

Guide for exploring opportunities outside of academia

Before you start networking with people it's important that you have some guide posts about what you may potentially want. This step I believe is critical because if you spend the time to do this it will help you form better questions to ask people you will network with. A lot of people really want to help you but if you cannot articulate what you want how are they supposed to know? If you can articulate what you are looking for more times than not, people you network with will be able to make recommendations, which will lead to other recommendations and ultimately an interview or job (the adjacent possible).

What do you potentially want?

- What do you value?
- What would you consider an ideal role (lots of travel, working with people, high salary, high autonomy)?
- What things are critical for you to have, what things would you definitely not want to do and what things can you live with?

References to help you form this

- Books to consider (The Start Up of You, So Good they Can't Ignore You). Remember you don't have to buy these books you can borrow them from the McMaster library or public library
- Internet (groups on Linked In and blog posts)
- Cornell site on translating what you do to life outside of academia (http://www.career.cornell.edu/students/grad/skills.cfm?goback=.gde_1844342_member_274199476#!)
- Angela Duckworth TED talk on GRIT (http://www.ted.com/talks/angela_lee_duckworth_the_key_to_success_grit)
- Career services at the University should help with coaching and access to personality tests

Networking with people

- Linked In (search for people that are doing roles that you might be interested in and asking them to connect to ask questions. Join groups that align with what you may be interested in and see the discussions and the people who are contributing and ask them or post on the group and see the responses)
- Family and friends (you may be surprised on the people they could hook you up with to speak)
- Professors at McMaster (ones with partnerships with industry could give you some insights)
- MeetUp.com (site that allows groups with similar interests in cities all around the world to meet and discuss topics that are of interest to them)
- Toastmasters (if you feel that you are not comfortable speaking in public than this is a must and the people you meet could have some great insight for you)
- Rotary Club (groups all over the world, helps with public speaking and its an interesting place to meet people from a variety of different backgrounds)
- BNI.com (business networking organization)

Finally, if you feel that you are interested in something that is away from your area of expertise and want to know more take a free online course through Coursera or MIT online.