below. Whilst this data is collected on an annual basis publication of analyses are less frequent. The message for you from this research is that there are many realistic options. It could be helpful to speak to your Human Resources Department or Careers Service about information at your own institution as outlined in Chapters 10 and 11. (Volume III)

Employer Perceptions

Employers outside research are willing to welcome staff looking for a change or new direction but their awareness of the skills and experiences of researchers varies a great deal. The Empress Survey, Employer's perceptions of recruiting research staff and students published by the University of Leeds in 2005 (see sources below) provides a great insight into the views of employers, researchers and the communication between them. See also Chapter 3 Identifying Skills which gives details of the earlier study "University Researchers, Employers' Attitudes and Recruitment Practices" (Wright 2000). Many employers expect that you will have a range of skills including analytical, writing, presentation, self learning and other skills traditionally associated with academic life in addition to any technical skills related to your subject area.

They may however be concerned that researchers lack teamwork, leadership. project management, commercial awareness and ambition. You therefore need to be able to put those research skills to good use and check what is needed and make sure you "translate" your evidence into employer speak (see Chapter 7 Making Applications).

Linear Progression

Improving Your Chances

Academia

If you wish to remain in academia with permanent employment as your ultimate goal there are a number of current options. You may wish to continue in research by applying for further research contracts either developing your specialism or diversifying, moving to a more teaching based role, or work towards a mixed lecturing role including research, teaching and administration elements. You need to consider the following to build up skills, experience and contacts:-

- Building a significant body of research publications.
- Keeping up to date with fellowship options.
- Being aware of the increasing multidisciplinary research options.
- Becoming increasingly involved in funding/budgeting issues.
- Gaining some project management experience.
- Increasing your teaching responsibilities.
- Familiarising yourself with quality assessment procedures.
- Understanding broader higher education issues.
- Networking with colleagues both inside and outside your own institution.
- Obtaining extra qualifications, if appropriate.

Successful academic careers can be built within the constantly developing Higher Education sector.

Case Study

After obtaining a BSc in Physics, Alison went to work for an engineering company. She eventually realised that she wouldn't be able to progress any further without a higher degree, so she returned to higher education. Following a masters degree in Polar Studies she became a full-time research assistant.

During her first post, she attended a course on 'Career development for research staff'. Alison says 'this was very helpful in making me realise that no-one else was going to look after my career progression – it was entirely up to me to decide where I wanted to go and how I was going to get there'. This was the impetus for her to register for a part-time PhD.

After years of working on her own behind a computer Alison decided she would relish the opportunity to teach, so she took on some undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, attended short training courses at her institution and started applying for lectureships. She is currently employed on a permanent contract by one of the post '92 universities.

Her advice is "Don't be afraid to apply to universities further down the RAE scale. The teaching load may be heavier than at more prestigious universities but there are compensations, like a far more supportive atmosphere, encouragement and financial help to continue with research, and a greater chance of going straight into a permanent post."

Mobility and networking can make useful connections.

Case Study

After completing his first degree in Social and Political Sciences, Peter took a year away from academia in financial administration, before returning to study for a Masters' degree in Industrial Relations. While on that course, he took a module in vocational training and decided that his future lay in that area. Subsequently, he studied for a PGCE, during which time he was approached by one of his tutors who suggested that he apply for a PhD, which he did.

At his viva, the external examiner mentioned that he had recently won a large ESRC grant and said that he should consider applying for one of the postdoctoral research positions attached to the project. He applied, was offered the job and accepted it. Several months later, the project moved institutions and he moved with it, but stayed in contact with the people he had got to know at his previous university. Eventually, a lectureship came up in his old department. He applied for it and was offered the position.

Peter says "Perhaps the main thing to emphasise from my experience is the importance of maintaining contact with people you come into contact with – particularly those who might be able to offer you a job at some point. Your PhD examiners, heads of department, senior lecturers, indeed all friends and colleagues within academia, may be able to help you find the right job, even if it's simply acting as a referee for you or putting in a good word. In a similar vein, 'networking' at conferences, workshops, social functions and other events can help in identifying the right people and provide a means of getting to know them."

Outside Academia

Many former research staff have successfully chosen research roles outside academia.

Case Study

After a history degree, a short period of teaching and a PhD, James found himself unemployed. He undertook some research work for an author and produced several academic articles, while writing a book based on his PhD. He found himself "too well qualified, or not properly qualified, to get a non-professional or non-skilled job, but unable to secure a job for which I was potentially qualified."

He obtained his current role, as a reader adviser at an archive repository, after responding to an advertisement in a national newspaper. The job involves administrative, research and editorial responsibilities as well as regular contact with members of the public. Although the job uses many of the skills he gained during his research, James doesn't feel that he has the same level of intellectual challenge so he has continued his historical research as a hobby.

His advice is "ensure that you don't become too isolated as a researcher and that you remain able to relate to people working outside your field". He also recommends that you "obtain transferable skills – computing skills are useful, as are presentation skills".

There are good quality Public Sector roles available.

Case Study

After gaining a first degree in Chemistry with Education and a PhD in the Education/Social Sciences field, Dorothy worked on various short-term contracts. A desire to return to her home town, and have a break from academia, lead her to Scotland where she now works as a research officer with a non-governmental organisation (NGO).

Dorothy hasn't ruled out a return to academia. Her current role involves similar research, but also includes project and financial management, and liaison with various committees. She advises those who are considering the same path to "be aware that you won't have the same opportunities to publish. You will need to devote a lot of your own time to writing and negotiate heavily to make opportunities."

However, she does feel that it is a "good idea to step outside academia and broaden your experience. You will realise that research is done very differently in terms of time scale and techniques. You will have to deal with non researchers who don't understand why you want to do research at all and why you have to do it in a particular way. This can be very challenging."

Your skills can be transferred to new environments.

Case Study

Samuel obtained a first degree in Applied Biology, followed by a PhD studying cell division. He was a post-doctoral researcher for three years and now works as a senior computer biologist in a genetic research centre.

He decided to change his career because he wanted to get away from short-term contracts and laboratory work. His current job, which uses much of the knowledge he gained during his academic research career, was advertised in a popular scientific publication. His laboratory skills are now redundant, but he is learning new computer skills.

His advice, to those who are considering a change of career, is to "get some new relevant skills, maximise the CV, be confident".

Changing Emphasis

Improving Your Chances

To maximise your chances of success, you might consider the following:-

- Increasing your involvement in the most enjoyable aspects of your current role. For example, if you enjoy teaching and are considering a career in training – build on your teaching experience.

- Thoroughly researching your field of interest and gaining relevant skills or qualifications such as advanced IT skills, languages, proof-reading etc.

- Enhancing your commercial awareness, for example through increased knowledge of funding/budgeting issues, project management experience, and looking out for any industrial/government collaboration projects.

- Attending institutional and regional events run for researchers offering opportunities to hearing about career change experiences from former researchers.

- Attending so called "Graduate" targeted events to gather options information.

- Revisiting your University Careers Library for a range of occupational information. (See Chapter 10 Visiting the University Careers Service.)

- Gaining work-shadowing experience with current practitioners in sectors that interest you.

Suggestions for Research

You might use your existing expertise in a less research-orientated area, for example, a biochemist may consider a career in forensic science, quality assurance or the brewing industry. Similarly if you work in health-related research the NHS have many options from Clinical Science to Health Policy and Finance to consider.

Your knowledge of a particular subject area could be very useful in a department such as marketing or sales. In this type of role, you would also have the opportunity to build on other skills such as communication or negotiation.

Once you have identified and fully researched an occupation that interests you, you might send targeted speculative applications. See Chapter 7 'Making Applications' (Volume II) for more information. For advice on identifying your strengths and deciding how you might use them, see Chapter 2 'Making Choices'.

Making the Most of the University

There are many options available to continue your career within the university environment, but in a different role. For example, you might look for employment in an administrative department such as Academic Registry or Research Support dealing with funding support and spin off companies. Check the internal jobs web page for your institution, this will contain all the current vacancies, from senior lecturer posts to maintenance jobs.

Redeployment

Some institutions may offer the option of redeployment for staff on fixed-term contracts. Make sure you check this out with your line manager or your Human Resources department well before your contract term expires. This may have the effect of giving you preferential rights to attendance at interview and could be a convenient chance to look at areas of the University that you had not thought of before. Being an internal candidate it is also easier to take up the option of an informal chat with the recruiter.

If you have contacts in other institutions, you could ask them to alert you if something suitable is likely to arise in addition to checking the job websites of your target universities.

Ex Researchers can develop international careers in the university sector.

Case Study

Lolita is a multilingual experienced former researcher with an international background and a career path to match. She has worked and studied in 4 countries on her career journey with a first degree in Physics and PhD in Radiation Biology and presently works in Germany at a prestigious national research centre where she coordinates an international PhD programme, dealing with its marketing and developing training curricula.

The decision to change from her accomplished research career of 9 years duration was based on her declaration that "I felt that yet another post-doc was out of question – 'one could not retire as a post-doc!'. She looked at lectureships as her first option but after getting to second choice at two interviews realised that neither her heart nor her head could settle with this as the nature of the very busy mixed role as a teacher, administrator, grant writer would not leave enough time to research the only career she knew.

Career change dawned as a realistic option when she attended a career planning workshop and followed up with reading the book 'Leaving the Ivory Tower: alternative careers in science'. She was successful in finding a permanent research administration/technology transfer position at a university where she did one of her post-docs. "I wanted to stay in academia, be able to use my broad interdisciplinary research skills, but also to work directly with people." This turned out to be an ideal opportunity.

"I had to meet academics from a range of the departments and learn about their research, inform them on relevant funding opportunities and assist with preparing the grant applications, setting collaborations and getting their finding protected (patents) and commercialised. I was given the opportunity to attend the courses to learn about technology transfer, and it also meant the opportunity to broaden my skills and knowledge." When Lolita and her husband decided to move out of the UK, following his career, the technology transfer experience had broadened her experience sufficiently to help her gain the current role.

Advice from Lolita on a career change is to practise your research skills on checking out your career research, and make sure you have made the right decision. Finally, if it within a university be positive and be prepared to confidently justify yourself and your role to academic staff whose career choice you have moved away from.

Looking out for growing areas and making use of you insider knowledge can be an ideal combination.

Case Study

Following a PhD in Pharmacology, Michelle worked as a post-doc for several years. She reached a point where she had had enough of the research treadmill. She had proved that she could "do research, come up with fundable ideas, raise external funds, supervise junior research staff, write papers, give presentations and gain a national/international reputation" and decided that she needed a change.

One of her responsibilities was to run the undergraduate work-placement scheme. Much of her time was spent "advising students on self assessment of skills and in articulating their achievements and abilities to prospective employers." She enjoyed this aspect of the work and decided "I had better start taking my own advice". She saw a potential niche, focusing on postgraduate education, and when a post came up successfully applied. She now has a permanent position in training and development.

Her advice is "Accept that you may have to play a waiting game. Try to gain some experience of working in the area of your choice. Look for areas in which there are likely to be new openings. Accept that short-term contracts are used to manage risk and exposure when people are setting up new initiatives."

There are many employers, closely linked with the university sector, who would find an employee with inside knowledge very useful.

Case Study

Jennifer obtained a first degree and worked in management and training roles with a variety of organisations for several years. She was then invited to become a researcher and worked on various labour market-related projects within a research centre. She was employed on a series of fixed-term contracts.

She became "sick of dealing with the uncertainty and insecurity which this way of working involved" so she started to look elsewhere. She saw an advert for her current job, linking small companies with sources of university expertise, and applied. Having worked with the director on a number of occasions and with a core of relevant knowledge gained from her extensive research experience, Jennifer got the job.

Her advice to research staff career changers is "try to get involved in as many activities as possible which are not specifically concerned with your own research". Jennifer was a member of the university's Concordat Implementation Group, and this gave her access to senior staff and extensive networking opportunities with individuals outside her own area.

Improving Your Chances

If you want an entirely new direction there are endless possibilities. This makes it impossible to give precise advice on how to improve your chances, but the following are some general suggestions you might consider:-

- Drawing on strengths that you already have. For example, if you are an excellent communicator and can easily explain complex issues to a layperson, you might consider journalism or publishing and seek opportunities to gain relevant experience.

- Recognising the skills that employers in a particular sector are seeking and concentrating on filling your gaps, for example, through a relevant course.

- Thoroughly researching the field, through networking and work shadowing. One of the benefits will be convincing potential employers that you are properly motivated.

- If business is of interest make use of the free Enterprise courses and sometimes finance help in your area.

- Use the Career change "process" and "suggestions" books listed below.

- Revisiting your University Careers Library for a range of occupational information.

- Consider taking a Gap year for grown ups, giving you time to think.

Experimenting can pay off.

Case Study

Cara obtained a first degree in Sociology and a Masters degree in Social Research Methods. She then became a university researcher, working on projects for the Home Office.

The low pay and lack of available jobs, combined with her colleagues' limited team-working skills, lead to Cara's decision to change her career.

She joined a recruitment agency and they found her a job in recruitment. Her work involves researching candidates, maintaining a client database and negotiating contracts. It has also allowed her to develop the interviewing skills she used during her research.

Her advice to current researchers is "go for every opportunity and show that the skills you have learnt are applicable to the job you are looking to do."

Transferring skills in short supply to growing areas of the employment market is lower risk.

Case Study

Rebecca's BA in Chemistry, MSc in Geology and PhD in Geochemistry led her to a prestigious research position. From there she obtained a permanent lectureship, but found that the department was unable to live up to many of the promises made on her appointment. For example, research facilities were insufficient, there were financial problems and her publication record was suffering.

After a serious rethink, Rebecca decided that she relished "the opportunity to work in a more team-oriented situation with clear goals and relatively frequent new challenges". She identified three potential areas of employment and researched them thoroughly by contacting current practitioners and reading relevant literature.

She eventually decided that a career in Information Architecture would fulfill her requirements and sent speculative applications to several companies. She obtained advice on her CV from a friend working in the field and was invited for interview by a number of employers. She accepted a job and will start in the Autumn.

Her advice is to "find something you really want to do and are enthusiastic and passionate about. Chances are, if you are applying for a job that is perfect for you, they'll hire you. It is very hard to be enthusiastic about something you don't really want and see as second best". She also says "you're much better going for a really obscure job that really fits you than a main stream job that you think you're more likely to get because more people are hired overall."

Business accept a wide range of subject backgrounds.

Case Study

Stan followed his PhD in Immunology with 5 years of research contracts at his home Institution, gaining good technical skills and a growing list of publications. He had toyed with the idea of looking at a finance career before he did his PhD but had decided to crack on with the sciences as his tutor had some funding and a project which followed on from his undergrad project. He then took a long hard look at the pay and the uncertainty on offer and with thoughts of planning a family decided that he needed to look elsewhere. Science was great but he had other plans.

Stan looked at banking and chartered accountancy at a graduate fair and after going through psychometric tests, interviews and assessment centres with the support of his old Careers Service and a friend who had qualified with one of the medium-sized firms he decided on Chartered Accountancy training with one of the big firms. It was a serious decision to leave science and enter a domain where the PhD was a "nice but not needed", and your A level grades seemed to matter more.

The new commercial life is going fine with Stan sailing through the professional exams in his first year and he loves the variety of going out and meeting new people every few weeks plus the great camaraderie and the social life, despite being several years older than his fellow trainees. He is looking forward to regular pay rises if he keeps on track with his exams and work. He advises "you develop more skills than you know in research but you need to be able to articulate them."

Starting your own business can suit a change in lifestyle.

Case Study

Emma had never intended to do research, but an interesting subject and the opportunity to work on environmental projects tempted her. She became a contract researcher in a very specialised branch of chemistry. As there were very few secure jobs available, she was "not that keen to stay in research" and felt that the longer she continued with it the fewer career options she would have in the future.

She had made a number of useful contacts during her research and was expecting a baby, so she decided to try working freelance. She is now working from home on projects for several organisations and has the flexibility to care for her child.

She says "using my existing contacts was very useful – they gave me helpful suggestions and also ultimately helped me to find the work which I am now doing. Networking is very important."

Sources

Here are a range of books addressing academic careers and change options. There is also a selection of the many websites addressing matters from fellowships and research jobs alternative options with your research skills and running your own business to destination information for postgraduates and research staff.

Books

Academic Careers

Ali, L. and Graham, B., *Moving On in Your Career. A guide for academic researchers and postgraduates,* Routledge Falmer, London, 2000.
Blaxter, L., Hughes, C. and Tight, M. *The Academic Career Handbook,* Open University Press, Buckingham, 1998.
Boden, Rebecca, Epstein, Debbie & Kenway, Jane. Academic's support kit [set of 6 books]. Sage Publications. London. 2005.
Delamont, Sara & Atkinson, Paul. Successful research careers: a practical guide. Open University Press. Maidenhead 2004.
McCabe, Edward & McCabe, Linda. How to succeed in academics. Academic Press. London 2000.
Newhouse, M., *Cracking the Academic Nut: A Guide to Preparing for Your Academic Career*, President and Fellows of Harvard College, USA, 1993.
Newhouse, M., *Outside the Ivory Tower: A Guide for Academics Considering Alternative Careers*, President and Fellows of Harvard College, USA, 1997.

Career Change

Change process

Basalla, Susan & Debelius, Maggie. So what are you going to do with that? a guide to career changing for MAs and PhDs. VHPS Holtzbrinck Publishing. 2001.

Bolles, Richard Nelson. What color is your parachute?: a practical manual for job-hunters and career-changers. Ten Speed Press, Berkeley,1997.
Green, Graham. Career change handbook: how to find out what you're good at and what you enjoy: then get someone to pay you for it. How To Books. ISBN 978 1 84528 137 3.
Hawkins, Peter, *The Art of Building Windmills: career tactics for the 21st century* Liverpool : University of Liverpool, 1999.
Hopson, B. and Scally, M., *Build Your Own Rainbow: a workbook for career and life management* Chalford, 2004.
Johnstone, Judith. Planning a career change. How To Books. 2006.

Change suggestions

Brown, Craig. Working in the voluntary sector: how to find rewarding and fulfilling work in charities and voluntary organisations. How To Books. 2005.
Eikleberry, Carol. The career guide for creative and unconventional people. Ten Speed Press. 1999.
Reuvid, Jonathan. Working for yourself : an entrepreneur's guide to the basics. Kogan Page. 2007.
Griffith, Susan. Gap years for grown ups. Vacation Work Publications. Oxford 2006
Cynthia Robbins-Roth, editor Alternative Careers in Science: leaving the ivory tower London: Academic, 1998.
Sato, Toshihiro. NIRA's world directory of think tanks. National Institute for Research Advancement. Tokyo 2005.

Websites

Academic

http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/aboutrcs/default.htm Research councils site with links to all seven Research Councils.

www.researchresearch.com for funding opportunities and news on research policy and politics world-wide. All disciplines covered.

Across Disciplines:

www.royalsoc.ac.uk/ The Royal Society – UK's national academy of science.

www.leverhulme.org.uk/ The Leverhulme Trust – supports research and education in all subject areas.

www.nuffieldfoundation.org/   The Nuffield Foundation – a charitable trust aimed to 'advance social well being', particularly through research and practical experiment.

www.esf.org/   The European Science Foundation (ESF) – the European association of national organisations responsible for support of scientific research.

Addressing Work Life Balance

http://www.daphnejackson.org/   The Daphne Jackson Trust - implements a Fellowship scheme to enable a return to careers in science or engineering through updated knowledge and renewed professional skills.

Job Hunting

www.jobs.ac.uk/ The main job hunting website for research, science academic and related professions jobs.

http://www.findapostdoc.com/ Large database of post doctoral job opportunities.

http://www.findaphd.com/ Large database of postgraduate opportunities.

Science/Engineering Research Employers

http://www.abpi.org.uk/ Pharmaceutical industry – The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI) website at includes a list of member companies under 'associated links'.

http://www.acrpi.com/ Association of clinical research careers information.

http://www.airto.co.uk/about.htm Independent research organisations – see the members directory on the Association of Independent Research and Technology Organisations website.

http://www.biologyinbusiness.org/ Biology in Business BiB non-profit organization that bridges academic and commercial life science to promote career development and technology transfer.

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/index.htm Government Departments – on-line A to Z database at UK Government website includes links to all the Government Department websites.

http://www.nature.com/naturejobs/index.html Major science publications /academic websites Nature.

http://www.naturenet.net/orgs/ Provides links to the websites of several agencies. Wildlife or environmental protection agencies – the Naturenet "who's who" listing of organisations.

http://www.newscientistjobs.com/jobs/default.aspx New Scientist.

http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/ At *Science* Careers.Org is a mixed careers help and international employment opportunities site for qualified scientists with jobs in industry, academia, and Government. Includes good range of case studies. Focus is USA but European portal available Electronic newsletter available.

http://www.theengineer.co.uk/Home/Default.aspx Engineering - this site covers all engineering specialisms.

http://www.ukspa.org.uk/home SMEs (Small and Medium-sized Employers) – the directory of members on a relevant trade association or professional body website, for example the United Kingdom Science Park Association website.

Social Science/Humanities Research Employers

http://www.archives.org.uk/ The Society of Archivists is the principal professional body for archivists, archive conservators and records managers in the United Kingdom and Ireland. Includes career development section.

http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/about/public/bodies.asp   Agencies and public bodies website provides Information about Executive Agencies and Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs), their purpose, history and organisation Links to Agencies' and their parent departments' websites.

http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/iwant/index.asp Civil Service recruitment link site.

http://www.gsr.gov.uk/recruitment/index.asp   Government Social Research or GSR website includes recruitment opportunities.

http://www.mrs.org.uk/ The Market Research Association (MRS) website is an association representing providers and users of market, social, and opinion research, and business intelligence.

http://www.natcen.ac.uk/ The National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) is the largest independent social research institute in Britain. It provides training ,conferences and own job opportunities.

http://www.nira.or.jp/english/index.html Think tanks – the National Institute for Research Advancement (NIRA) includes a World Directory of Think Tanks under 'think tank information' on its website. 2008 edition is on-line only.

http://www.oultwood.com/index.php   Local Government – the Oultwood Local Government Website Index, searchable by country.

http://www.rbg.org.uk/ Link The Research Buyer's Guide (RBG) is a directory of market research providers and support services there is also careers section.

http://www.labournet.net/links.asp   Trade Unions – Activist Network a directory of left, radical websites includes a list of links to trade union websites under 'Unions'.

http://www.charitychoice.co.uk/   Charities – the Charity Choice website at is a charity directory, searchable by category.

International - All Disciplines

http://www.europa.eu.int/eures/home.jsp?lang=en - European mobility portal with job search facility for post doctoral and other posts in Europe.

Destinations and Labour Market Information

http://www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Labour_market_information/p !efeXak Annually updated graduate and postgraduate destinations - The Labour market section of the Prospects Website also links to trends and destinations information.

www.ahrc.ac.uk/about/ke/evaluation/pg_career_tracking.asp **Longitudinal study** - Tracking researcher Careers: AHRC study on the impact of skills development, career progression and economic and social contribution of arts and humanities PhD graduates.

http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/Images/employment_of_soc_sci_ phds_tcm6-15385.pdf Longitudinal study - The ESRC The employment of social science PhDs in academic and non academic jobs: research skills and postgraduate training.

http://careerweb.leeds.ac.uk/downloads/Empress_LR_000.pdf   Employer perceptions- Empress Survey. Staff , student and employer perceptions of recruiting research staff and students.

Starting Your Own Business

A new direction may involve starting your own business. If you are considering this option, there are a number of organisations that can help you including some examples of regional help. Also check your own University student societies and your research and business links or commercial development sections.

http://www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Self_employment/p!eFcmg
Graduate Prospects self employment site with advice and links.

www.businesslink.gov.uk BusinessLink provides information on self-employment, starting small businesses, entrepreneurship.

http://www.startups.co.uk/ All round advice and links site for new businesses.

http://www.financewales.co.uk/what_we_do.aspx Commercial funding for businesses in Wales. Regional help with HE associated spin out companies.

http://www.oxonbe.co.uk/ Regional help in Oxfordshire area.

New from Autumn 2008

http://www.vitae.ac.uk/ Look out for an increasing range of resources dedicated to research staff career development and for PhD students from Vitae, successor to UKGRAD which developed many resources for PhD students in the past.

Chapter 5 RESEARCHING OPTIONS

Once you have some ideas about what you want to do next, whether that means staying in academic employment or exploring other fields, you will need to research the options that are open to you. This will enable you to make a more informed decision when suitable opportunities arise, and allow you to demonstrate your motivation in job applications.

Although the information in this chapter is mainly based on finding employment outside academia, there are many points that will be equally useful for those of you wishing to continue your academic career.

Sources of Information

There are a number of sources of information which you can make use of during your research:-

Careers Information

Careers Service Library/Resource Centre - for details on the facilities available see Chapter 10 Visiting the University Career Service.

Computer Programs e.g. Prospect Planner, available on the Prospects website via What Job would suit me? **www.prospects.ac.uk**

Occupational Profiles - Explore types of work using the occupational database of Prospects Planner which has occupational profiles giving job descriptions, entry, training, sources of vacancies etc **www.prospects.ac.uk**

Professional Bodies/Learned Societies - Websites often offer detailed careers advice. Printed career guides may be purchased and some have case studies/histories.

Practitioners - Ask them about their own background and day-to-day work. This can be very useful if wanting to investigate different entry points into career areas.

Peers and colleagues - Investigate other roles within academia. See earlier chapters on career options.

The Internet - Many university careers services are providing websites specifically for university researchers. Examples include: **http://www.bris.ac.uk/researchstaff/** and the Careers Group the University of London Virtual Careers Library at **www.careers.lon.ac.u**k is also worth a visit. Prospects Web, **www.prospects.ac.uk** provides detailed information on a number of occupational areas as outlined under occupational profiles.

Training Information

Careers Service Library* - For details on the facilities available, see Chapter 10 Visiting the University Career Service.

HR/Staff development – find out about university professional development courses. More are now offering courses and events for research staff. Some may also be offering leadership/management training to help with your future management development.

Professional bodies - Specific training courses or qualifications are often endorsed.

Practitioners - May provide latest opinion on appropriate training.

The Internet - Check the credibility of a web advertised course before paying money to attend. Ask tutors what previous students are doing now, or discuss the course content with current practitioners.

* Where 'Careers Service Library is mentioned - this refers to services catering for students in HE. Many of these may now have remits to support research staff.

Labour Market Information

Practitioners - May advise on the career prospects in a particular industry.

Surveys - What do PhDs Do? – **www.vitae.ac.uk** plus a regional analysis of where PhD researchers are employed.

Research Council websites for details of their current research and the Research Councils also employ researchers and other staff and are very interested in career development issues **http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/aboutrcs/default.htm** Site with links to all seven Research Councils.

The Internet - Access Prospects Web at **www.prospect.ac.uk** and choose 'Career planning' then 'Using your degree' for a section on the graduate labour market. Using your qualifications: Your PhD … What Next? is helpful.

Printed reports - Press and business reports or Chamber of Commerce publications will provide the latest information on individual companies as well as particular industries. Income Data Services Surveys are also useful **http://www.incomesdata.co.uk/**

Brief Summary of the Current Job Market

Many permanent contracts within academia were gained more than 20 years ago when there were relatively few contract research staff within universities, and external opportunities, such as in the manufacturing industry, were more obviously available. Since that time there have been numerous changes in the labour market, both inside and outside academia, and the picture today is very different.

Examples of Labour Market Changes include:-

- A decline in manufacturing industry (a traditional employer of research staff);

- De-layering of management structures within the workplace, reducing the likelihood of automatic promotion and increasing the necessity for transferable skills;

- The outsourcing of non-essential services, reducing the number of permanent employees in a company but increasing the role of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs);

- A change in focus from products to customers, leading to an increased requirement for commercial awareness in employees;

- Fast moving technology leading to an increased requirement for IT skills in the workplace;

- Increased regulation creating the need for organisations to have access to expert advice on how to ensure compliance;

- More emphasis on working within a global environment.

Employer Information

Careers Service Library - For details on the facilities available, see Visiting the University Careers Service, Volume III Chapter 10.

Professional Bodies - Often have specialist libraries. May provide lists of member companies for further research (often available on the website). Some have 'careers' sections with useful case studies.

Practitioners - Identify someone currently working for a particular employer and investigate the reality.

The Internet - The Careers Group of the University of London Careers Service Virtual Careers Library, at **www.careers.lon.ac.uk** contains a large number of links to employers' websites in an easily searchable format.

Local employer lists - Access lists of local employers from your city library or town hall, or look in the Yellow Pages. There are also regional sources like GO Wales **http://www.gowales.co.uk/en/graduate/index.html** which has both market information and graduate level vacancies and work placements in Wales.

Science Parks - Special research and technology business areas, in the UK, often linked to universities **http://www.ukspa.org.uk/home** SMEs (Small and Medium-sized Employers) – the directory of members of the United Kingdom Science Park Association.

REMEMBER

When investigating employers outside academia, it is easy to concentrate on household names and overlook less well-known organisations. This is particularly the case with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). For example, there are more than 1,200 such firms in the Cambridge Science Park alone, many of which are looking for the specialist skills and knowledge of university researchers.

Similarly with the finance an accountancy industry with many firms unknown to the general public but listed in the According to Business Link are currently over 4 million SMEs in the UK, and the market is growing, so this could be a good starting point for your research **http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/**

Vacancy Information

Careers Service- See Volume III Chapter 10, Visiting the University Careers Service, for vacancies notified to the Careers Service.

The Internet - Vacancy sites like **www.jobs.ac.uk**

Newspapers - National, regional or local newspapers. For academic posts see the Times Higher Education Supplement **http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/** or the Guardian on Tuesdays.

Specialist Publications - Professional journals or trade magazines. Obtain through good newsagents or membership of the relevant professional body. The university library may also offer a selection. Quality weekly publications such as The New Scientist, New Statesman or Economist may contain academic posts.

Professional Development Websites - Often carry vacancies and support e.g. Vitae **www.vitae.ac.uk** Science.Org magazine and website **http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/**

Science Noticeboards - Institutional noticeboards often advertise academic posts.

Recruitment Agencies - Agencies are not permitted to charge you so avoid using those that try. Access the Recruitment and Employment Confederation website at **www.rec.uk.com** Use the 'Find a Consultancy' facility to search for member agencies representing your particular interest and geographical location. Some agencies have strong links to regional development and local universities such as Graduate Yorkshire **http://www.graduatesyorkshire.co.uk/**

Research centres outside academia. For example:
Social Research Association **http://www.the-sra.org.uk/**
Independent Industrial Research Associations **http://www.airto.co.uk/**
Association of Medical Research Charities **http://www.amrc.org.uk/homepage/**

Personal Contacts - A large number of jobs are gained this way. See Networking information below and, Chapter 6 Building Academic Networks.

Overseas Information

Your university careers service will have some reference information. See Chapter 10 Visiting the University Careers Service.

The Internet - Access the Careers Group of The University of London new web resource – 'International Job online through **www.careers.lon.ac.uk/ijo** for links to several international recruitment pages.

The Prospects website has a Work and study overseas section with country specific information **www.prospects.ac.uk/**

The European Researchers Mobility Portal offers career opportunities and assistance for researchers **http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index_en.cfm**

Embassies - Contact the relevant embassy for advice on recruitment and information on living conditions etc. Access the London Diplomatic List on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website at **http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/what-we-do/building-strong-relationships-ol/foreign-embassy-uk/**

Networking Information

In each of the sections above, talking to practitioners has been a recommended strategy. In fact networking can be an extremely fruitful aspect of job hunting both inside and outside academia. Many of you already excel in this area, but others will feel daunted by the prospect of approaching strangers. Remember that most people will be flattered by your attention, and the worst they can do is refuse to help. Sometimes this process is referred to as the 'Creative Job search', or 'Informational Interviewing' where you uncover more about the 'Hidden Job Market'.

Benefits of Networking

- To collect useful information. Information gathering works in two ways. It allows you to make more informed applications and demonstrate that you have researched the role, but it may also allow you to delete inappropriate options from your list of possibilities.

- To make yourself known to people who may be able to influence your career progression. Interviewers trying to choose between two candidates are likely to pick the one they have had the most contact with. As long as you have impressed them, your previous discussions should give you an advantage. This is particularly true for smaller employers.

How to Network Effectively

A Strategy

- Decide what you want to achieve. Are you looking for information about a particular career or industry, or are you looking for a chance to demonstrate your aptitude to a potential recruiter? It might be wise to start with the former, as a request for advice is more likely to generate a response than asking for a job.

- Identify the most appropriate contact. The personnel officer is unlikely to be able to provide you with the inside information that you need. Aim for an individual currently working in a role that you are considering, or someone in a position to make recruitment decisions.

- Make sure you impress them. Find out as much as you can about the work before you go along to the meeting and prepare a list of questions so you don't end up wasting their time (and yours). Downloading an occupational profile from the Prospects website will give you a concise job description, details of entry requirements, etc and may help you focus on questions to ask **www.prospects.ac.uk** Even if you are only information gathering at this stage, it might be worth having a well-targeted CV handy just in case the person you are speaking to asks to see it. They might be able to suggest some improvements especially if this requires a targeted CV to move outside academia (See Chapter 7 Making Applications).

Generating Contacts

Identifying the appropriate contact is important, but how do you go about it? There are several levels you can progress through if you find the prospect of cold calling a complete stranger a little daunting.

- People you already know – friends, relatives, colleagues.

- People you almost know – the friends, relatives and colleagues of the previous group.

- Complete strangers – generated from professional association websites, trade directories or lists of university alumni. Company websites sometimes list the contact details of individuals in different departments.

You might also gain some useful contacts through attending careers events (courses, fairs, occupational panels etc). Visit your careers service library to find out what's on.

Making Contact

The next step is to decide how to approach your target. It may be appropriate to make an informal phone call or you might choose to e-mail them or write a letter. It is worth noting that although some individuals will get back to you promptly, in the majority of cases you will need to chase them. A follow-up phone call can be a very helpful strategy. The worst that can happen is that they will say no, but they may be able to suggest a colleague who has more time to oblige.

The Meeting

- Try to generate at least two new contacts from every meeting you have.

- Know when to leave. Keep an eye on body language.

- Keep records of each meeting.

- Always send a thank you letter or e-mail.

Former Research Staff Say ...

To highlight the use of networking in job search situations, the following quotes are from former researchers who are now working outside academia:-

"I had help from a friend within the business both in rewriting my CV and formulating my covering letter ... It was really helpful to have someone inside to tell me how I appeared ... It is worth spending a lot of time finding someone who is where you want to be who is willing to help you ... The thing is to follow up every lead you have until you find the right person on the inside. At that point you're 90% there."

"Talk to someone who works in the area that interests you. If you are in a job interview and you are naive about the difference between the academic world and theirs you will have no chance."

"I found that using my existing contacts was very useful – they gave me helpful suggestions and also ultimately helped me to find the work which I am now doing."

Obviously there are huge benefits to networking within the academic community as well.

Building a good reputation amongst peers and colleagues is vital if you wish to progress. Knowing and working with the right people can make a significant difference to your career progression.

Also see Chapter 6 Building Academic Networks, which gives a strategic guide to academic networking which is an essential part of career advancement within academia. This will be extremely useful if you wish to continue working within an academic environment.

Limiting Your Options

Your Own Stereotypes.

Many research staff are restricted by their own stereotypical view of employers outside academia. Here are some quotes:-

"Working in industry would mean giving up your freedom and flexibility, compromising the purity of your research."

"Working outside academia will be more pressurized. Companies are driven by financial issues rather than a desire for knowledge."

As with all stereotypes, these perceptions may have a grain of truth behind them. However, you shouldn't let that stop you from researching an area that interests you. Talking to current practitioners or work shadowing may show you a different picture and you may find that the pressures are easier to bear than those in your current environment.

Employers' Stereotypes

Your perception of the attitudes of employers might also limit the areas you consider. Quotes from employers include: "I would be very concerned that anyone who has been in university research for over three yeas has lost touch with the commercial world (EMPRESS 2005)." **http://careerweb.leeds.ac.uk/downloads/Empress_LR.pdf**

Assume ignorance, not arrogance. An employer who is not specifically targeting individuals with your academic background and has no personal experience of academia may not appreciate the skills and qualities you possess. Tackle the stereotypes and explain why they are wrong.

Other employers say "If they have the right skills sets and have researched themselves, the company, and can then market their skills on paper and at interview, we are happy to see them." large engineering company, (SEARCH 2006) Survey of employer attitudes to postgraduate researchers. Mary McCarthy and Jane Simm. The Careers Service, The University of Sheffield August 2006
www.careers.dept.shef.ac.uk/pdf/employersurvey.pdf

Former Research Staff Say …

"Recognise that you have an incredible range of transferable skills. Many employers have no idea what 'being a scientist' is all about and how many things you do as part of your job. You need to be prepared to spell it out to them."

"Be aware of the stereotypes you will be up against. You may have to play down your academic achievements, but give examples of when you have met deadlines etc. Although an employer may often use the 'added value' of having an academic researcher on the team, they may also be wary that you will not be prepared to undertake mundane tasks."

If you think the stereotypes are accurate, you might use them to demonstrate why you want to escape from the negative aspects of academic work and embrace a new career in a different environment.

Lack of Research

If your research is half hearted and doesn't involve personal contact with current practitioners, your applications will suffer. You will not demonstrate sufficient motivation, particularly if you are trying to persuade an employer outside academia to take a chance on you. Your academic prowess will not always be enough to get you to interview stage. You must demonstrate that you are well informed about the sector, the employer and the skills they are seeking. This will help you to convince them that you are genuinely interested in changing your career and haven't just run out of options in academia.

More views from employers "We recruit postdocs/research staff into non-research posts but they must be able to capitalize on 'transferable skills", research occupations, the job market etc (large scientific services, SEARCH 2006).

Being Too Selective

Don't ignore advertisements that do not specify a PhD or research experience. Those credentials may not be essential for the job, but that doesn't mean that the interviewers won't be impressed by the skills you have gained during your time in academia, or that the job is unsuitable for you.

You may be drawn towards prestigious jobs, which traditionally demand a high level of intellect. This is certainly appropriate, but such fields are usually highly competitive and your applications must be carefully targeted and well informed. Alternatively, you could investigate less competitive, but equally important, roles within the same industry.

The Wrong Attitude

Understandably, some of you will feel that potential employers should treat you differently from new, inexperienced graduates. If you have always been regarded as top of your field, it can be a shock to discover that some employers, although impressed by your academic reputation, are looking for other things.

However, employers' selection methods are carefully designed to assess specific skills and compare candidates in an equal opportunities environment. Why should they treat you any differently when there are lots of other excellent individuals to choose from? If you behave as if you are superior to other candidates, particularly in a group situation, you are likely to be shooting yourself in the foot. The employer will assume that you are not really interested in the job, and may even decide that you are not the type of person they wish to work with anyway.

One final point from employers "don't assume there is one entry point into a company, we recruit into technical positions, graduate training schemes, via websites, specialised journals, recruitment agencies , word of mouth, and by individuals contacting us for advice on what is the most appropriate route into our organisation" (large IT services, SEARCH).

Additional Support

Find out if there are professional development courses on networking, communicating effectively, personal effectiveness. If working within the university sector there may well be staff development opportunities via Human Resource departments, Research Offices, Postdoc Societies etc. Perhaps some of these are run in conjunction with University Careers Services especially at the larger HE institutions. The latter can be consulted on strategies and tactics to adopt. See Chapter 11 Making the most of Staff Development/ Human Resources.

Helpful publications include The Art of Building Windmills, Dr Peter Hawkins, including on line support via the Windmills Programme **www.windmillsonline.co.uk** and books such as Network Your Way to Success, John Timperley.

The Vitae website **www.vitae.ac.uk** has a good section on networking. See also Sources and Resources for Further Reading and Useful Websites.

Chapter 6 BUILDING ACADEMIC NETWORKS

In Chapter 5 'Researching Options', the importance of networking in the process of career development was emphasized and key aspects of this process were explored. This included the importance of having a strategy, how to generate contacts and issues to consider when meeting people face-to-face. As was previously stated, networking is also an essential part of career advancement within academia and we shall explore this in more detail in this chapter.

Types of Networks Within Academia

Kenway, Epstein and Boden, in 'Building Networks' (2005) describe 3 major types of network found within academia in considerable detail. They are:-

1. Academic Networks. Building relationships with individuals in your own research group and department and building relationships with researchers in other fields and institutions to enhance your own research and teaching.

2. Stakeholder Networks. Building relationships with non-university partners such as Government or commercial organisations who can make use of, and contribute, to your own research and teaching.

3. Dissemination Networks. The communication of your ideas and findings to other researchers within and beyond your institution and in many cases to the public at large.

This chapter focuses on the first type of Networking described – Academic Networks and draws to a great extent on advice offered by Kenway, Epstein and Boden (2005) noted above and Perkins (2007).

What is the Benefit of Academic Networking?

In Chapter 5 (page 38) it was explained that networking has two main benefits; to collect information that allows you to make more effective applications and decisions about career direction, as well as making yourself known to people who can influence your career. Successfully identifying and eliciting the help of key individuals can help your academic career in a variety of other ways:-

- It can provide research training and advice as well as access to new methods and technologies.

- Experienced researchers can provide general advice about your career or can act as informal or formal mentors.

- It can allow you to gather information and obtain access to sources of funding and job opportunities.

- It can result in the generation of new research ideas and lead to research collaboration.

- It can facilitate and enhance teaching and administration activities, experience of which is required in order to obtain a tenured position in the majority of academic institutions.

One essential feature of successful networking is pro-activity. You are going to have to actively search out and create opportunities for networking to achieve maximum success. Below are some key stages and activities to consider:-

Start With Who You Know, Then Build Outwards

During your everyday research start thinking strategically about how the people around you can help with your academic career. Make a list of everyone you come into contact with on a regular basis and are comfortable talking to. What about the contacts of your principal investigator or research head – can you use their networks? Then start to think, who do they know? Ideally what you need are to link up with people that Graham Perkins' Killer CVs and Other Hidden Approaches', (2007) describes as **'Connectors'**. These are people who, through their role or personality, know a lot of different people in a lot of useful places, such as key research groups and group leaders, people on boards of funding bodies, journal editors, departmental heads etc.

Get Yourself Out and About

In order to be successful in academic research it goes without saying that you need to get yourself known as far and wide within your research area, both nationally and in the majority of cases internationally. Start with your department. Socialise with people in other research groups, attend seminars and training events. You can use such people to generate ideas, gain strategic information (such as when a new position may be coming up) and gain access to equipment and resources, even useful collaboration. Next, get to know researchers beyond your own department, people in other parts of your faculty and institution – it is a very good idea to start thinking beyond your narrow area of research and become more cross-disciplinary; this helps with the generation of new ideas for research and in identifying future funding trends. An easy way to do this is to attend discussion groups, seminar and workshops in other departments or at the faculty level.

Conference Strategy

The next stage is to get yourself known beyond your institution. This can be done in a number of ways. Probably the most obvious is to attend conferences and external workshops. But first, you will have to do your homework. Is the focus of the conference relevant to your current and future research interests? Will it attract the people that you want to meet – who's on the list of attendees? How big is the conference/workshop and therefore how likely are you to bump into those you are targeting? If you are going to a large conference, then you will need to study the programme carefully and identify any panel session, workshops and other activities within the event where you are most likely to encounter key people.

Conferences are also an ideal opportunity for you to advertise yourself with the hope that people will start approaching you – making the job of networking that much easier. Ideally you could give a paper – either in a main session or in a fringe session or workshop. If you are fortunate, there may be academics within your audience who are actively recruiting. Failing that, networking opportunities can arise during a poster session. Remember, if you wish to present a paper you will often need to contact the conference organisers well in advance.

If you find it difficult to attend conferences due to funding limitations then search for other sources of funding yourself. Many institutions provide awards and bursaries to allow early career researchers to travel to conferences, and also check with a variety of funding bodies and charitable organisations.

Proactive 'Research', Volunteering and Visiting

Other opportunities for networking, aside from the above, include either being invited to give a presentation at another institution or, being proactive, asking if you can come and deliver one. If successful, not only can you advertise your own research and capabilities you can also use your time wisely when there to talk afterwards to key individuals and further extend your networks in an institution that you might like to work in later on in your career. Use your time there to collect essential information – are there enough groups doing similar work to generate a stimulating and collaborative environment? What are the facilities like? What kind of support is offered, both financially and developmentally (e.g. academic mentors, training) for early career researchers and probationary lecturers? Alternatively you could arrange your own workshops or seminar session and invite an interesting external speaker, someone you would like to spend some time talking to afterwards. An alternative way of visiting other institutions is as a visiting scholar, which would give you a lot more time to establish networks in a target institution. Many departments and institutions provide opportunities to become a visiting scholar, and some research grants and fellowships have these opportunities built in.

Join the On-line Community

An increasingly important method of networking extensively beyond your immediate research environment is by getting yourself on e-mail lists and on-line networking sites. The use of on-line academic networking forums and groups is increasing. These can be a good source of information relating to both research and job opportunities, finding out about relevant events and also for the fertile exchange of ideas. Links to a small selection of such sites are given in 'Sources and Resources'.

Information on Networking

Use a variety of sources to help keep up-to-date and visible.

Books

'*Networking', The Academic Career Handbook' Blaxter*, L., Hughes, C., Tight, M. Eds. 2001. Ch.4 p 55 – 77.

Building Networks. Kenway, J., Epstein, D, Boden, R Eds. 2005. The Academics Support Kit. SAGE Publications Ltd.

Killer CV's & Hidden Approaches. Graham Perkins, Third Edition, Pearson Prentice Hall 2007.

Science Careers. Articles on Networking
http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career_development/tools_resources/how_to_guides/how_to_build_your_network

Personal Networking: How to Make Your Connections Count, Mike Cope, Pearson Education, 2003.

Networking for Job Search and Career Success, L. Michelle Tullier, PhD, JIST works, 2004.

Research Councils

A good starting point for locating relevant events, training and workshops as well as, in many cases, research area specific collaborative networks.

Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) **www.ahrc.ac.uk**

Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) **www.bbsrc.ac.uk**

Economics and Social Research Council (ESRC) **www.esrc.ac.uk**

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) **www.epsrc.ac.uk**

Medical Research Council (MRC) **www.mrc.ac.uk**

Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) **www.nerc.ac.uk**

Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council (PPARC) **www.pparc.ac.uk**

General Sources

Conference Alerts **- www.conferencealerts.com –** A subscription service where you can receive free e-mailed updates of conferences (international and by subject area) matching your interests, available dates and preferred destinations.

EUROPA – Marie Curie Actions **http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/mariecurie-actions/home_en.html** - scheme to enhance the training, mobility and career development of EU researchers.

EUROPA – The Researchers' Mobility Forum **http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/** - assistance for researchers wishing to work in Europe. Includes a vacancy search, grant and fellowship search, CV submission facility, and general advice and information.

JISC Mail **www.jiscmail.ac.uk -** The National Academic Mailing List Service, known as 'JISCmail', is one of a number of JANET services provided by JANET(UK) **www.ja.net** and funded by the JISC **www.jisc.ac.uk** to benefit learning, teaching and research communities.

Humanities and Arts Higher Education Network, HAN. The Network is administered by the Institute of Educational Technology (IET) at The Open University in Milton Keynes, UK. **http://iet.open.ac.uk/home.cfm**

Intute – **www.intute.ac.uk** - A free on-line database of hand selected Web resources for education and research. The research areas covered are Science & Technology, Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences, Health and Life Sciences. Includes Blogs, news and events listings.

Nature Network. 'Nature Network' is an on-line scientific social networking tool set up by the Nature Publishing Group (NPG) for Research staff. The site allows you to meet other scientists with similar interests **http://network.nature.com**

www.researchiscool.com – A site set up in 2007/2008 by a PhD student from Edinburgh University. Designed specifically as a site to locate research jobs and for social networking amongst research staff at all stages of their careers.

www.vitae.ac.uk - An excellent resource for all aspects of researcher career planning as well as identifying regional and national training events and support.

University Researchers and the Job Market
A Practical Career Development Resource for Research Staff

VOLUME II
The Effective Job Selection Package

Chapter 7 MAKING APPLICATIONS

You probably know a lot about making job applications in academia, but it might surprise you to know that in other fields of work, application styles can be very different. For example, many large organisations use complex application forms that require detailed information about specific transferable skills.

This section offers advice on completing written applications i.e. the Curriculum Vitae (CV), application form and covering letter.

No matter what type of application you are making, researching as much as possible about the employer and the role will help you to make it more targeted. Targeting is vital. Without it your application can look unfocused. Where it exists, employer recruitment literature often contains many clues, but you can also find out about an employer from their website or printed publicity. You could even try to arrange an informal chat with someone in a similar role to the one you are applying for. For more information about networking, see Chapter 5 Researching Options.

Another useful tip is to take out a file on yourself. Collecting together information about courses you have attended, qualifications you have obtained, things you have achieved etc. will make the practical process of applying for jobs much smoother.

CVs

Although you are probably familiar with writing CVs for academic posts, for many roles outside academia you will need to prepare a different form of CV or complete an application form.   The information included in this section refers to CVs for use in the UK.   For information about making overseas applications use the applications section in the country profiles at **www.prospects.ac.uk.**

CVs for Jobs Outside Academia

There are no absolute rules when it comes to writing CVs but there are some general guidelines that many employers expect you to follow. Some of the following information is quite basic, but may be helpful to those of you who are starting from scratch.

Basic **layout** of a CV includes:-

    Name
    Contact details
    Education
    Employment history
    Skills e.g. languages, computer packages
    Interests
    References

A non-academic CV should generally be no longer than two pages of A4 sized paper.

Unless there are exceptional circumstances, you do not have to provide personal details such as gender or marital status. This now also includes age and date of birth as anti-ageism legislation was introduced in the UK in 2006.

Make sure you haven't left huge areas of unused paper or produced vast expanses of dense text. If the layout is bad and difficult to follow, employers may reject your CV without reading it properly.

Remember, the employer might only have 30 seconds to spend on each CV at the first sift, so make it as clear and easy to read as possible, set out so the most relevant information can be quickly located, with relevant headings in bold type and indentations where necessary.

Target the CV

Your CV should always be targeted to the job for which you are applying. Ask yourself what the employer is looking for and make sure you can provide evidence that you meet those requirements. Try to find out if the employer prefers a particular style of CV.

If you are applying for an 'academic' research position in a non-university environment, an academic style of CV could be more appropriate (see next section).

- If you are applying for research posts outside academia, your reputation will be important, but the employer may be put off by a lengthy list of publications on the first page of your CV. Summarise your publications, highlighting only the most relevant. Alternatively, provide a full list of publications as an appendix.

- In a CV for a non-academic job, unless your knowledge base is directly related, the amount of technical detail should be significantly reduced, with greater emphasis being placed on your transferable skills (see Chapter 3 Identifying Skills). Employers outside academia may be less interested in your academic reputation, especially if the job is unrelated to your previous research.

- Leaving out the details of your presentations, publications and teaching experience may be disappointing, as they represent the 'public face' of your academic achievements. But unless a particular paper is relevant, an employer outside academia will probably not have the time to wade through such information and may overlook you. It is often sufficient to state 'author of 'n' peer reviewed publications.'

- If you concentrate on your academic expertise rather than your more transferable skills, the employer may wonder whether you really want a job outside academia.

Case Study

Daniel is a research officer with a well known trade union. He has a Masters degree in Politics and several years of experience as a university researcher.

After deciding that he could no longer put up with the 'uncertainty of life on a series of 12 month contracts', Daniel decided to look for permanent work which would tie in with his commitment to the Labour movement. He applied to various trade unions and was offered his current role.

He says "trying to get into a trade union meant on the one hand emphasizing the analytical and communication skills I had developed in academia, but on the other hand making it clear that I had experience in other fields, could work to a faster pace than is usual in academic research and on a variety of projects, and crucially wasn't after the job simply because I had run out of work as a contract researcher."

- Consider including some interpretation of the facts you are listing. For example, in the employment section, rather than simply providing a summary of your main responsibilities add a few lines about the skills you gained while doing these tasks.

- Give the most relevant information more prominence and more space. For example, don't waste a page on details of all the courses you have ever taught if there is no teaching requirement in the post to which you are applying.

- The CV of someone who has been working for several years may be significantly different, in layout and content, from the CV of a new graduate. For example, you might omit your school exam results to allow you to add detail to a more relevant section. However some employers e.g. accountancy firms, are interested in UCAS points so you will need to include A level/Higher (or equivalent) results in some applications.

- You may choose to discuss your employment history under a series of skills headings rather than choosing the more standard format of reverse chronological order. It is most important to put the information that matches the requirements of the post in a prominent position near the beginning of the document, and you can rearrange your headings to allow you to do that.

References

- Try to ensure that your potential referee feels able to support your application positively. You might do this by organising regular appraisal meetings or informal progress discussions. This is particularly important if there is a possibility that you might leave mid-contract. If your supervisor understands why you wish to leave and knows your career aspirations, they may be more able and more inclined to write a favourable reference.

CVs for Academic Jobs

Most of you will have had plenty of experience of writing academic CVs. You are also in an ideal environment to get feedback from colleagues, supervisors etc. However, you may find the following comments useful when applying for permanent positions.

- An application for an academic post must include evidence of your research reputation, academic achievement, teaching/research/administrative experience and track record in attracting funds. Therefore, an academic CV will list publications and courses you have taught, along with detail about the research methods you have used, techniques you are familiar with and so on.

- Although a CV for a job outside academia should generally be no more than two sides of A4 paper in length, an academic CV will usually be longer, providing all the information is relevant to your application and clearly set out.

- It is important to emphasise educational background when applying for academic jobs, so the '**Education**' section often comes first. Note that this is not necessarily the case in other CVs.

- Most of the allocated space (approximately a third of the first page) should be used to summarise your research to date. Alternatively, you could include a research synopsis as an appendix.

You should also include details of funding and a list of technical procedures used.

If your first degree is relevant to the position you are applying for, include more detail. Otherwise, a brief summary of your final year project or dissertation and a list of relevant modules will be sufficient.

In the section on **employment history**, emphasise your management and teaching experience as well as your research reputation.

Your most relevant experience should have the most prominence on your CV.

If reverse chronological order doesn't allow you to highlight your most relevant experience, you may choose to use subheadings. For example, you might use 'Research', 'Teaching' and 'Management', or 'Relevant Research Experience' and 'Other Research Experience'.

It may also be useful to include some evidence of transferable skills in an academic CV. Although you don't need to emphasise them as much as you would on a non-academic CV, academic employers still want to see evidence of communication and organisational skills etc.

List **publications** in reverse chronological order, so your most recent work is shown first. However, if this work is not your most prominent or related to the job application you could use a subheading such as 'Relevant Publications'.

You might also use headings such as 'Peer Reviewed', 'In Progress' or 'Conference Proceedings'.

If you have a long list of publications, which may detract from the clarity of your CV, include the list as an appendix.

A short **interests** section will allow you demonstrate your personality to potential employers. You can also use this section to describe relevant skills. Avoid merely listing your interests. Explain your level of participation. Even in this section, bear in mind the job you are applying for. For example, if the advert emphasises teamwork skills, a long list of solitary hobbies may give the wrong impression.

Related Professional Experience/Achievements

These are optional sections, which allow you to highlight details such as committee or professional body membership, prizes and scholarships.

Other Information

It may also be useful to include a section for other information such as invited speaking or conference presentations .

The information you choose to include should suggest an appropriate title for the section.

CV Examples

The two non-academic CVs which follow are adapted from the experiences of real individuals. All personal details have been altered. They are not meant to be a blueprint for the perfect CV. They are included to give you a few ideas and to illustrate some of the previous comments.

CV 1. Consultancy Research Role	**Skill-Based**

- The first CV is an application for a Research role in a Consultancy and demonstrates only one of your options in terms of layout and structure.

- This is a skills-based CV, particularly useful if you are considering a career change and wish to highlight your skills rather than the environment in which they were gained. The accompanying covering letter would highlight the match between the skills you are demonstrating and those required for the post.

CV 2. Industrial Scientific Role	**Chronological**

- The second CV is for an application to a scientific research role in industry and is an example of a chronological CV. Although not a skills-based CV, this still focuses on the applicant's expertise as a scientist. This CV would differ from an application for an academic research post in that it includes less details of their academic achievements. For example, rather than a full list of publications and conference presentations, it includes only the most recent examples.

Andrew Ross

25 Bute Street   Tel: 0141 3324891
Glasgow   Mob: 07786552305
G12 3AQ   a.ross@socsci.gla.ac.uk

PERSONAL PROFILE

A dynamic and experienced researcher looking to move into Consultancy. Can offer a range of skills required in a commercial setting including the ability to self manage, juggle competing demands and meet frequent deadlines. Ready for a new challenge in a stimulating and client-focused environment.

SKILLS

Writing and Analytical Skills

My PhD developed analytical skills, logical reasoning, the ability to reflect and to use carefully reasoned arguments to present and defend insights.

My extensive writing experience includes the publication of a 2006 book entitled 'Adam Smith's Philosophy' and numerous journal articles on a range of topics. I have developed a clear and concise writing style.

I am a member of the Glasgow Editorial Board for the Journal Politics.

I act as a referee for the Routledge Journal The Adam Smith Review.

I am also a regular reviewer for numerous publications including Political Studies Review, History of Political Thought and Economic Affairs.

Organisational & Team Work Skills

I have excellent project management skills developed on my PhD research project and maintained in my current research projects.

My teaching commitments include designing and conducting tutorials, marking essays, attending meetings with the teaching team and contributing to the development of the teaching programme. For the past 3 years I have also taken on board a further responsibility as Convener and organiser for Postgraduate Research Seminars which run on a weekly basis in semester time covering topics in response to student feedback, including booking speakers.

I volunteered as Conference Organiser for the Northern Political Theory Association Annual Conference at the University of Glasgow in August 2005.

I am an enthusiastic Member and Organiser for the Department Research Seminar Committee which runs weekly throughout semester time.

Communication & Presentation Skills

I am a highly adaptable presenter having delivered in a variety of settings, from department meetings to international conferences.

As a tutor, I am highly competent in explaining complex information and ideas to a range of students at different stages. In addition I have learnt to communicate my research at non-specialist level to the varied audiences attending my conference seminars.

Tutoring in groups and providing pastoral care to individual students has fully developed my communication and interpersonal skills.

IT Skills

Extensive use of MS Office, e-mail packages, use of search engines and academic databases for advanced research functions.

EMPLOYMENT

2004 – Present   **The University of Glasgow**
                                  British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow

Class Co-ordinator for Honours Class in The Scottish Enlightenment
Tutor on Level Two Politics options:

History of Political Thought	Classical and Renaissance Political Thought
Reformation to Enlightenment	Eighteenth-Century Thought

2002 – 2004   **The University of Glasgow**
                                  Tutor

Tutored on the following Level 1 courses:

British Politics	European Union Politics
American Politics	Feminism

2003 – 2004   **University of Paisley**
                                  Part Time Lecturer, Department of Politics

Summer 2003   **George Mason University, Arlington Virginia**
                                  Summer Research Fellow at the Institute for Humane Studies

2002   **The University of Glasgow**
                                  Tutor, Faculty of Social Sciences Graduate School

EDUCATION

1999 - 2002   **University of Glasgow**
                                  PhD in Politics

Thesis title 'The Idea of Spontaneous Order in Liberal Political Thought'.

1998 – 1999   **University of Edinburgh**
                                  M.Sc. (Distinction) Social and Political Theory

1994 – 1998   **University of Edinburgh**
                                  M.A. (Hons.) Politics (First Class)

Courses included social policy and economics.

REFEREES

Professor Gerald Campbell   Dr Briony Sandler
Department of Politics   Department of Politics
University of Glasgow   University of Paisley
Glasgow G12 8RT   Paisley PA1 7HA
0141 3305064   0141 842 536398
g.campbell@socsci.gla.ac.uk   B.Sandler@paisley.ac.uk

James Mead

112 St Peter's Street
Cardiff CF12 5QF
Tel: 02920386781   E-mail: jsmeade@cardiff.ac.uk
Mobile: 077859055216

EMPLOYMENT

Feb 2006 – Present   **Cardiff University**
                                Postdoctoral Research Assistant

Research focuses on genetic variation and gene expression focusing on 'Physical activity, insulin resistance and adipose tissue gene expression in the offspring of patients with type 2 diabetes'.
Major involvement in directing projects on the roles of genetic variation and gene expression on the metabolic syndrome, diabetes, obesity and athletic ability.
Currently working on an international collaborative project with colleagues at the Estonian Academy of Physical Education for the collection of a large cohort of elite athletes along with very high quality phenotype data.

Further Responsibilities include:-
Sourcing new grant funding to further develop these projects including a recently awarded BHF grant.
Day-to-day management of the laboratory, specifically maintenance of existing equipment and stocks, ordering and testing of new equipment and consumables.
Contributing to the teaching, development and day-to-day supervision of PhD, undergraduate and summer students through technical and statistical advice.
Maintenance of project databases containing entries relating to over 1,200 biological samples.
Postdoctoral representative for the divisions of N&BS and MG. Communicating views and feelings of research staff to the Faculty Committee on issues in teaching and research in the biological sciences at Glasgow University.

Oct 2005 – Feb 2006   **Cardiff University**
                                Postdoctoral Research Assistant

VIP award - 'Epigenetic differences in adipose tissue gene expression between overweight and lean adults from Wales'.

Jan 2003 – Oct 2005   **Cardiff University**
                                Postdoctoral Research Assistant

BBSRC/MRC grant - 'An investigation of the functional significance of a genetic predisposition to human obesity'.

1996- 1998   **Virology Unit, University of Sheffield**
                                Research Assistant

Using biochemical and molecular techniques to study Bunyamwera and Maguari haemorrhagic fever viruses.

TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

Extensive experience of DNA and RNA isolation and manipulation techniques, including genotyping and gene expression analyses.
Familiarity with database handling and statistical packages including programming in R language and in HTML
Experience of protein analysis, Drosophila handling, maintenance and dissection, confocal microscopy and programming in HTML.

RELATED WORK EXPERIENCE

2000   Biotechnology YES competition
Team-orientated business management course focusing on a technological idea, its development into a business plan and practical assessment of its feasibility.

Summer 1995   Virology Unit, University of Sheffield
Using molecular cloning techniques to study the infection and reactivation from latency of HSV-1.

Summer 1994   Georgia University, Atlanta, USA
Working in 2 laboratories during this period on the following projects:
As part of a cytogenetic team refining FISH techniques to identify critical stages of prostate cancer development.
Using molecular genetic techniques to study mitochondrial encephalopathy. Attempts were made to establish a link between the distribution of mutant DNA within a patient's body and the clinical symptoms they suffered.

HIGHER EDUCATION

1999 – 2003   University of Warwick
**   PhD 'Molecular and cellular analysis of D. mel. lovesong.'**

1992 – 1996   University of Sheffield
**   BSc (Hons) Molecular Genetics (2:1)**

PROFESSIONAL BODY MEMBERSHIPS

Genetics Society
American Society of Human Genetics
American College of Sports Medicine
Physiology Society
Institute of Biology

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

N Adamou, I Antipas, JS Mead, JK Digby , GA Wilde, E Stamatelos, G Villas, A Rigotos, E Lalagos, S Papastavrou (2006) Developmental changes in adiposity in toddlers and preschoolers in the GENESIS study and associations with the ACE I/D polymorphism Int J of Obesity under consideration.
JS Mead, L Guthrie, GA Wilde, M Mestas, CA Sousanis, G Elliott, PA Smith, S Papastavrou, JK Digby (2006) Association analysis of the ACTN3 R577X polymorphism and complex quantitative body composition and performance phenotypes in adolescent Greeks European J of Human Genetics in press.

JS Mead, Y Garofolis, M Mestas, CA Sousanis, GA Wilde, SL Burns, JK Dgby, S Papastavrou (2006) The associations of ACE polymorphisms with physical, physiological and skill parameters in adolescents European J of Human Genetics 14(3): 332-339.

JS Mead, Y Garofolis, M Mestas, Ca Sousanis, GA Wilde, JK Digby, S Papastavrou (2005) Effects of interaction between ACE polymorphisms and lifestyle on adiposity in adolescent Greeks Obesity Research 13(9): 1499-1504.

TALKS & PRESENTATIONS

Invited speaker to the Estonian Academy of Physical Education (2006) 'ACTN3 genotypes and obesity-, power- and endurance-related phenotypes in adolescent Greeks'.

Invited lecturer at the International Networking for Young Scientist (INYS) workshop (2006; Malaysia). This involved delivering two lecture-style talks and a computer-based laboratory tutorial session.

American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) 53rd Annual meeting (2006). Presentation on 'ACTN3 genotypes and obesity – power - and endurance-related phenotypes in adolescent Greeks'.

ACSM 52nd Annual meeting (2005) funded by the Genetics Society. Presentation on 'Physical activity-dependent effects of   -adrenergic receptor polymorphisms on obesity-related phenotypes in children'.

References available on request.

Differing Emphasis in Three Types of CV

Imagine you are applying for three different jobs. The first is an academic post in your specialist field, the second a related industrial research job, and the third a position as a trainee accountant with a large London firm. Areas that you may seek to emphasise on each CV include the following:-

Academic CV	Industrial CV	Non-academic CV
Research reputation - publications etc	Administrative experience - particularly management	Knowledge of the area/ commercial awareness
Teaching experience - lecturing, tutoring, mentoring	Research experience - relevant publications	Transferable ('soft') skills - communication, teamwork etc
Admin experience - organising, managing	Technical skills (subject specific)	Administrative experience - organising, managing
Ability to attract funds	Transferable ('soft') skills	Numeracy
Technical skills (subject specific)	Commercial awareness	Reasons for changing career

Application Forms

Applying for a position outside academia may involve completing a specifically designed application form. Employers spend a lot of time and money developing these forms and they are designed to extract the most relevant information from you. They may be deliberately long and complicated in order to deter those who don't have the right experience and motivation. If you have good evidence of the skills they are looking for you might already be ahead of the game, so it is worth spending a few hours on making it the best application possible.

Questions

Some application form questions are more **straightforward**, such as:-

Please describe what attributes you can offer this position.

Here, you are required to give a summary of your own strengths, matching them with the needs of the organisation.

Others are more **complex.**

Describe a situation where you have met resistance to a decision you have made. How did you persuade others to see your point of view?

In answering this question, you should include a very short description of the situation and concentrate mainly on how you negotiated the issue. Think about the skills that the job requires and reflect those in your answer.

What are the most stimulating, difficult or unusual experiences you have had in the last 5 years, and what have you learnt from them?

On the actual form, the space allowed for the answer to this question was limited, and this can be a significant indicator of the importance of the question. If they only want a short answer, try to analyse exactly what they are looking for before you start. In this case, they may be expecting evidence of creativity or an insight into your personality.

As with CVs, there are many useful rules which may be applied when answering application form questions.

Be very clear about what the questions mean and how you are expected to answer them. Consider why the employer is asking the question. What do they want to know? There is usually a clear indication of how you should structure your response, but the main emphasis should be on what you did in a particular situation with just a brief explanation of the circumstances and the outcome.

You may find it useful to list as many relevant experiences as possible on a separate piece of paper, and select the most appropriate for each question. Try to use different examples to answer each question, and don't be afraid to vary the experiences you use between work and leisure etc.

If you have a particularly relevant example, you may choose to use an experience from several years ago to illustrate your answer. However, more recent experiences will often provide more useful evidence of your current abilities.

Use of Language Matters

Use **Action verbs** – to describe what you have done:-

Achieved, assessed, completed, created, co-ordinated, demonstrated, developed, elected, expressed, initiated, investigated, led, organised, prepared, produced, selected, supervised, tested etc.

Use powerful **Adjectives** – to describe yourself:-

Adaptable, commercially minded, determined, logical, patient, precise, resourceful, systematic, tolerant etc.

A covering letter is an effective way of highlighting your attributes and persuading an employer to read on. It usually consists of three sections:-

The first paragraph is introductory, stating who you are, the position you are applying for, where you saw it advertised etc.

The middle section should carry the most weight, explaining why you want to work in that role with that particular employer and highlighting the personal qualities and relevant experience that make you the most suitable candidate. This is obviously an area where your previous research about the organisation, and the individual department to which you are applying, will enable you to impress the reader and argue your case convincingly.

The closing paragraph should be optimistic, perhaps including some practical information such as when you are available for interview.

Practical Hints

In general, the covering letter should be no longer than one side of A4.

Where possible, address your covering letter to a **named individual**. If necessary, you could contact the personnel department to find out the name of the person to whom your application should be sent. If you simply need to establish whether their title is Ms, Miss or Mrs, the switchboard operator may be able to help.

Covering letters should always be typed unless the employers states otherwise in the advert. If you use the same quality paper, it will match your CV and help to create a more professional image.

As with your CV, consider the **layout** of your covering letter. Look at the spacing, use of emboldening etc. The employer may read this before the rest of your application and you need to create a good first impression.

Imagine you are applying for a job outside academia and you wish to demonstrate your commitment to a new career and your understanding of the different work environment you are applying to. The covering letter will provide you with a useful opportunity to clarify these points before the employer looks at your application.

Covering Letter Examples

Below are two examples of covering letters.

Example 1 is too vague and shows no evidence of targeting or research. An employer is unlikely to read on.

While **Example 2** is not perfect, it demonstrates that the individual has thought carefully about their skills and how they meet the employer's needs. They mention work shadowing and talking to current practitioners, showing commitment and enthusiasm. They have also carefully chosen to apply to a company with some links to an area that is familiar, hence they can offer 'specialist knowledge'.

Covering Letter Example 1

6 Hawthorn Grove
Nottingham
NG5 2BL

22nd July 2008

Dear Mr Simm

I wish to apply for the Exhibition Organiser vacancy which you advertised on the Guardian website. I am looking to move into a role with a forward looking organisation and I believe I can offer the experience and skills to do this job effectively.

I am currently working as a postdoctoral researcher at Nottingham University. I am fully committed to continuing my career in science and am confident of my ability to work with young people. I am an experienced presenter and work well with people of all ages and from all walks of life.

I am enthusiastic, adaptable and willing to take on any responsibility. I feel I will get a lot out of working with the public in a role in which I can offer a range of skills and scientific expertise.

Yours sincerely

Covering Letter Example 2

27 Wilton Lane
Kilburn
London NW10 7DL

7th June 2008

Dear Ms Khan

Student Recruitment Officer (Sciences)   Ref: 16782/SRO12

I would like to apply for the above position advertised on your website. I am currently working at University College London in a research role and am now looking to move into a student recruitment role reflecting my significant experience and commitment to science.

My interest in Student Recruitment stems from my 3 years volunteering as a Science Ambassador in local schools whilst undertaking my PhD. I found it hugely rewarding working with young people on classroom projects to inspire and encourage them to consider careers in science. I also advised older pupils on applying to science degrees and on the 'university experience'.

I have further enhanced my communication and interpersonal skills working as a tutor to undergraduates during my PhD and as a demonstrator in my current role. I am a confident and articulate presenter when communicating scientific ideas to a range of audiences including at national and international conferences.

As a university researcher I can offer a high level of managerial and organisational skills required in running a lab and supervising other staff and students. Furthermore, attending university committees keeps me up to date with developments in the sector, particularly relating to the science disciplines. Working closely with undergraduates over a long period means I have a strong insight into the issues applicants face when applying to university and have a breadth of knowledge of the range of science courses offered at undergraduate level.

I look forward to your response. Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely

Further Resources

The following websites have informative and up-to-date sections on Applications including sample applications:-

- **Researchers Portal –** advice for research staff and students **www.vitae.ac.uk**

- **Prospects** – the UK's official graduate recruitment website **www.prospects.ac.uk**

- **Hobsons** - advice for job seekers in the graduate labour market **www.get.hobsons.co.uk**

- **Target Jobs** – advice for job seekers in the graduate labour market **www.targetjobs.co.uk**

Chapter 8 INTERVIEWS

Researchers often have very different levels of experience of interviews; some may have had a number of interviews whilst others may not have had a formal job interview until they apply for a fellowship or an academic or non-academic job. Whatever your experience this chapter can be used to review your past interview experience and refine your skills or to assist you to prepare for your first interview.

Academic Interviews

Within academia there are variations in interview procedure. A post-doctoral position may be obtained through talking to the right people at a conference, involving virtually no formal selection interview. However, the application process for a permanent academic job or a research fellowship may be a much more formal experience, involving the presentation of a research paper, teaching a class and a panel interview with senior university staff. Do expect to be asked questions on areas other than your research, for example, teaching approaches, managing resources and people. Your preparation must include these areas as well as your research. Examples of questions that you might be asked can be found later in the chapter. If you apply for a post outside the UK you may be interviewed by telephone or a video conference may be set up. Remember that there may be some cultural differences concerning interview styles and behaviour across the globe. Try to use contacts in the country or consult others who may have worked there previously to check out any significant differences that you may need to take into account.

Non-Academic Interviews

Many organisations now use panel interviews as well as other selection exercises and psychometric tests in order to select the best candidate. Smaller organisations though may still rely on a one-to-one interview conducted by a senior manager as their main recruitment method. The growth of the recruitment industry itself has meant that more companies use agencies to make an initial assessment of candidates, therefore, you may be invited into the agency for an interview with their staff or increasingly they may use telephone interviews at this stage. Some agency staff may have very little knowledge of academic research and so it is important that you highlight the transferable nature of your skills and experiences.

A former researcher comments:-

"Interviews for research jobs had been very informal. Decisions were made on my track record e.g. where I had been before and what I had done, and on being known already. The CVs that I prepared for research posts were very much academic CVs i.e. the emphasis was on places where I had worked and the evidence that I was an independent researcher, technically competent and that I could start and complete a piece of work (papers published, papers presented, grants held, research interests, invited talks, Society involvement, refereeing carried out etc)."

The same researcher, on applying for a position in training and development, says:

"The interview for the permanent post that I was appointed to was very formal. It was also a skills/competence-based interview that complemented the skills CV that I submitted when I applied for the position."

In both interview environments there is greater emphasis in selection procedures on fairness and consistency for all candidates, a representative from the Human Resource department is often involved in the procedure, either as an independent observer or as a member of an interview panel. There are now, perhaps, more similarities between interview styles than differences.

One former university researcher, who now works for a commercial research company, says that the interview procedure was "not that different". But the questions were "more probing, relating to developing business and winning money."

Some Different Interview Approaches

Panel Interview

Always address your responses to the individual who is asking the question, glancing at the other panel members as you speak. Members of the panel may take different question areas e.g. one may consider your previous experience whilst another may concentrate on how you would tackle some of the aspects of the job applied for. This can help you to focus on particular themes and concentrate on your strengths in these areas.

You should feel reassured that members of the panel are able to concentrate on your answers unlike the questioner who is also trying to listen and formulate their next question at the same time. A panel interview can also mean that there will be a fairer assessment of your performance based on a number of views, one-to-one interviews can be subject to a great deal of bias.

Interviewers may now also be trained not to react either verbally or non-verbally to your responses. This can feel very "clinical" to you as the candidate but is another way of trying to ensure fairness to all candidates. Your approach should be to continue to utilise effective communication skills in your responses.

Telephone Interview

The interview may be unannounced, pre-arranged or (if you are applying for a job that involves substantial phone contact) require you to role play a scenario in which you are trying to sell or explain something to the interviewer. A pre-arranged interview may take the form of a telephone questionnaire. This involves responding to a series of statements by pressing an appropriate button on the phone i.e. 1 if you strongly agree, 2 if you agree etc. Alternatively, it may be a structured interview where a trained interviewer asks you a series of questions based on core competencies. Your responses are recorded and analysed. This type of interview will nearly always precede a face-to-face meeting.

Stress Interview

The interviewer uses an aggressive tone and a rapid-fire style of questioning in order to test your reactions when under pressure. Although uncommon (and not generally considered good practice), you are most likely to come across this format in high pressure, high risk industries. The important thing to remember is that the attack is not personal.

Technical and Case Study Interviews

Some industries will want to test your technical skills and problem solving. Don't be surprised if they begin with some basic level knowledge, they want to know that you can still explain things simply to others who may not have your higher level of expertise, so remember to "revise" some of the basics before you get there, don't be caught out by some simple calculations that you would normally be able to do very easily outside an interview. Technical interviews may also take you into your non-specialist area, don't immediately say "this is not my field", have a go, they are testing your ability to think quickly and use other knowledge to attempt an answer. In technical interviews using illustrations can help you to explain things; it is probably a technique you would use in meetings or discussions with colleagues at work. You can use the same technique in an interview, so ask for a piece of paper or use a whiteboard, if you feel this would help you to explain something clearly, it also demonstrates that you have a range of communication techniques.

Criterion-Based Interview

Some employers may have a list of specific questions that they must ask all the candidates. Try to include some extra information in your answers to each question. As long as it is relevant, this may help you to stand out in the interviewer's mind.

Competency-Based Interview

These interviews are similar to the criterion based interviews in that the panel may ask the same set of questions of each candidate. The questions will focus on the core competencies or behaviours required for the job.

No matter what type of interview you face, the strategies you apply in order to do it well are universal. This chapter aims to demonstrate that the skills you used to get your current position will be equally helpful whether you are applying for academic jobs or looking for work outside academia.

Preparation

To be successful in an interview, you must be well prepared. Research the employer as thoroughly as possible using the following suggestions:-

- Look out for relevant articles in the press; review the organisation's website, if they have a news archive this can often be a useful source of company activity; and the most recent annual report may highlight issues of particular importance.
- Visit the careers service at your current university (see Chapter 10 'Visiting the University Careers Service' for a list of the resources they may offer).
- If the job advertisement invites you to telephone for more information, plan some pertinent questions about the work environment etc. and give them a call.
- Identify individuals in similar employment and arrange to talk to them about their work.

Prepared answers can sound wooden, but it is useful to prepare your thoughts, think about the key messages you want to communicate about your skills, experience and suitability for the job.

- Think about the questions you would ask a potential applicant and try to answer them. For example, if you are making a complete career change, be prepared to answer questions about why you wish to leave academia. Make sure your responses are positive.

- Be prepared to be asked about those areas where your application is not as strong and have a positive approach as to how you would rise to these challenges.

> A former university researcher, now working for an IT company, advises "give yourself enough time to find the right position. Sell your reasons for leaving academia as a positive for the company. Companies want people who want to develop and progress."

- Read through the job description and list your evidence for each of the requirements. When you are doing this try to "think" yourself into the job this will help you to formulate answers which demonstrate how you would approach aspects of the work.

- Find out what support may be available to you from your university. There may be interview skills workshops run by your careers service or staff development unit, this will enable you to learn more about interview approaches and also to practice in a safe environment. You may also be able to obtain a practice interview with a careers adviser or an employer. . See Chapter 10 'Visiting the University Careers Service' and Chapter 11 'Making the Most of Staff Development. Colleagues and friends may also help you to practice.

Preparation will enable you to build a more accurate picture of what the employer is looking for, and allow you to provide more relevant information about yourself at the interview. It will also demonstrate your interest and motivation to the employer.

Performance

Appearance and Body Language

A significant proportion of the employers' impression of you is based on your appearance and your behaviour.

- Your outfit should reflect a professional attitude. Dress code can be an issue, and there may be those of you who feel that what you say is more important than what you wear. However, the employer doesn't yet know anything about you and will form strong views from a first impression so it is better to adopt a smart and businesslike approach initially.

- Smile and make eye contact.

- Try to appear confident.

- If you have a habit of wild gesticulation when expressing yourself, try to tone it down. Don't suppress it completely as you may become stilted and end up concentrating more on that than the points you are making.

Questions

During the course of the interview the employer must determine **three** things, and their questions will reflect this.

THE THREE ISSUES

Can you do the job? - *do you have the academic ability and appropriate skills?*

Will you do the job? - are *you sufficiently motivated and interested in the work?*

How will you do the job? - *will your working style and personality fit?*

Example Questions

Fellowship and Academic Interviews

If this research work were to progress well, what would be the net impact of it, and who would it benefit?

As a research fellow, you would have a great deal of discretion over how you allocate your own time. How will you balance your time between conducting the research and preparing new grant applications?

Could this proposal have been put forward ten years ago and if so, what makes it timely now?

How do you see your research progressing in the next five years?

What innovations in teaching would you like to implement given sufficient resources?

How would you deal with unruly behaviour in the teaching environment?

Management and Leadership

What makes a good leader?

How do you motivate others?

What is your approach to resolving conflict?

Other Skill Areas

What are the attributes of a good team member?

Tell us about a situation where you showed initiative?

What is your approach to planning and managing tasks and projects?

Personal Development and Qualities

How do you normally cope with pressure?

How do you recognize when you are stressed?

What makes you angry?

Competency-Based Questions

Give me an example of a time when you had to convince someone to change their point of view. How did you do this and what was the result?

Tell me about a time when you have led a group or team, what was the outcome and what would you have done differently?

Your Answers

The most important communication skill in an interview situation is **listening**. Make sure you answer the question that was asked.

- Pause before you answer. Not only will this help you to listen to the entire question but it will also help you to begin your answer positively, rather than in a stumbling and halting fashion.

- If you can't think of an answer immediately, ask for a moment to think about it.

- Where relevant, you may elaborate on certain topics, but keep it concise.

- If you are required to give negative information (such as describing a weakness), make sure you present it in a positive way e.g. how you overcame it and what you learned from the experience.

- Another daunting question is 'where do you see yourself in 5 years time?' Part of your research should include finding out about typical career paths within the industry. Use this information to imply that you wish to progress in the job and take on more responsibility.

Your Questions

At the end of the interview, you will usually be asked if you have any questions.

- Try to have something to ask, but if you don't have anything, explain that they have covered everything you wanted to know.

- Ask about training programmes or career development opportunities (as long as they aren't mentioned in the brochure/job description). It is worth finding out who will be conducting the interview beforehand as there is no point asking a personnel officer what they enjoy about working in the Radiology department. You might also ask about future development plans or management structure.

- If there is a vital point that you haven't yet had the chance to make, now is your opportunity.

The End of the Interview and Feedback

- To avoid unnecessary panic, find out when you are likely to hear from them. If they don't contact you within the allotted time, telephone to find out why.

- If you are rejected, it is a good idea to request feedback. You could explain that you are very keen to work in this field and would welcome any advice on your performance, on improving your self presentation, and if there are any areas of skills knowledge and experience they feel you need to address in a competitive market. They may be unable to offer this, but it could be very helpful to your future applications if they do.

- If you feel that you have been unfairly treated at any stage of the selection process make detailed notes of all matters, facts, documents and your feelings and consult the Diversity advisers at you Careers Service or Human Resources for initial advice.

Assessment Centres

The interview itself is often only a part of the whole process. Increasingly employers require you to complete various tasks on which you are assessed. The particular exercises involved in an assessment centre (sometimes known as a second/final interview, or selection centre/board) will depend on the job for which you are applying. Chapter 9 Employer Assessment Centres offers detailed advice and information on the range of exercises used by employers.

Chapter 9 Assessment Centres

An invitation to an assessment centre can strike fear into the hearts of many job seekers but this should be viewed as an opportunity rather than a trial. The purpose is to give you the chance to demonstrate the key competencies required for the post. They can involve a lot of hard work on your part but on the whole are a lot fairer and objective than having to sell yourself in one short interview. In addition, you can use this experience to find out a lot more about the employer, again much more so than you would find out in an interview.

Assessment Centres have become increasingly common in recent years and for a large scale recruitment scheme you are pretty much guaranteed that later in the recruitment process you would be invited to an assessment centre of one or two days. However it's not just large organisations that employ a range of assessment activities. Many different types of recruiters, including some universities, recognise the importance of assessing your relevant skills in different activities so you can expect that recruitment for many jobs will involve some if not all of the activities listed below.

In the case of large scale recruitment, it may be reassuring to know that at the Assessment Centre you are not usually competing against the other participants but against the criteria set by the employer. So, in theory all participants could successfully gain a place. This means that you can support each other through the process, making it a more positive experience.

What Can You Expect?

Panel Interviews and One-to-One Interviews

For information on the range of interview formats and advice on approach and preparation see Chapter 8 Interviews.

Presentations

In many cases you will be given prior notice of your topic so that you can prepare a professional and polished presentation. Take note of how much time you have and practice until your timing is perfect as they may mark you down for over-running.

Alternatively you could be given the topic on the day and have only a short amount of time to prepare. In this case they are clearly not expecting a very slick presentation or visual aids but to see how you can think on your feet and deliver under pressure.

Your audience size could vary from a small number of people (possibly the same people on the interview panel) to a wider group of staff from the organisation. It could also include your fellow candidates.

However much preparation time you have, make sure your presentation has a clear structure to it. Introduce it by explaining what you will be covering, then deliver the talk and finish by summarising your main points.

Even if you don't have much rehearsal time, try to avoid the temptation to read from a script. You will impress more if you can summarise the main points of your presentation onto bullet point cards and use them as prompts.

Useful reference books include:-

Harry Tolley and Robert Wood. *How to succeed at an Assessment Centre : test taking advice from the experts.* London, Kogan Page, 2005.

Andrew Bradbury *Successful Presentation Skills.* London Kogan Page, 2000.

Patsy McCarthy and Caroline Hatcher. *Presentation skills* : the essential guide for students.London,Sage, 2002.

Work Simulations

The employer may want to assess you in a real working situation. The most common activities used are listed below:-

Case Studies

You will be given a possible work scenario on which you will have to make recommendations. Usually this will involve a large amount of information to assimilate and analyse before presenting and explaining your proposals a short time later to an assessor or in a written report. You are not being tested on your prior knowledge of the subject but on your analytical skills, logical thinking, decision making skills and communication skills.

In-Tray Exercises

This will test your organisational and planning skills by giving you complex information to deal with in a short period of time. Nowadays many take the form of 'E-Tray' exercises involving a large number of e-mails you have to decide on how to prioritise, delegate, and draft replies to. It could also take the form of paperwork such as memos, letters, and telephone and fax messages.

Drafting Exercises

You will be presented with sensitive information and asked to draft a letter clearly and tactfully e.g. writing a letter to an important customer explaining why you are unable to waive a bill they are querying.

Dinners/Lunches

You are probably not going to be assessed in this situation (although it does happen occasionally) but clearly you still want to make a strong impression, especially if you are sitting next to a senior manager. You are allowed to relax and enjoy this experience and the best way to impress is to be yourself.

One note of caution - be careful not to overindulge in alcoholic drink which can be tempting after a day of tiring activities. Even more so when some employers generously provide a free bar which has proved to be the downfall of past candidates unfit for a second day of activities.

Psychometric Tests

There are two types of psychometric tests used by employers at Assessment Centres – Aptitude Tests and Personality Tests.

Aptitude Tests

These are used to measure your intellectual capacity in thinking and reasoning. The most commonly used are Verbal Reasoning, Numerical Reasoning and Spatial Reasoning. There will be a time limit on this type of test and many candidates don't complete all questions.

It is worthwhile getting in some practice in order to improve your accuracy and speed and also so that you have an idea of what to expect. It is particularly advisable for numerical tests that you start practicing maths again if you haven't done so in a while, as even people with a natural ability can get extremely out of practice.

You will often encounter aptitude tests at an earlier stage of recruitment. This can take place in a supervised environment but in some cases you may be able to undertake it at home on your own pc. In the case of the latter, it is possible that you will have to retake the test again at the assessment centre, to eliminate cheating.

There are numerous free online sites with practice tests - you will find links for online practice tests at **www.prospect.ac.uk** There are many excellent practice books available which you may find in your University's Careers Service or they may be able to recommend some. One mainstream text stocked by many is *How to Master Psychometric Tests* by Mark Parkinson London: Kogan Page, 2004. Many Careers Services also run practice test sessions to allow you to experience real test conditions.

Personality Tests

The aim of personality tests is to assess your personality traits and therefore give some indication of your behaviour in a work situation. You cannot practice for personality tests.

There are no right or wrong answers and you should aim to answer honestly rather than trying to second guess what the employer is looking for. Although you may feel that the answer you give could vary depending on your mood, the most effective method is to answer by what you feel most accurately reflects your feelings or behaviours when you are in 'work mode' (at your best).

Group Exercises

These are used to assess your interpersonal skills and your ability to work in a team through group discussions or practical ice breaker activities. In most cases this is not about demonstrating your leadership skills. It is extremely important that you participate fully in group exercises as those that fail this type of task tend to have been overly dominant or have failed to get involved enough. If someone else is dominating the discussion, you may have to work harder to get involved but it is worth the effort as it can be easy in this situation to get to the end of the task without making sufficient contribution.

It is also important that you understand the team dynamics and adapt your role in the group depending on the priorities of your team. Although you may gravitate towards a particular role that you feel most comfortable in, try to push out of your comfort zone to show your adaptability, thus impressing the recruiters. For example if some group members are slow to participate, try to encourage them to get involved. Or if your group has lost track of time, then you could take the lead on managing the time effectively. You can practice beforehand by testing out different group roles in any group situations you find yourself in through work or outside interests.

Group exercises may on occasions assess additional competencies including negotiation and persuasion. If the exercise demands that you have to 'fight your own corner' as well as aim for group co-operation then you will need to ensure that you achieve the right balance.

Your Overall Performance

However many exercises you have, try to focus on one at a time and don't worry if you performed less well than expected in one exercise. It is your overall score at the end of the assessment centre that counts so you could perform poorly in one exercise and still be successful.

Also, remember that the assessors want to see you do well; after all they have invested a lot of expense and resources into this process. By now you have successfully completed at least one recruitment stage so keep reminding yourself that you have so far demonstrated the competencies the employer is looking for. Be positive, enthusiastic and put your all into it. If you do this, you are likely to find afterwards that you have really enjoyed the experience. And remember, just as with interviews, it's not just about what you say but how you say it. So maintain your non-verbal communication throughout the activities – this means good eye contact, facial expression and gestures expressing your positivity and enthusiasm.

In common with interviews, you may learn your fate at assessment centre the same day or later by letter or e-mail. Many employers give feedback to unsuccessful candidates and may even encourage you to re-apply at a later date. If you are unsuccessful, take on board any feedback and work on your development points so that you are successful next time.

Further Resources

The following websites have informative and up-to-date sections on Assessment Centres with relevant links to practice activities:-

- **Researchers Portal –** advice for research staff and students **www.vitae.ac.uk**

- **Prospects** – the UK's official graduate recruitment website **www.prospects.ac.uk**

- **Hobsons** - advice for job seekers in the graduate labour market
  www.get.hobsons.co.uk

- **Target Jobs** – advice for job seekers in the graduate labour market
  www.targetjobs.co.uk

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VOLUME III
The Support

Chapter 10 VISITING THE UNIVERSITY CAREERS SERVICE

The amount of information and the degree of access available to researchers will depend on the size of the careers service and the number of staff. There is considerable variation between institutions. Some careers services are funded to help Research Staff, and may have careers adviser(s) who specialise in looking after researchers, whereas others must commit their limited resources to helping current students only. In some institutions, careers guidance may be offered to Research Staff by a staff development unit, research offices or human resources department.

The following is a guide to what you might find.

Face-to-Face

For all the information sections covered in this chapter, **information officers** are available for initial enquiries and can help you choose the right resources.

Career Choice Information

- A one-to-one confidential interview with a **careers adviser**. This may be a brief preliminary chat or a longer session exploring your career options and requirements in more detail. The careers adviser is there to facilitate your decision making process - they cannot make choices for you.

- Career workshops or career management courses specifically for Research Staff.

- The opportunity to participate in personality questionnaire sessions such as the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI).

Occupational Information

- Alumni talks on different occupational areas.

- Courses and Careers presentations covering different occupational areas.

Training Information

- Talks by training institutions and professional bodies.

- Skills workshops e.g. on networking skills.

- Skills training may be offered by the staff development unit at your university rather than by the careers service.

Advice on making applications, interviews etc

- Feedback on your CV, application form or covering letter from a careers adviser.

- A mock interview with a careers adviser or employer.

- Relevant seminars by visiting employers.

- Career workshops or career management courses specifically for Research Staff.

- Practice aptitude test sessions, allowing you to sit a series of tests under exam conditions.

Employer Information

- Presentations run by individual employers.

- Skills sessions run by individual employers.

- Recruitment fairs offer the opportunity to talk to a number of employers under one roof.

Vacancy information

- Employers at recruitment fairs often provide vacancy information.

- Employer presentations commonly include information about current vacancies.

On Paper

Career Choice Information

- Relevant reference books (see Sources and Resources for more details).

Occupational Information

- Occupational files, put together by the careers service, containing more detailed information on individual occupations. These files often include literature produced by professional bodies and other relevant organisations.

- General career publications such as 'Occupations' or 'The Penguin Career Guide' which are also available from good bookshops.

- A library of reference books covering different occupational areas.

- Occupational publications such as the GTI Guides and Inside Careers Guides covering areas such as law, science, engineering and chartered accountancy.

- Alumni information. Many careers services keep a database of alumni contacts who are happy to be contacted for occupational information.

Advice on Making Applications, Interviews etc

- In house publications and leaflets on all aspects of the job search process.

- General career publications on 'how to write a CV', 'how to do well in an interview', aptitude tests etc.

Training Information

- Postgraduate course directories, such as Hobsons Postgrad **www.postgrad.hobsons.com** and the Prospects Postgraduate Courses Directory.

- Occupational files containing training literature produced by professional bodies and other relevant organisations.

- Postgraduate study files put together by the careers service.

- Directories of short courses and evening classes e.g. Floodlight.

Employer Information

- Employer files, put together by the careers service, containing detailed information about individual employers. These files often contain recruitment literature, annual reports and press cuttings. Large national employers should be represented, as well as smaller local companies.

- Employer directories such as Inside Careers, Target and Prospects. These directories list a large number of graduate employers and can be searched by category and subject area.

- Resources such as employers' recruitment directories and databases, business directories and, in some cases, specialist journals.

- Specialist directories such as The Legal 500 **http://www.legal500.com/** which lists law firms or the Hollis UK Press and Public Relations Directory, **http://www.hollis-pr.com/A-Z/w.htm**) which includes the contact details of PR firms throughout the UK.

Vacancy Information

- Graduate vacancy bulletins.

- Current vacancy files or a noticeboard advertising the latest opportunities.

- Various professional journals or popular publications (such as New Scientist) available for reference.

- Information about recruitment fairs or other events.

Overseas Information

- Overseas files, put together by the careers service – containing information on working overseas.

- General careers publications on working overseas.

- Information on producing CVs or resumes for overseas job applications.

- Employer directories for various countries.

Other Sources

The careers service will often have its own website or set of pages on the university website, containing information about facilities and a programme of events. You may also find advice about various careers topics and links to other useful sites. Many universities now have web pages dedicated to research staff.

For all the different sections mentioned so far, you will find information on the Internet. You may have Internet access in the careers service library.

Career Management

- The Windmills website at **www.windmillsprogramme.com** provides a virtual careers coach, including help on identifying your skills.
- The online careers guidance and management programme **'SORTIT'** from The Careers Group, University of London www.careers.lon.ac.uk/sortit

Career Choice Information

- Computer aided careers guidance. Online Programmes such as Prospect Planner or Adult Directions are designed to generate a list of possible career options.
- There may be a computer database of alumni contacts.

Advice on Making Applications, Interviews etc

- AGCAS videos/DVDs: 'Why Ask Me That?', 'The Assessment Centre Video', 'Looking Good on Paper' and 'Can I Have a Few Minutes of Your Time?'.

Employer Information

- Employer videos and CD ROMS.

Vacancy Information

- Current vacancies may be advertised on the careers service website.
- **www.jobs.ac.uk** is a comprehensive source of vacancies for postdocs, academic and academic related jobs. Also contains a section of career-related articles.

Careers Guidance with a Careers Adviser Outside your Institution
If you do not have access to a careers adviser for one-to-one advice, mock interviews etc at your own institution, commercial services are available from the Careers Group, University of London **C2: http://www.c2careers.com/**

Chapter 11 MAKING THE MOST OF HUMAN RESOURCES

As a member of staff at a UK University your employment will be subject to both the UK legal requirements and national good practice expected of a major Public Sector employer. This will include policies covering your specific conditions of employment, your rights and obligations as an employee, those of your fellow employees, for example your research leader or PI, and your employer, the University. The transition from student researcher to employee may have felt seamless especially if you have remained at the same University and research centre but you are in a different legal position with changed conditions and also have a new set of university support to help you along. It is worth checking both your contract of employment and the University Human Resources policies dealing with everything from working hours to maternity leave and promotion processes.

The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers

The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers (the Concordat) **http://www.researchconcordat.ac.uk/** launched in June 2008 provides a set of key principles for the future support and management of research careers, and under each principle, an explanation of how it may be embedded into institutional practice. The three principles most vital for you as an individual researcher are:-

Principle	Description
3	*Researchers are equipped and supported to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse, mobile, global research environment.*
4	*The importance of researchers' personal and career development, and lifelong learning, is clearly recognised and promoted at all stages of their career.*
5	*Individual researchers share the responsibility for and need to pro-actively engage in their own personal and career development, and lifelong learning.*

All Universities have agreed these principles as Universities UK **http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/** have become signatories to them on their behalf. Each University must make their own arrangements to implement them within a reasonable timescale and this will vary greatly between Institutions. Thus your need to be aware of University policies and get to know how they work.

Human Resources Policies

Human Resource (HR) policies are not just there to protect you when you think something may be going wrong they can maintain clarity and fairness in the workplace by being transparent to all staff and form standards that all staff should adhere to. Being aware of policies and practice to support your personal and career development can be an important part of making the most of your current employment opportunities and preparing for your future in the jobs market.

Typical policies of interest include:-

- **Fixed-term contracts** including redeployment, redundancy matters, notice periods, entitlement to time for job search in the last few months of contract.

- **Equality, diversity and work life balance** including carer, maternity, paternity and adoption leave, rights to request flexible working and release for civic duties.

- **Promotion, regrading and secondments.**

- **Staff wellbeing** including staff counselling and occupational health.

Most Universities will have a staff handbook that will set out policies and identify staff who can assist with specific confidential advice on matters effecting your employment. Your Institution website will also provide information about HR policies and other related policies that may govern your current and future work like those dealing with applications for grant funding. There are often some independent interpretations and traditional practice within academic schools and faculties depending on size and funding. Some will have devolved HR functions so be sure to check your own School provision.

Staff Development

Typically included under staff development will be formal processes like:-

- **Induction**

- **Probation**

- **Appraisal**

As with the HR policies these can be very helpful in improving your employability and assisting you to plan your future job moves. Induction allows you to familiarise yourself with the University and the research group whilst Probation comes at the early stages of your job, clarifying objectives and targets and communicating with your manager. Appraisal goes further with commonly an annual stop, review, and reflect to include job objectives, performance and training needs, both for the current project and transferable skills and experiences for your future career. Take the opportunity offered by these processes to plan your career moves and assert your employment rights.

Proceeding from your appraisals you will be able to identify your training needs, and then you can look to the training provision. As a member of Research Staff at a UK University you will be entitled to access training and development support appropriate to your level of experience, your current job description and your future development. If your University has a substantial research tradition it will have funding specifically allocated to support the career development of early stage researchers with an emphasis on training to develop transferable skills, Roberts funding noted in the Introduction.

Typical training and development on offer will cover:-

- **Mentoring**

- **Career Management Skills** including career planning, CVs and interviews, job hunting (see Chapter 10 visiting the University Careers Service).

- **Project Management**

- **Dissemination of Research** including presentation skills for conferences and writing skills for publication.

- **Information Management.**

- **Accessing and managing funding** including fellowship and grant applications.

- **Teaching and learning** skills.

- **Personal development** including time management and personal impact.

Trade Unions

You may consider becoming a member of a trade union as a method of keeping up-to-date with an independent view on your employment rights and obligations and other benefits. The largest union for academic and related staff covering researchers lecturers and administrators at UK Universities is UCU **http://www.ucu.org.uk/** and there is very likely to be a local contact at your institution.

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Sources and Resources
For Volumes I ,II and III

- Background information
- Employer and employment market information
- Useful DVDs
- Reading
- Useful Websites

Background information

In 1996, in response to growing concerns about career development for university researchers, a Concordat was agreed aiming 'to provide a framework for the career management of contract research staff in universities and colleges'.

Contents of the 1996 Concordat

- It addresses the need for more effective career management and a continuing development programme for contract research staff, involving regular review and career guidance.

- It states that conditions of employment, in areas such as maternity leave, sick pay and pensions, should be brought in line with those for other university employees.

- Responsibility for the management and operation of such policies lies with the employer, i.e. the university or college, and funding bodies must be satisfied that these policies are in place before awards can be made.

- Progress will be reviewed every two years.

Building upon the principles of the 1996 Concordat and in recognition of the significant progress made as a consequence of it and the major reports (see below) and funding provided for the support of career development of Research Staff current a new Concordat was issued after wide consultation with Universities, Universities UK and a range of supporting organisations including AGCAS, in June 2008. It prides itself as 'setting out clear expectations for researchers, research managers, research institutions, and funders of research' and aims to 'enhance the research workforce and thereby sustain research excellence in the UK, bringing benefits to the health, economy and well being of our nation'.

Contents of the 2008 Concordat

The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. This extract **http://www.researchconcordat.ac.uk/** lists the set of key principles for the future support and management of research careers whilst the Concordat itself also offers explanations of how they may be embedded into institutional practice.

The Concordat's key principles:-

1. Recognition of the importance of recruiting, selecting and retaining researchers with the highest potential to achieve excellence in research.

2. Researchers are recognised and valued by their employing organisation as an essential part of their organisation's human resources and a key component of their overall strategy to develop and deliver world-class research.

3. Researchers are equipped and supported to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse, mobile, global research environment.

4. The importance of researchers' personal and career development, and lifelong learning, is clearly recognised and promoted at all stages of their career.

5. Individual researchers share the responsibility for and need to pro-actively engage in their own personal and career development, and lifelong learning.

6. Diversity and equality must be promoted in all aspects of the recruitment and career management of researchers.

7. The sector and all stakeholders will undertake regular and collective review of their progress in strengthening the attractiveness and sustainability of research careers in the UK.

There is a high level strategy group to promote the Concordat, monitor progress on its implementation and advise on putting the principles into action.

Other relevant reports include:-

2001 *Supporting Research Staff: Making a difference* A HEFCE funded report with recommendations for the career management of research staff and their managers, and for their development of personal and professional skills.

2002 *Set for Success* Sir Gareth Robert's report to the Government about the supply of science, technology, engineering and mathematics skills. Chapter 5 in particular looked at the uncertain career prospects of research staff associated with fixed-term contracts, unsatisfactory skills training and uncompetitive salaries and made recommendations to address these concerns.

These reports led to government funding for a range of initiatives aimed at improving conditions for researchers including:-

- Academic fellowships – awarded by the Research Councils as a way of funding the best researchers into tenured academic posts over five years. Further information can be found at **www.rcuk.ac.uk/acfellow/default.htm**

- Enhanced salaries for postdoctoral researchers in some cases.

- Funding for generic skills training for both PhD and postdoctoral researchers. The Research Councils Joint Skills Statement lists the transferable skills researchers are expected to have developed including career management skills. The skills list can be seen as being at the heart of a research career **http://www.vitae.ac.uk/policy-practice/1690/Joint-Skills-Statement.html**

This money, commonly called Roberts Money, is a set amount per Research Council funded researcher (PhD and research staff) given to Higher Education institutions in order to fund appropriate generic skills training. The funding has enabled institutions to employ dedicated Careers Advisers and Programme Skills Managers for the development of skills training programmes and other initiatives especially tailored for these groups.

Other Developments

2006   Research Councils UK Research Careers and Diversity Strategy published at **www.rcuk.ac.uk/rescareer/strategy.htm**

2007   Recruiting PhDs what works? A report by Dr Charles Jackson .Although a project about the experiences of newly qualified PhDs entering non academic employment this provides very useful insights into the necessity for direct communication between researchers, employers and University Careers Services which can be instructive to research staff looking at this employment market **http://www.vitae.ac.uk/cms/files/UKGRAD-Recruiting-PhDs-what-works-Mar-2007.pdf**

Other relevant policy documents, including information on developments in Europe, can be found in the Policy section of **http://vitae.ac.uk/policy-practice/1391/Policy.html** similarly reports can be found on the publications section **http://vitae.ac.uk/1272/all/5/Publications.html**

Fixed-Term Contract Legislation

2002 - The Fixed Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations state that fixed-term employees (including postdoctoral and other research staff) should not be treated less favourably than comparable permanent employees and that the use of successive fixed-term contracts will be limited to four years, unless the use of further fixed-term contracts is justified on objective grounds. The response of universities to this legislation varies between institutions but there have been moves by some institutions to transfer Research Staff from Fixed to open ended contracts.

Association of Postdoctoral Researchers

The aim of the Association of Postdoctoral Researchers is to provide a voice for the UK's research staff and postdocs. Find out more from the Wiki at **http://scratchpad.wikia.com/wiki/NationalpostdocUK**   There are also many entries on post doc blogs.

The USA has the much larger and longer established National Postdoctoral Association **http://www.nationalpostdoc.org/site/c.eoJMIWOBIrH/b.1388059/k.DBBE/NPA_Home.htm**

University and College Union UCU - UCU have a recent guide entitled 'The Researchers' Survival Guide' **http://www.ucu.org.uk/media/pdf/5/0/ucuressurvivalguide_apr08.pdf** This covers a range of useful advice and is downloadable to members and non-members alike.

Vacancy Information

- The Times Higher Education Supplement (weekly, on Fridays, or on the Internet at **http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/**

- **www.jobs.ac.uk** Comprehensive searchable vacancy list for research only, academic and academic related posts in Universities and related employers.

Employers Attitudes

- Souter, Claire *Employers' Perceptions of Recruiting Research Staff and Students* (University of Leads/Research Councils UK, November 2005) **http://careerweb.leeds.ac.uk/downloads/Empress_LR.pdf**

- McCarthy, Mary & Simm, Jane *Survey of Employer Attitudes to Postgraduate Researchers* (University of Sheffield, August 2006) **www.careers.dept.shef.ac.uk/pdf/employersurvey.pdf**

Destinations and Labour Market Information

http://www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Labour_market_inform ation/p!efeXak Annually updated graduate and postgraduate destinations - The Labour market section of the Prospects Website also links to trends and destinations information.

www.ahrc.ac.uk/about/ke/evaluation/pg_career_tracking.asp Longitudinal study - Tracking researcher Careers: AHRC study on the impact of skills development, career progression and economic and social contribution of arts and humanities PhD graduates.

http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/Images/employment_of_so c_sci_phds_tcm6-15385.pdf Longitudinal study - The ESRC The employment of social science PhDs in academic and non-academic jobs: research skills and postgraduate training.

http://careerweb.leeds.ac.uk/downloads/Empress_LR_000.pdf - Employer perceptions- Empress Survey. Staff, student and employer perceptions of recruiting research staff and students.

Academic Research Careers in Scotland and Older study but still very relevant. For more information about this project, see the Institute for Employment Research website at **http://www.warwick.ac.uk/ier** Hasluck, C., J. Pitcher and C. Simm (2001). *Academic Research Careers in Scotland: A Longitudinal Study of Contract Research Staff, Their Jobs and Their Career Patterns.* Edinburgh/Coventry: Scottish Higher Education Funding Council and Institute for Employment Research. **http://www.sfc.ac.uk/information/info_circulars/shefc/2001/he5401/researchcar eersinscot.pdf**

Starting Your Own Business

A new direction may involve starting your own business. If you are considering this option, there are a number of organisations that can help you including some examples of regional help. Also check your own University student societies and your research and business links or commercial development sections.

http://www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Self_employment/p!eF cmg Graduate Prospects self employment site with advice and links.

www.businesslink.gov.uk BusinessLink provides information on self-employment, starting small businesses, entrepreneurship.

http://www.startups.co.uk/ All round advice and links site for new businesses.

http://www.financewales.co.uk/what_we_do.aspx Commercial funding for businesses in Wales. Regional help with HE associated spin out companies.

http://www.oxonbe.co.uk/ Regional help in Oxfordshire area.

Useful DVDs

AGCAS videos/DVDs available at University Careers Services

- 'Why Ask Me That?'
- 'The Assessment Centre Video'
- 'Your jobs on line'
- 'Making an Impact- the graduate job interview'
- 'Selection Success in One'
- 'Can I Have a Few Minutes of Your Time?'

Reading

Academic Careers

Ali, L. and Graham, B., *Moving On in Your Career. A guide for academic researchers and postgraduates,* Routledge Falmer, London, 2000.
Blaxter, L., Hughes, C. and Tight, M. *The Academic Career Handbook,* Open University Press, Buckingham, 1998.
Boden, Rebecca, Epstein, Debbie & Kenway, Jane. *Academic's support kit* [set of 6 books]. Sage Publications. London. 2005.
Delamont, Sara & Atkinson, Paul. *Successful research careers: a practical guide*. Open University Press. Maidenhead 2004.
McCabe, Edward & McCabe, Linda. *How to succeed in academics*. Academic Press. London 2000.
Newhouse, M., *Cracking the Academic Nut: A Guide to Preparing for Your Academic Career*, President and Fellows of Harvard College, USA, 1993.
Newhouse, M., *Outside the Ivory Tower: A Guide for Academics Considering Alternative Careers*, President and Fellows of Harvard College, USA, 1997.

Career Change

Change Process

Basalla, Susan & Debelius, Maggie. *So what are you going to do with that?* a guide to career changing for MAs and PhDs. VHPS Holtzbrinck Publishing. 2001.
Bolles, Richard Nelson. *What color is your parachute?:* A practical manual for job-hunters and career-changers. Ten Speed Press.,Berkeley,1997.
Cope*, Mike.Personal Networking: How to Make Your Connections Count*. Pearson Education, 2003.
Green, Graham. *Career change handbook: how to find out what you're good at and what you enjoy: then get someone to pay you for it*. How To Books.
Hawkins, Peter, *The Art of Building Windmills: career tactics for the 21st century* Liverpool : University of Liverpool, 1999.
Hopson, B. and Scally, M., *Build Your Own Rainbow: a workbook for career and life management* Chalford, 2004.
Johnstone, Judith. *Planning a career change*. How To Books, 2006.
Timperley, John. *Network your way to Success-Discover the secrets of the world's top connectors.* Piatkus, London, 2002 reprinted 2004.
Tullier L. Michelle *Networking for Job Search and Career Success*. JIST works, 2004.

Change Suggestions

Brown, Craig. *Working in the voluntary sector: how to find rewarding and fulfilling work in charities and voluntary organisations*. How To Books, 2005.
Eikleberry, Carol. *The career guide for creative and unconventional people*. Ten Speed Press, 1999.
Reuvid, Jonathan. *Working for yourself : an entrepreneur's guide to the basics*. Kogan Page, 2007.
Griffith, Susan. *Gap years for grown ups*. Vacation Work Publications. Oxford, 2006.
Cynthia Robbins-Roth, editor **Alternative Careers in Science: leaving the ivory tower** London : Academic, 1998.
Sato, Toshihiro. *NIRA's world directory of think tanks*. National Institute for Research Advancement. Tokyo, 2005.

Practical Advice on Making Applications, Assessment Centres etc

Bradbury, Andrew. *Successful Presentation Skills.* London Kogan Page, 2000.

McCarthy, Patsy and Hatcher. Caroline. *Presentation skills* : *the essential guide for students.*London,Sage*, 2002.*
Parkinson, Mark. *How to Master Psychometric Tests* London : Kogan Page, 2004.

Perkins, Graham. *Killer CV's & Hidden Approaches.*3rd ed.Pearson Prentice Hall. 2007.
Harry Tolley and Robert Wood. *How to succeed at an Assessment Centre : test taking advice from the experts.* London :Kogan Page, 2005.

Thompson. M.A. The global resume and CV guide. New York. Wiley, 2000.

Useful Websites

Include websites referred to in the publication Volumes I to III.

Sites are listed alphabetically by URL. All addresses were correct at the time of submission (December 2008).

- **http://www.airto.co.uk/** Independent industrial research associations.

- **http://www.amrc.org.uk/homepage/** Association of medical research charities.

- **http://www.bris.ac.uk/researchstaff/** Example of a University Careers Service web page for research staff.

- **http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/** Major source of business support contacts for SMEs.

- **www.careers.lon.ac.uk** Find on-line advice on areas such as making applications, interviews and getting started in the 'help and advice' section, and links to employers, professional bodies, career choice sites etc. in the Virtual Careers Library. Of particular relevance is the 'Resources for Postgraduate Researchers' section under 'By Degree Subject Relevance'.

- **www.careers.strath.ac.uk** Comprehensive graduate job search.

- **www.conferencealerts.com** Conference Alerts A subscription service where you can receive free e-mailed updates of conferences (international and by subject area) matching your interests, available dates and preferred destinations.

- **http://www.c2careers.com/** Commercial careers advisory services are available from the Careers Group, University of London, C2: if you do not have access to a careers adviser for one to one advice, mock interviews etc at your own institution.

- **http://www.daphnejackson.org/** The Daphne Jackson Trust - implements a Fellowship scheme to enable a return to careers in science or engineering through updated knowledge and renewed professional skills.

- **www.employment-studies.co.uk** The Institute for Employment Studies is a centre of research and consultancy in human resource issues. Summaries of current research projects can be accessed on this site. Useful for labour market information.

- **www.esf.org/** The European Science Foundation (ESF) – the European association of national organisations responsible for support of scientific research.

- **http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index_en.cfm** European Researchers Mobility Forum - For researchers looking for work in Europe. Provides job vacancies, a section for posting your CV and a range of other career resources. Includes a link for a similar portal for Canada.

- **http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/what-we-do/building-strong-relationships-ol/foreign-embassy-uk/** The London Diplomatic List on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website useful for embassy contacts for staff looking abroad.

- **http://www.findaphd.com/** Large database of postgraduate opportunities.

- **http://www.findapostdoc.com/** Large database of post doctoral job opportunities.

- **http://london.floodlight.co.uk/** Floodlight provides listings of regional training provision in and around London.

- **www.get.hobsons.co.uk** Advice for job seekers in the graduate labour market.

- **http://gmpcrs.group.shef.ac.uk/** A project, focusing on career planning and support, developed a number of career support mechanisms, namely a Research Career Builder whereby Researchers can measure the levels of their existing skills; two Employment Skills Guidebooks with examples of how transferable skills are being acquired, can be built into projects and can transfer to other work contexts; and a Staff Review Scheme, to facilitate development and monitor progress. A number of training materials, case studies and checklists to enable career tracking have also been developed which can be downloaded from the site.

- **http://www.gowales.co.uk/en/graduate/index.html** GO Wales which has both market information and graduate and postgraduate level vacancies and work placements in Wales.

- **http://www.graduatesyorkshire.co.uk/** Graduate Yorkshire a regional graduate agency which liaises with HE careers services

- **http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/professional** HE Academy provides information and resources on career development in the Professional Development and Recognition section.

- **www.hefce.ac.uk** The Higher Education Funding Council for England distributes public money for teaching and research to universities and colleges.

- **www.Hefcw.ac.uk** The Higher Education Funding Council for Wales distributes public money for teaching and research to universities and colleges.

- **www.hero.ac.uk/uk/niss/index.cfm** National Information Services and Systems provide a wide range of information on its website. Ranging from academic job listings to information about funding and the performance of individual universities, this website provides an extensive directory of links.

- **http://www.hollis-pr.com/A-Z/w.htm** Hollis PR which includes the contact details of Public Relations firms throughout the UK industry information and jobs in PR.

- **http://iet.open.ac.uk/home.cfm** Humanities and Arts Higher Education Network, HAN. The Network is administered by the Institute of Educational Technology (IET) at The Open University.

- **http://www.incomesdata.co.uk/** Income Data Services Surveys independent research organization useful on employment matters.

- **www.intute.ac.uk/** Web resources for education and research. The service is created by a network of UK universities and partners. Subject specialists select and evaluate the websites in our database and write high quality descriptions of the resources.

- **www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/CONTRACT-RESEARCH-STAFF.html** Jiscmail is a service that runs electronic discussion lists for the UK higher education and research community. This particular webpage provides an excellent list of on-line resources of research staff in UK HE and tells you how to join the list.

- **www.jobs.ac.uk** Comprehensive site for vacancies for postdocs, academic and non-academic posts. Also includes some useful career-related articles.

- **www.leverhulme.org.uk/** The Leverhulme Trust – supports research and education in all subject areas.

- **www.le.ac.uk/researchleader/** An on-line resource to support the development of Principal Investigators – useful for those wanting an academic career.

- **http://network.nature.com** Nature Network is an online scientific social networking tool set up by the Nature Publishing Group (NPG) for Research staff. The site allows you to meet other scientists with similar interests.

- **www.nuffieldfoundation.org/** The Nuffield Foundation – a charitable trust aimed to 'advance social well being', particularly through research and practical experiment.

- **http://www.postgrad.hobsons.com/** Hobsons Postgrad includes comprehensive listings and advice articles on postgraduate study.

- **www.prospects.ac.uk** Access extensive occupational information as well as details on working abroad, vocational courses, careers services, job seeking strategies and self employment etc.

- **www.prospects.ac.uk/links/countries** Country database for anyone thinking about working abroad, includes country-specific CV/resume advice.

- **www.rcuk.ac.uk/rescareer/default.htm** Research councils site with useful information about career development and skills training, Academic Fellowship Scheme, other awards and national and international policy information.

- **http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/aboutrcs/default.htm** Research councils site with links to all seven **Research Councils.**

	RESEARCH COUNCILS	
www.ahrc.ac.uk	Arts and Humanities Research Council	AHRC
www.bbsrc.ac.uk	Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council	BBSRC
www.esrc.ac.uk	Economics and Social Research Council	ESRC
www.epsrc.ac.uk	Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council	EPSRC
www.mrc.ac.uk	Medical Research Council	MRC
www.nerc.ac.uk	Natural Environment Research Council	NERC
www.pparc.ac.uk	Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council	PPARC

- **www.rec.uk.com** Recruitment and Employment Confederation website. You can use the 'Find a Consultancy' facility to search for member recruitment agencies representing your particular interest and geographical location.

- **www.researchiscool.com** A site set up in 2007/8 by a PhD student from Edinburgh University. Designed specifically as a site to locate research jobs and for social networking amongst research staff at all stages of their careers.

- **www.researchresearch.com** For funding opportunities and news on research policy and politics world-wide. All disciplines covered.

- **www.royalsoc.ac.uk/** The Royal Society – UK's national academy of science.

- **http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/** A wealth of information about different science-based careers, making applications, interview skills and more. Although aimed at scientists, there is plenty of interest for non-scientists.

- **http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career_development/tools_resources/how_to_guides/how_to_build_your_network** Science Careers. Articles on Networking.

Science and Engineering Employers

http://www.abpi.org.uk/	The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI) website at includes a list of member companies under 'associated links'.
http://www.acrpi.com/	Association of clinical research careers information.
http://www.airto.co.uk/about.htm	Independent research organisations – see the members directory on the Association of Independent Research and Technology Organisations website.
http://www.biologyinbusiness.org/	Biology in Business BiB non-profit organization that bridges academic and commercial life science to promote career development and technology transfer.
http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/index.htm	Government Departments –online A to Z database at UK Government website includes links to all the Government Department websites.
http://www.nature.com/naturejobs/index.html	Major science publications /academic websites Nature.
http://www.naturenet.net/orgs/	Provides links to the websites of several agencies.Wildlife or environmental protection agencies – the Naturenet "who's who" listing of organisations.
http://www.newscientistjobs.com/jobs/default.aspx	New Scientist
http://www.theengineer.co.uk/Home/Default.aspx	Engineering - this site covers all engineering specialisms.

Social Science/Humanities Research Employers

http://www.archives.org.uk/	The Society of Archivists is the principal professional body for archivists, archive conservators and records managers in the United Kingdom and Ireland. Includes career development section.
http://www.charitychoice.co.uk/	Charities – the Charity Choice website at is a charity directory, searchable by category.
http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/about/public/bodies.asp	Agencies and public bodies website provides Information about Executive Agencies and Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs), their purpose, history and organisation Links to Agencies' and their parent departments' websites.
http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/iwant/index.asp	Civil Service recruitment link site.
http://www.gsr.gov.uk/recruitment/index.asp	Government Social Research or GSR website includes recruitment opportunities.
http://www.labournet.net/links.asp	Trade Unions – Activist Network a directory of left, radical websites includes a list of links to trade union websites under 'Unions'.
http://www.mrs.org.uk/	The Market Research Association (MRS) website is an association representing providers and users of market, social, and opinion research, and business intelligence.
http://www.natcen.ac.uk/	The National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) is the largest independent social research institute in Britain. It provides training ,conferences and own job opportunities.
http://www.nira.or.jp/english/index.html	Think tanks – the National Institute for Research Advancement (NIRA) includes a World Directory of Think Tanks under 'think tank information' on its website. 2008 edition is on line only.

http://www.oultwood.com/index.php	Local Government – the Oultwood Local Government Website Index, searchable by country.
http://www.rbg.org.uk/	The Research Buyer's Guide (RBG) is a directory of market research providers and support services there is also careers section.

- **www.sfc.ac.uk/** Scottish Funding Council distributes public money for teaching and research to universities and colleges.

- **www.shintonconsulting.com/postdoc/index.html** Careers resources for post-docs including career change and CV advice.

- **http://www.careers.lon.ac.uk/sortit/** Sortit an online careers guidance programme from The Careers Group University of London, which has key sections on Self Analysis, Options Generation, Research etc.

- **www.swan.ac.uk/crs/ University of Wales, Swansea** Includes a 'Career Development Planner' for contract researchers (in the section on career development) which assists in identifying transferable skills. Also case studies.

- **www.targetjobs.co.uk** advice for job seekers in the graduate labour market.

- **http://www.legal500.com/** The Legal 500 which lists law firms.

- **http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/** Time Higher Educational Supplement – articles of interest and HE job vacancies.

- **http://www.the-sra.org.uk/** Social Research Association.

- **www.ucu.org.uk** Universities and Colleges Union.

- **http://www.ukspa.org.uk/home** SMEs (Small and Medium Employers) directory of members of the United Kingdom Science Park Association.

- **www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/careers/researchers/** Comprehensive career development site for research staff including career development, researching career options, decision making, job search, fellowships and making applications. Includes an extensive directory of useful websites.

- **http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Pages/Default.aspx** Universities UK is the respresentative body for the executive heads of UK universities.

- **http://www.vitae.ac.uk/** VITAE a national organisation championing the personal, professional and career development of doctoral researchers and research staff in higher education institutions and research institutes. Access using the researcher portal.

- **http://www.windmillsonline.co.uk/** Virtual career coach – highly recommended.