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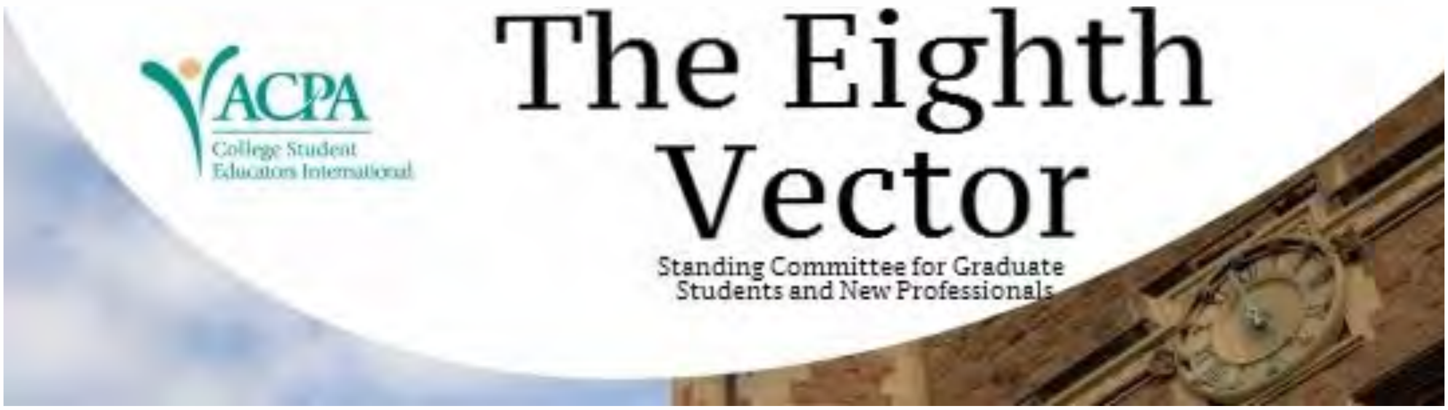

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Networking: Making the Most Out of Your Weak Ties of Your Twenties

Tim Cason, University of South Carolina

"Thirty is the new twenty" is a statement commonly heard amongst 20-somethings operating under the illusion that their 20s are "odyssey years, a time meant for wandering" (Jay, 2012, p. xxii). Meg Jay, author of the highly acclaimed book entitled *The Defining Decade,* argues that the twenties are the time "to engage the

most" to benefit our future careers (Jay, 2012, p. xxii). One such strategy is to intentionally build your networks. There are two types of networks: strong ties and weak ties. Strong ties, those ties within your immediate personal and professional circles, possess many of the same connections you already have (Granovettor, 1973). Crowding together with the same group of people prevents your network from thriving. In contrast, Granovettor (1973) defines a weak tie as an acquaintance, or
someone you know, but do not currently know well. Young professionals need to be intentional about creating, developing, and utilizing their weak ties because they provide a bridge to fresh, new people that can lead to novel and exciting job opportunities. The purpose of this article is to provide young professionals with tips for identifying and building upon their weak ties.

The first step to intentionally developing weak ties is to evaluate your career goals. Then, create a list of all the people you know who work in that field and contact them by sending a personalized email or phone call. Ask them for advice about pursuing a career in that field and if there are any people they would suggest you contact for further assistance and advice. Although it is often awkward to reach out to these weak tie referrals, it is important to do so. You will begin to realize most people are happy to assist young professionals. After all, they were once faced with the daunting task of establishing their careers. By helping you they also benefit because there is a "high" associated with helping others (Jay, 2012, p. 29).

Although most weak ties will be keen to help, it is important to be purposeful with your request. Be direct, be concise, and be intentional. If you are clear about your request, it is more likely that your weak ties will assist you because they know exactly what you want. Make sure you do your homework on the person you are meeting. This will allow you to appear informed and help you create a list of questions to guide your conversation. Ask intentional questions, such as:
"I would love to learn more about your career path."
"What advice do you have for me as a young professional?"
"Are there other people you would suggest that I speak to?"
These sample questions will help maximize your time with each contact.
It is also important to express gratitude to everyone that agrees to meet with you. Send a follow-up thank you email or hand-written card as soon as possible following your informational interview. Save their contact information for future reference.

Conclusion

As your career progresses, never forget the impact of weak ties. For the rest of your career you will have the opportunity to "pay it forward" by helping future young professionals that seek your advice and assistance.

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Congruence in the Job Search

Stacie Schultz, University of Florida

"True learning does not occur unless reflection is present." -John Dewey

Having recently moved across the country on my own to start a new position, I have had more time than I've had in years to reflect. I've reflected on my graduate school experience, my assistantship, the job search process, what to make for dinner, what I want out of life, and what to do with all the free time that has been so limited for so long. In that time, I have seen how important reflection is for learning and for forward progress. I am fortunate that my assistantship was in the same functional area (which I love) as my job, and so many of those experiences are directly applicable to my daily work. But more importantly, this reflection has shown me how important it is to be true to yourself throughout the job search and interview process.

Let me preface by saying I applied for my current position primarily out of desperation. I was tired of applications and cover letters and it looked interesting enough. I did not believe I was qualified and hit the submit button without much hope. Several weeks later I found myself on a phone interview and shortly after that, in a state of semi-disbelief, preparing to come to campus.

Reflection 1: Stretch your limits - apply for things that are a bit of a stretch, whether it's a job, professional development position, or simply asking for a project. You never know what might work out and how you may be able to grow from it.

Preparing for an on-campus interview is stressful and takes a lot of work. In my case (and many others, I'm sure), I did not have experiences to reference for each bullet point of the job description. Instead, I had a fairly good conception of what I was "supposed" to do to be successful. (After all, that's what our master's degrees are for, right?) I found it most difficult to prepare for questions that I hadn't directly addressed within my assistantship. I spent some time reviewing potential questions with colleagues and brainstorming answers, but ultimately decided to just do the best I could in the moment. I started my interview with a presentation about my vision for the department and a seemingly endless hour of Q&A. This was where almost all of the hard questions came up, particularly around the areas that I hadn't had experience in yet.

Reflection 2: *Know* who you are and *be* who you are. Be honest in your answers, particularly about how you will do things in the position if you are hired. Understand how you work on your own and with others, practice talking about those things. Above all else, be honest. If you aren't confident in your ability to fundraise, acknowledge that and use it as a way to show you can work to balance areas of weakness. When you are in that job later, you will be glad you did.

When I finished with the interview, I processed the day with a friend from my hotel room. There were things I wasn't sure about, and I needed to get all those lingering questions worked out to decide if there were red flags. I continued to reflect over the next few days, shifting from the immediate fear of potential issues to the realization that every place

has issues, the hard part is assessing whether they are issues you can deal with or not. By time I got the call with an offer, I was more than ready to accept and 12 days later I was on the road.

Reflection 2.5: Give yourself enough time to have your life together how you need it. If you like to be settled and organized, be sure to make that happen. If you work best under pressure and with a lot on your plate, move a little faster. Do your best to make sure you are not stressed from the start as you transition into a new opportunity.

I found it very hard to not feel like I was still interviewing throughout my first couple weeks of work. I was consistently on my toes and trying to think back to anything and everything I said in my interview to be sure that I was being congruent with those claims. This feeling has faded as I have settled in, but as I complete projects, I realize how important it was to be honest in who I was and who I would be as a member of the office in the interview stage. My colleagues and supervisor appreciate it, and it has made doing my work all the much easier.

Reflection 3: The more honest you are in your interview, the easier it will be to find success in your position. If you are true to who you are from the get go, you don’t have to spend as much time or energy figuring out what you said interview – you can just do the task. You will have been hired for being yourself and comfortable in your approach to work, not for having the ‘right answer’. Finally, in your first weeks, remember that they already chose you and they did so for a reason, even if you don’t know what that reason is.

Mentoring 201: What Does It Mean To Be A Good Mentee?

Kimberly Griffin, PhD, The University of Maryland

We often think of mentorship as a one way interaction – as mentors stewarding their young charges through rough waters and filling their mentees with advice and information. However, I've found that the most successful relationships between mentors and mentees are truly reciprocal. Both members of the relationship give and take, considering how they can contribute their partner's success and achievement. Therefore, it is important that we look beyond offering advice on how to be a good mentor. We must also think about how to be good mentees to make our relationships really work and yield the best outcomes. There are three things (there are always three things aren't there?) that I would suggest to mentees as we seek to develop great relationships with our mentors: communicate clearly, develop a network of supportive individuals, and have relationships with purpose.

I think that one of the most important things for people to keep in mind is to be a good communicator - especially when you think your mentor *must* know what you know what you need. Mentors sincerely want to be helpful, but when they don't hear from you and you don't share what is going on in your life, they often won't take the time to figure it out. Most of the time they will assume you're fine and move on to their mentees who do say they need something. Or they get busy addressing their own needs. I once spent weeks waiting for my advisor to ask me if I would be his Teaching Assistant for a class – I thought he knew I needed teaching experience, it was my turn in the rotation, and I was excited about the opportunity to work with him. I waited and waited. One day, I finally decided to just ask him if I could be his TA. He wrote back right away saying that he had been thinking about asking me, but thought I was too busy, so he held off. If I would not have communicated with him, I would have missed out on a great opportunity! So, be sure to think about the following questions: Have I told my mentor/advisor about my goals, interests, and aspirations? Have I actually asked for the kind of support and opportunities to which I would like to have access? Am I answering emails and phone calls when my mentor reaches out to me, and am I available when they try to schedule meetings? If I am unavailable, have I taken the time to explain why?

It is also important to know that the relationship that you have with your academic advisor or your supervisor may evolve into a mentoring relationship, but it might not. And that's ok! There are lots of important relationships you will have in your career, and they are all critical to your evolution as a professional. Some will be largely focused on the nuts and bolts – they will be assigned, focused on exchanging information, and helping you meet important benchmarks, but maybe not so personally rewarding. Mentoring relationships take time to develop because mentors take a personal interest in you; they invest in your professional *and* personal development. But as we think about mentoring and who can support our growth and development, it is often a multidimensional task that is more than one person can handle! Good mentees have multiple mentors who support different aspects of their development, helping in different ways. I'd encourage you to think in comprehensive ways about the areas in which you'd like to grown and the support you need, and then reach out to a diverse network for support – good mentees look beyond immediate advisors or supervisors and build a team of mentors.

The final piece of advice I would offer mentees is that you should do what you can to structure your relationship and make your meetings intentional. Don't get me wrong, checking in to say "Hi!" and just dropping by is great, and everyone appreciates the occasional catch up over coffee. But meeting with purpose will allow you to make the most out of your mentor's knowledge and expertise. Emailing your mentor with specific questions or requests for feedback (with adequate turnaround time, of course!) that draws on their area of expertise will allow you to gain as much as possible from their time. It is also helpful to come to meetings prepared with questions and an agenda of topics to cover. This will allow you both to make the most of the time that you have together. Also, be creative as you keep your mentor updated on how situations you sought their counsel on are progressing. I sought a mentor's advice on a fellowship application – there was a big time difference and she had to get up very early to take my call. I later sent her a box of margaritas as a thank you and to tell her that I was a finalist in the competition. She loved it and called a few times subsequently to find out how things were going and whether I heard anything about the award. While I ultimately didn't get the fellowship, the experience brought us closer and allowed us to connect and catch up about other things.

In the end, being a good mentee means being actively engaged in one's mentoring relationship. It can be hard to move out of traditional mentoring models, where we mentors are expected to give and mentees are expected to receive, but I'd be willing to bet that the most successful relationships happen when mentors and mentees see each other as equal partners. While it may take some extra effort, clearly communicating with your mentor, building a network of support, and being intentional about structuring your interactions will likely add to your relationships, and make them more rewarding.

Lessons Learned: Planning Successful Large Scale Events

Jennifer Boozer, University of Georgia

This weekend I witnessed the product of long months of planning my assistantship site's student leadership conference. As a graduate student chairing a committee of professional staff I learned an incredible amount about myself and about successfully planning these big events. Here are three big lessons I learned in the process!

Keep Perspective

Our university officially consolidated in January, but the process of finding out how to operate as a new institution is just beginning. I often grew frustrated with our committee of professional staff because it seemed to me that everyone was more concerned with how the consolidation was making their jobs harder than with making this conference the best it could be.

Over time I recognized the difference in my perspective and that of the committee members. This conference is the biggest thing I do in my assistantship and is my sole focus from July to October. However this event is only a small part of what the professional staff does every day. As a graduate assistant I have the privilege of being more removed from consolidation issues, but this transition is affecting the work my colleagues are doing every single day. I learned to remind myself that keeping perspective on each member's situation is important in chairing a successful committee.

Everyone Isn't Like You

As I tackle papers, assignments, and presentations, I've learned that I not only work well under pressure, but I love the thrill and focus that comes with a time crunch. Call it procrastination, but that's just how I work!

So, I don't feel a lot of stress when a deadline approaches. In a time crunch, I know my focus will kick into high gear and I will be more efficient. NEWSFLASH: This stresses people out!!

I realized that my style really doesn't work for some people, and that's okay. When I'm working on my own I can push the limit. However, when you're part of a team you must find a middle ground that works for everyone.

Did we put on a great conference? Absolutely. But, had I been more cognizant of others' styles I could have saved some members a lot of stress.

Enjoy The Process

Planning big events is hard. From finding a theme to finalizing every small detail it is a long, involved process. When we focus on how busy we are or the frustrations of planning it is easy to fall into a very negative place.

In my short experience I have realized that there is nothing more gratifying and energizing than seeing your students benefit from something you did for them. Watching students engage in meaningful conversations about leadership, social justice, differences, and their strengths serves as a reminder that they are the whole reason this conference exists.

So, enjoy the process. Enjoy knowing that you are in a field where your work can have life-changing impact on a student. Enjoy knowing that, even when things are hard, you are learning lessons and growing just like your students.

Twenty-Something's: Fostering Romantic Relationships in Graduate School

Christine Kovach, University of South

Combining Love and Graduate School

Your twenties are a time for big changes and transitions in your life, including pursuing your education, embarking upon a career, and establishing a relationship with a significant other. Meeting and selecting a significant other can be stressful, yet the rate at which twenty something's are getting married is relatively high. According to Meg Jay, the author of *The Defining Decade: Why Your Twenties Matter—and How to Make the Most of Them Now,* "Today's young people marry about five years later than their parents (on average, women at 26 and men at 28), but most will marry. About 75% of Americans are married by 35" (Goudreau, 2012).

For graduate students the time demands can be overwhelming and make it challenging to find a partner. Yet, Banville (2013, p. 22) found in a study of Psychology graduate students that, "students who have supportive spouses have lower levels of stress than their unmarried peers. Couples can actually grow closer by working through the challenges of school as a team." The purpose of this article is to offer suggestions for meeting and nurturing a relationship with the love of your life while in graduate school.

When and Where to Meet Your Life Partner

Although there is often family pressure to meet your soul mate, first make sure that you are happy and comfortable with yourself. The reality is that few of us will meet our future spouse out at a bar. In fact, researchers have found that only 9% of married couples met at a bar or club ("One-third of," 2013). In today's dating market, many people are meeting partners online. Approximately 17% of couples married between the years 2007-2010 met online ("One-third of," 2013). The good news is that this study found that those who met online had higher satisfaction in their relationship than those who met offline.

Suggestions for Balancing a Relationship with Graduate School

While maintaining a relationship in graduate school can present certain challenges, it is possible to balance the two. Banville (2013, p. 22) discusses the importance of making time for your partner. It is also important to communicate appreciation: "couples who felt most thankful, even those who didn't always say it outright, had more satisfied spouses" (Banville, 2013, p.22).

One important skill to master to keep a relationship thriving is negotiating (Duke University Student Affairs, n.d.). As a graduate student, sometimes your priorities will change and unscheduled commitments will occur. Understand that sacrifices will have to be made and negotiate with your partner to seek a balance that works for both of you. Another helpful tool is to recognize your partner's fears and insecurities. By recognizing these feelings, you can begin to talk through them (Duke University Student Affairs, n.d.).

Conclusion

with a significant other while pursuing your education. There are opportunities to meet someone as long as you are searching in the right place. And once you have found a partner, take steps to maintain a healthy

relationship by effective communicating, negotiating, and making time for one another.

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Dear Colleague: Resources for Veteran Students

Jacob Mendez, Missouri State University

Question:

Dear Colleague,

I currently advise a veteran student within my student organization and have now begun to notice the lack of resources and support within my institution for veteran students. Are there any resources or tools to help me approach this situation within my institution?

Answer:

Working with veterans students within higher education has become a contemporary issue in recent history as this population has gradually increased within the campus culture. The American Council on Education (ACE) has noticed this trend and has created several resources for professionals to reference when addressing this growing population. These resources stem from helping create military college credit within your institution to providing general support to student veterans.

ACE has implemented a program called the “Toolkit for Veteran Friendly Institutions” to help colleges and universities build better programs for student veterans. This toolkit highlights promising practices within higher education, including on-campus veteran centers, specific veteran orientations, prospective student outreach efforts, faculty and staff training, and counseling services designed for veteran students. The toolkit includes a database of resources to be accessed at any time to find way ways to support military veterans. Recently, ACE had a webinar about the toolkit and walked participants through the details of this program. The webinar is available on the ACE website for individuals to view anytime.

In 2012, The U.S Department of Education issued $14,392,377 in grants to Veteran’s Upward Bound programs. These programs are developed to increase support for low-income, first generation military veterans and to support the commitment to improving veteran’s transition into college through educational opportunities. This transition is aided through instruction in reading, writing, and study skills sessions, academic and personal counseling, tutoring opportunities, and mentoring programs. Information about this program is listed on the U.S Department of Education website and includes details about the eligibility, applicant info, and resources to help the grant writing process. Also, current institutions benefiting from this grant are listed on the website to allow other professionals to use them as a resource.

I hope these resources will allow you to begin creating more networks and resources for your student, and will allow your institution to become more veteran friendly.
Jacob Mendez

Resources

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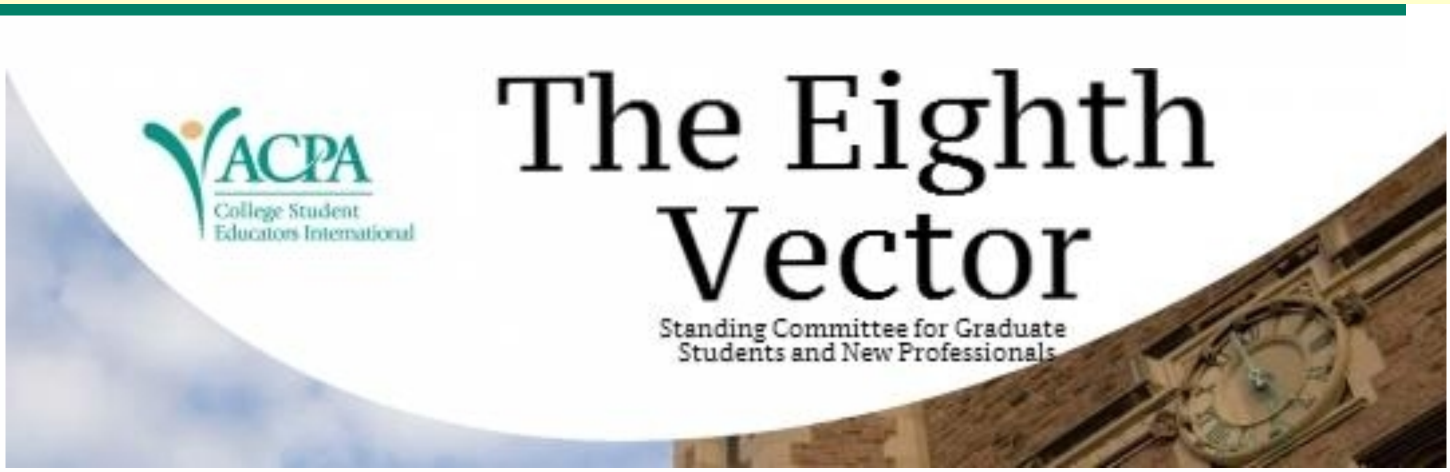

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The Key to Success is Failure

Alexander Thomas, University of South Carolina

"Failure is not fatal, but failure to change might be." This quote by famed college basketball coach John Wooden, highlights the idea that even when things do not go according to plan, the situation can still be salvaged through change (Bois, 2010). The idea is relevant to new graduate students, as the transition to graduate education can be incredibly difficult and stressful. Students need to change their approach to meet the challenges and demands of the transition to graduate life (Gallagher, 2013). In order to be successful, graduate students must find ways to adapt to the more challenging situations that they encounter. The purpose of this article is to highlight a strategy for graduate students to become more adaptable by embracing failure.

It's Not You

From time to time, everyone will fail at something or have a task that does not go as well as planned. For graduate students transitioning into a new lifestyle, failure can occur in numerous settings, including work, academics, and personal relationships. In order for students to ultimately embrace failure, they must start by realizing that failure happens and is not fatal. American pioneer William D. Brown once stated, "Failure is an event, never a person" (Goodreads Inc, 2013). By recognizing that even though they have failed, they are not failures, graduate students can start to see these events as what they really are: learning opportunities.

Learning Through Failure

In a recent interview, entrepreneur Richard Branson responded to a question about fear and failure by saying, "The key to bouncing back is to learn whatever lessons you can from the experience so that you can avoid making the same mistakes in the next launch" (Branson, 2013b, para. 6). Though targeted at entrepreneurs, Branson's advice is useful for graduate students as well; students need to adjust their mindset towards failure, and embrace it as feedback that can be used to become more successful the next time (Bain, 2012, p. 54). As opposed to a novel, students need to see life as a series of short stories, each with its own moral or lesson to be learned. Each of these lessons serves as a way for students to avoid similar mistakes in the future, and encourages a positive outlook on the current situation. "Failure is one of the secrets to success," a secret that graduate students can utilize by learning as much as they can from it (Branson, 2013a, para. 8).

Conclusion

Motivational speaker Zig Ziglar once said, "If you learn from defeat, you haven't really lost" (BrainyQuote.com, 2013). Graduate students need to begin embracing their failures as they enter graduate school by viewing them as learning opportunities. In doing so, students will not have really failed at all, but

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Who Says You Can't Go Home?: Lessons Learned as a New Professional

Chelsea Rhodes, University of South Carolina

The *click, click, click* of my heels on the pavement outside of my campus office signaled my first day as a young professional, and a return home after a long journey. Instead of feeling nervous about where to park or the location of the office, I knew exactly where I was going. When the opportunity to return to my Alma Mater arose, I leaped at the chance to give back to my undergraduate institution. However, I could not help but wonder if working as a graduate assistant here might be a poor career move. Entering into the workforce as a young professional is tough and there is a unique set of challenges associated with working at your alma mater. This article provides tips to individuals considering a similar return to their alma mater.

Tip One: Dress the Part

My first tip is to dress the part of a professional staff member. Many higher education professionals understand the idea of dressing appropriately to fit into the culture of the office. Pay attention to what others are wearing in the office and match their level of "office chic." Considering most of my professors saw me in yoga pants or jeans as a student, making the change to dress pants and blouses was a clear signal that my role had changed. I also found wearing my nametag for the first few weeks helpful as it established me as an official and confident young professional.

Tip Two: Fraternizing with the Family

Deciding how you will interact with faculty and students, particularly those that knew you as an undergraduate, is an important point to ponder before starting work. I returned to campus less than two years after graduating, so some of the students knew me from my undergraduate days. Luckily, a conversation about the change of relationship was unnecessary; however, if needed, this conversation needs to be direct, leaving no room for confusion. One challenge was refraining from visiting past professors. I knew that, like my relationships with students, my relationships with my former professors had changed. It is true that they were, and forever will be, my mentors. But I needed to establish myself as a colleague, not as a student reaching out for support. Now, when I have discussions with them, there is less of a power differential and instead of a conversation occurring between pupil and teacher, the conversation is between fellow employees.

Tip Three: Be Your Confidant Self

Lastly, be confident and be yourself. You were hired for a reason: your supervisor believed you would be a great asset to the team. Although my journey took me back to my alma mater, I reminded myself that I was hired because of my strengths and abilities to serve the students of my institution. If you choose to return to

When is the Right Time to Job Search?

Ali Martin Scoufield, LaSalle University

A question that continues to plague me even as a mid-level professional is ‘When is the right time to job search?’ I asked a few colleagues what their thoughts were and as you can imagine, the responses were vastly different with various considerations, advice, timelines, and cautions. Every suggestion made me more aware that the job search is a very personal process. Sherly Shandberg, the chief operating officer of Facebook said, “Careers are a jungle gym, not a ladder.” I couldn’t agree more. While I worry over questions like, ‘Is a lateral move ok’ and ‘As a housing professional, am I ready to move off’, I have to recognize that my priorities are my own and my job search is my own. The best advice I can offer into this complicated process is to trust yourself.

In addition to trusting yourself, you should also be ready to ask yourself tough questions. Many colleagues said our jobs should make us happy; maybe not happy all the time, every day but mostly. And there may be aspects of your job that never make you happy (for me, budget proposals) but for the most part – you should be excited, look forward to what the day brings, and find new challenges along the way that inspire you. If you’re not finding enjoyment in your work, perhaps it is time to look for something else, even if you’re still within your first year. But be prepared to have a tough conversation with yourself. If after you transition to another job, you again find yourself unhappy…leaving two positions within the first year starts to look like a pattern and employers might wonder if the problem isn’t the positions - but you.

Many colleagues also mentioned that it is time to job search when institutional or supervisor priorities differ from what you originally thought or committed to. Perhaps your SSAO announces a newly crafted Mission Statement that no longer aligns with what you espouse – this might be a reason to search. Again, only you can determine how institutional change affects your work and only you can recognize how your growth as a professional affects your ability to work within certain parameters.

A final theme common in responses was the impact the job search can have on your social life. Not only is the job search often time consuming but the possibility of relocating can wreak havoc on an established social network and can have implications for all of your relationships. Certainly, friends and family are considerations for the job search and you must decide how big of a consideration they should be. For example, if you’re working at an institution that offers partner benefits and your partner is partaking in those, transitioning from that position could pose serious problems.

So when is it the right time to job search? In a very real way, my response is - you tell me. And while you are job searching, surround yourself with supportive mentors who can guide you to your next great adventure.

Lessons Learned: The Values of a Honor Society and Graduate School Transition

Naria Martinez, University of South Florida

As prepared as we try to become, many cannot completely adjust to the life of becoming a graduate student. Many quickly realize that the 8am-5pm student affairs jobs and 5pm-8pm night classes, along with the countless studying and reading hours, can drain us from truly grasping what the graduate experience is all about. We begin to long for the days when we were in undergrad, when we somewhat cared about academics, but in reality, cared more about the relationships we built and the “enjoy the moment” mentality many of us had.

I can confess that I have been down this road. Unfortunately, the challenges I began to face started to dominate my life and had begun to affect my work ethic and my enthusiasm to learn. I was tired of my schedule and had started to experience laziness and a lack of interest in the things I was doing. Additionally, I had become extremely homesick and any chance I could get to go home, I went home! This was never affordable and it never helped in appreciating where I was currently living. It was in the middle of the semester as I sat in front of my desk that I realized that I was unhappy and I had not been living the graduate experience I had hoped for.

So what did I do? Without knowing it, I began to incorporate the five areas of Omicron Delta Kappa (scholarship, athletics, campus or community service, journalism and creative/performing arts) into my daily life in order to face the challenges I was experiencing. I went to graduate school to further my educational career, so it was only fitting that scholarship became my priority. Thankfully, the program I am in is a cohort model, which allowed me to reach out to many of my colleagues to create study groups. Being around these people rejuvenated my passion for why I am seeking my Master’s in Student Affairs and has also opened the door for a new passion of mine, journalism. In the past few months, I have discovered an appreciation for writing and publishing written work. I have been able to write about my outlook on many of the concepts I am learning in my classes in hopes to make a contribution within my field. To bring balance into my life, I decided to cheer on rather than play the intramurals team my cohort had created. This allowed for me to build relationships with classmates and not feel so homesick. Lastly, the bonds I have created in my graduate experience has allowed me to step outside the classroom and share what I have learned within our campus and community.

To conclude, graduate school is not easy to transition to. But, with a positive mindset and filling up your life with new experiences, it can become the experience of a life-time, even better than the one that you had in

Best Practices:Kudos! at Indiana University-Bloomington

Brooke Moreland-Williams, Indiana University-Bloomington

Residential Programs and Services (RPS) at Indiana University-Bloomington implements a promising practice, called Kudos!. The mission of Kudos! is to acknowledge staff that go above and beyond when helping others on campus. When staff members within Residential Programs and Services (which includes Residential Life staff, Dining Services, Custodial and Maintenance Services, and Support Staff Services) have gone out of their way to help someone or made a positive impact on someone's college/work experience, individuals are able to submit these positive acts into a database online. The reporting individual can be a divisional employee, a student, staff, or faculty member on the Bloomington campus, a parent, or any other member of general public that RPS is providing services to. Reporting individuals write how that particular person has made a difference. Coordinated by the divisional Human Resources staff, the Executive Director of the Division has the opportunity to read these reports, sending to the student leader or staff member, a personally signed certificate along with an official commendation letter outlining the specific act of service that was submitted, a copy of which goes into the employee's permanent personnel file.

Additionally, each semester, there is a Kudos! luncheon and every individual who has been awarded a Kudos! is invited to the luncheon along with their immediate supervisor. As part of the luncheon, the Executive Director shares with those in attendance some of specific examples of employee's efforts that have generated Kudos! submissions. The Executive Director also hands out recognition pins to those employees in attendance who have received Kudos! recognition more than once. The Division has created special pin levels for individuals who are consistently recognized by others for their service.

Kudos! is truly a promising practice because it recognizes those individuals who have done a great job making the experience of others better on campus. This program not only empowers the individuals reporting by having the opportunity to show gratitude for their positive experience, but empowers the staff members and student leaders that receive the Kudos! because they are recognized for their hard work and dedication to their job and to the students of Indiana University. As a staff member, I have received many Kudos! awards and it feels good to know that someone took time out of their day and appreciated your work. It is truly a rewarding feeling to be recognized and it motivates staff members and student leaders to continue their best efforts while working in student affairs.

KUDOS
EXPRESS YOUR GRATITUDE

SCGSNP Spotlight: College Student Affairs Peer-Reviewed Journal

Donald Mitchell, Grand Valley State University

The M.Ed. in Higher Education program at Grand Valley State University (Grand Rapids, MI) is happy to announce the launch of the graduate student peer-reviewed journal, College Student Affairs Leadership (CSAL). CSAL highlights the professional interests of student affairs and higher education practitioners, as well as current national and international student affairs and higher education issues, while giving budding scholars the opportunity to present their work to an international audience. CSAL produces two issues a year and publishes the following: (a) book reviews; (b) literature reviews; (c) opinion editorials; (d) policy papers; (e) research articles and (f) theoretical/conceptual articles. In addition, CSAL accepts special issue proposals. All lead authors must be currently enrolled graduate students during submission. The editorial board is currently accepting submissions for the Fall 2014 issue. The deadline for submissions is September 1, 2014. To find out more about the journal visit: http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/csal/about.html Please email questions to csaljournal@gmail.com

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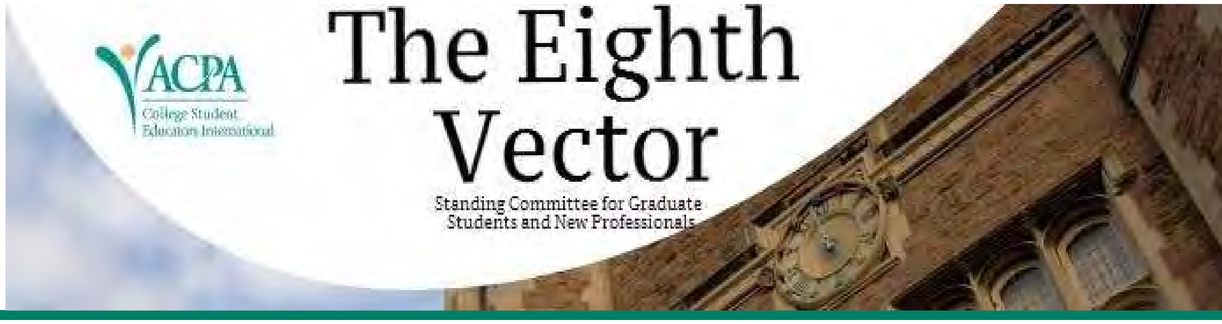
Questions or Concerns about the ACPA'S SCGSNP Eighth Vector?

Please contact Dale O'Neill, Newsletter Editor, at dmoneill@uno.edu or 504-280-6349

A pdf version of this issue of The Eighth Vector can be downloaded here:
http://www.myacpa.org/sc/scgsnp/newsletters.cfm



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A Letter from the Chair

Brian Hopkins

Welcome to another great year on the Standing Committee for Graduate Students and New Professionals'. We are happy to have you as a member of our standing committee as we celebrate our 25TH anniversary year!As the academic year comes to a close, I cannot help but look forward to the summer as our directorate engages in planning and goal setting for the upcoming year. It's hard to believe how much time has passed since convention already, however, many exciting conversations have occurred since then that will propel us forward for the next year. The SCGSNP Vice Chairs and I have engaged in our initial conversations as we get started on another great year of engaging our membership in professional development and networking opportunities, and a number of the Vice Chairs have already begun working with their Coordinators to get work started on this year's projects.

As the new Chair of the SCGSNP, I am filled with excitement and energy as we move forward to enhance the opportunities and services that we offer to our membership, while also focusing on new and innovative ways we can engage everyone throughout the year. In my initial conversations with our Vice Chairs, I have asked that their work support three major goals that I have work the SCGSNP this year. The first is to embrace the eagerness of our membership to engage in the work of ACPA and our standing committee. With that being said, please make sure you are on our listserv so that you are getting information about all of the volunteer opportunities that we will have

throughout the year. The second is to focus on developing new initiatives or re-envisioning ones we already have so such it is my hope that we are able to provide our membership with engaging and developmental opportunities that do not require convention attendance. Lastly, my hope is that we embrace the reinvention of the ACPA Annual Convention and take an innovative approach to reinventing the work that we do to serve our membership.

As we move forward, I welcome any thoughts, suggestion, or ideas that you have. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me and let me know how we can enhance your ACPA membership
experience. I can be reached by email at chair.scgsnp@gmail.com

Sincerely,

Brian Hopkins
2013-2014 Chair
Standing Committee for Graduate Students and New Professionals

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Making Self-Reflection a Priority

Sarah Schultz

As the campus calmed, the to-do list shortened, and the realization that my semester as a second-year graduate student was concluding, I arrived to an often-anticipated location on any long journey: the rest stop. This year has been a year of personal and professional seismic shifts—some anticipated, many unexpected, yet all leaving their undoubtedly important lessons learned. Many of us reflect in daily doses, while others reflect in weekly, monthly, or other increments; nonetheless, research has found that self-reflection is an area new professionals often struggle to individually engage in. In their national study of new student affairs professionals, Renn and Jessup-Anger (2008) found that the participating professionals struggled to personally reflect without such opportunities being initiated by a mentor within their new professional roles. As graduate students and new professionals, I believe we need to add improving self-reflection habits into our yearly professional goals.

For student affairs professionals to be successful, participation in our own self-reflection is critical, as “a person’s identity is closely tied to what he or she does professionally” (Cutler, 2003, p. 167). Reflecting upon significant experiences, successes, and challenges is where I believe we all can learn exceptional insight into who were are personally and professionally, and where I greatly focus my self-reflection efforts. For example, in March 2012 my best friend’s father was killed unexpectedly in an automobile accident. By reflecting on the significance of this moment to myself as a person, there was no way this critical experience would not impact me as a professional. For truly believe self-reflection can also guide us to be more authentic individuals and professionals, as we give our life experiences the right to be mattered, and not simply lived.

Holding Connectedness in my Top 5 Strengths and having a mind that craves understanding, I am grateful that self-reflection is truly a part of who I am. I know that reflecting upon the critical developmental moments in my professional journey will better equip me to navigate the job search in 2013, and the student affairs professional I am becoming. Self-reflection can be natural to some and challenging to others, yet it is nonetheless a skill I believe we must personally invest in. I believe it is a critical skill that we should encourage ourselves and colleagues to include in their toolbox as graduate students and new student affairs professionals. We can all become better professionals by reflecting upon key personal and professional experiences that will therefore enhance the work we do with students and who we are as individuals.

If you have not taken the time to reflect on what this year has meant to you as a graduate student or new student affairs professional, I challenge you to engage in a worthwhile introspective conversation with yourself to further develop your professional identity. What questions could you begin asking yourself to improve your self-reflection? How do you anticipate how engaging in self-reflection as a student affairs professional will impact your professional and/or personal journey? What individuals and resources could you utilize to aid you in self-reflection? Renn and Jessup-Anger (2008) suggest that new professionals engage in "purposeful reflection on practice through journaling or regular meetings with a mentor and a small group of peers" (p. 331). I also know engaging with colleagues in conversations through Twitter, blogs, and related media can add creativity to the reflection process. No matter the self-reflection route(s) you choose, I believe what you will learn will enhance how you serve and work as a student affairs professional. To best serve our students, our colleagues, and the profession as a whole, reflecting on our experiences, our successes, and our challenges is imperative.

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The Importance of Hope in our Lives and the Student We Influence

Lee Roddick

Dr. Barbara Frederickson (2009), author of the book *Positivity*, states that increasing your level of hope is one of the keys to happiness. Hope can help keep you going on days when things have not gone the way you planned.

Certainly as emerging higher education professionals we all have bad days and need a pick-me-up. In addition, we sometimes deal with students who seem dazed and confused who need to be reminded that there is always hope for a brighter day ahead. The purpose of this article is to share the research on why hope is important and to provide specific ideas for fueling a sense of hope in ourselves and our students.

The Research on the Importance of Hope

possible articles to read on how hope can change lives. Consider the reaction of the word “Hope” that President Obama during his 2008 election campaign. There were millions of people who supported him because he embraced the idea of hope. Sung, Turner and Kaewchinda (2013) found that hope has two components: pathways and agency. Hope increases when students realize that there are multiple ways to accomplish goals (pathways) and when they feel capable of attaining their goals (agency). The study demonstrated how students with higher levels of hope had higher levels of academic success in their college courses. The students who had a foundational understanding of developing their own hope were more prepared for their classes and had more confidence when faced with “the real world” (Sung, Turner, & Kaewchinda, 2013).

Ideas for Fueling a Sense of Hope

This section will provide two ideas for increasing hope in ourselves and our students: hope boxes and hope libraries. The goal is that you will find inspiration in one of these things to create your own way to inspire hope within yourself and students.

Hope Box

Fredrickson (2009) advocated the use of a Hope Box as a way to increase your own hope levels when your day is getting you down. The Hope Box can be kept in a drawer or displayed prominently. The ingredients of the Hope Box should include things that inspire you and make you hopeful. Begin by collecting pictures and quotes that make you feel hopeful. Write down your most cherished values on a piece of paper and add it to your Hope Box to help re-center you on your values when you are feeling lost and disconnected. The Hope Box can also be a place to save thank you cards and letters from friends and family as well as pictures of vacations or happy times. These are your “hope-filled moments” and they will grant you not only a happy moment, but possibly a new outlook on current hardships (Fredrickson, 2009). Ask friends, colleagues, and relatives to make contributions to your Hope Box and ask them to share what they most appreciate about the role you play in their lives. These little snippets of happiness can bring hope to the darkest hours of our lives.

Hope Library

Similar to the Hope Box idea, the hope library is another opportunity to collect items that bring you hope. In this case it is a collection of literature or written works that give you a sense of hope. Consider making this article and Frederickson’s (2009) book *Positivity* the first additions to your library. If you read something during the summer break or even during a division meeting that really touched you, add it to your library. You can also create a Hope Library folder on your computer where you can download articles, websites, and books that help restore your hope on dark days. Save a selection of emails from your students about the impact you have had on their lives as a reminder of the importance of the work you do every day. The Hope Library is your own literary hope collection filled with things that inspire you and give you hope.

Conclusion

Are you hopeful about your future? How can we as student affairs professionals inspire hope, if we are not hopeful ourselves? By creating your own Hope Box and/or Hope Library you can help yourself and your students take advantage of the power of hope!

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So You Hate Your Assistantship: Using Appreciative Inquiry to Create Positive Change

Supaphen Niroula

Employees, specifically graduate students, sometimes feel dissatisfied in their assistantship. For example, Mary Alice may have a strong interest in Orientation and the First-Year Experience, but was offered a live-out graduate assistantship within housing and accepted. After working in the position for a few months, Mary Alice begins to feel unhappy and dreads going into the office every day. The position does not include student interaction and there are minimal duties to complete, unlike her fellow graduates who seem to find fulfillment and pride in their busy days. She feels a sense of purposeless and unhappiness which begins to make her question her passion for student affairs. Instead of wallowing in unhappiness, the purpose of this article is to advocate the use of an organizational development theory, Appreciative Inquiry, to help Mary Alice change her perspective on her assistantship and help her craft a plan for optimizing her current position and reinvigorating her passion for student affairs.

Overview of Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is an organizational development theory that was created in the mid-1980s by David Cooperrider of Case Western Reserve University (Bloom & Martin, 2002, para 2). To understand the foundation of this model, one can divide this phrase into its core words of "appreciation" and "inquiry." Appreciation can be defined as a sensitive attentiveness or recognition of positive attributes, while inquiry refers to an examination and openness to these changes (Merriam-Webster, 2013). "Appreciative Inquiry is the cooperative search for the best in people, their organizations, and the world around them . . . AI involves the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to heighten positive potential" (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2000, p. 245-263).

AI is a method that focuses on positivity, specifically the positive aspects of an individual, company or group. With this tool, one identifies and builds on positive attributes and strengths to create a meaningful change. Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2003, p. 15) state that:

Appreciative Inquiry is a bold shift in the way we think about and approach organization change. The ultimate paradox of Appreciative Inquiry is that it does not aim to change anything. It aims to uncover and bring forth existing strengths, hopes, and dreams: to identify and amplify the positive core of the organization. In doing so, it transforms people and organizations. With Appreciative Inquiry, the focus of attention is on positive potential—the best of what has been, what is, and what might be. It is a process of positive change.

Applying Appreciative Inquiry

There are five phases in Appreciative Inquiry: Define, Discovery, Dream, Design, and Deliver. Using Mary Alice's situation, I will demonstrate how these five phases can be used to help people create positive change in their lives.

Define. The first phase of Appreciative Inquiry is to clearly Define the issue in a positive manner, or in other words, to turn a problem into an opportunity. Mary Alice should first identify the root of her dissatisfaction. After a bit of self-reflection, she realizes that her lack of student contact and meaningful tasks is the housing, the transferrable skills she is acquiring, and the professional development opportunities she has access to in her position. With both the issue and positive attributes in mind, Mary Alice can Define the outcome she wants and physically write it down (as well as the rest of the phases of AI) in a positive light: *I will find enjoyment and fulfillment in my assistantship and gain valuable skills that will help me further my career*. After creating this definition, she moves on to the Discovery phase to self-reflect.

Discovery. "The core task of the discovery phase is to discover and disclose positive capacity" (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2000, p. 7). In this phase, Mary Alice reflects and discovers her strengths, positive attributes, and passions. Mary Alice draws up a list of activities that she enjoys doing at and outside of work. After making the list, she delves even further by inquiring about her strengths within these activities. For example, her list includes that she enjoys meeting new people and doing crafts. Within her strengths, she realizes that she's very outgoing and great at building relationships. Further, doing crafts has led her to discover that she is a very creative individual. Mary Alice can use these discoveries in a later phase to help tailor her plan toward a positive change.

Dream. The next phase requires a bit of imagination: Dream. Mary Alice asks herself "If I could do anything in the world, regardless of limitations, what would it be?" Although Mary Alice at first was having trouble writing down her answer to this question, she instead decides to create a dream board. The dream board allows her to use artistic skills to create a bulletin board filled with images and symbols of her dreams and goals. Physically seeing these images allows her to dig deeper into her own hopes and dreams for her future. Looking at her dream board, Mary Alice notices a social theme and realizes that she truly wants to be constantly interacting with others in whatever she does. The next phase of AI is to actually Design a plan for making her dreams a reality.

Design. Keeping in mind her creativity and social skills, Mary Alice begins designing a feasible plan to tailor her graduate assistantship in such a way that it will improve her sense of fulfillment and overall happiness. In the Design phase, the goal is not to simply attempt to fix what is not currently working, but instead build upon the positives that are already in place. Because there is flexibility within her position to add additional duties, Mary Alice uses her Discoveries and Dreams to take initiative to mold her assistantship responsibilities in a way that better plays to her strengths and her dreams. Therefore, she writes down her plan to start volunteering as an academic coach and advising a hall government to gain the student contact that she has been missing. Further, she decides to use her creativity by revamping the housing website and enhancing the layout of her quarterly newsletters. She also decides to run for the Orientation Director position within her program's student association to gain valuable experience to reach her future career goals. After creating this plan comes the final and most difficult stage to creating a change, actually following through.

Deliver. Mary Alice has Defined, Discovered, Dreamed, Designed and now, she must Deliver. After moving through these phases, she posts her plan in a prominent place both at home and at work so that she will see it often. The constant visual reminder will provide added motivation to successfully reach the desired outcome. Mary Alice reminds herself that if the plan does not seem to be producing the desired results, that she can go back through the earlier phases and make adjustments to the design of her plan. No matter what, her goal is to keep persisting despite obstacles that will arise so that she can meet her end goals.

Conclusion

Creating change is never an easy feat; however, Appreciative Inquiry is a positive-focused method that provides a five phase framework for helping individuals successfully reach their goals. Through Defining, Discovering, Dreaming, Designing and Delivering, anyone can make a positive change in their lives. Perseverance through these phases and a will to succeed are crucial components for creating positive change throughout your life that will ultimately lead to everyone's desired end result: happiness.

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Tricks of the Job Search: Why Sugar and Spice Can Get You Everything Nice

Stephanie Ann Suarez

Emerging Student Affairs professionals are always applying for a variety of positions, starting with graduate assistantships, continuing with summer internships, and finally for full-time positions. Most of us find the process for applying and interviewing for positions to be a daunting, overwhelming, and even frightening experience. We all are trying to figure out how we can set ourselves apart from our competition. Having worked in a Career Center to coordinate the recruiting weekend for our graduate program and having the opportunity to see first-hand what employers are seeking in prospective Graduate Assistants, I realize that the answer is actually pretty simple. Just follow the Golden Rule: do unto others what you would want others to do for you.

The best way to do unto others is to realize what you would want if you were in their position. Turn the tables and think about what you would expect from your candidates. Would you expect to see grammar errors in a resume and/or cover letter? Multiple emails from candidates within a 24-hour time period? Emphasizing in the cover letter how the position is going to benefit the candidate instead of the employer? While coordinating our recruiting weekend, I realized that how candidates react before, during, and after interviews can mean the difference between an offer letter and a rejection letter. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to provide five tips for navigating the internship/job search process.

Tip 1: Making a "Resume" and Checking It Twice

A resume is always the first step, and the steps to creating/editing your resume are very similar to those used to write a great paper. First, you figure out what you want to write, then you draft the resume, and then last but not least, you revise, revise, and revise. Even though a resume is not a paper, it is easy to forget to revise it. Some key revision tips include:

- *Read your Resume Aloud to Yourself*: Are you using action verbs to describe your accomplishments? Are you using correct grammar? Will what you wrote make sense to someone outside of your institution and/or field? A simple way to ensure that what you have written flows well and makes sense is to read it to yourself out loud to yourself word-for-word. It may seem awkward at first, but reading aloud what you have written helps catch missing words, run-ons, or awkwardly worded sentences.

something—anything that will help them cut down the applicant pool. One typo could be what separates you from the job you are seeking. So take a moment to make sure everything is spelled correctly.
- *Phone a Friend:* Spell check is not perfect, so the more people that read, edit, and critique your resume the better. Your campus Career Center is a great place to go for input on improving your resume. In addition, ask trusted colleagues or professionals in the field to look it over. They will have a great idea of what should be in your resume and serve as another set of eyes to catch other mistakes.

Your resume is the first step and the true first impression in this process. It sets the tone. Showing that you have taken great care to make sure that it is perfect will tell potential employers a lot about you and your level of professionalism and attention to detail.

Tip 2: To Cover letter or Not to Cover Letter, that is the Question
Even if the job description does not explicitly require you to submit a cover letter, it is still a good idea to do so (unless they specifically state they will not accept cover letters). Submitting a cover letter sets you apart from other candidates who may have decided not to, since it was not required. A cover letter also allows you to demonstrate how your education and experiences will allow you to meet their specific needs. It is an opportunity to highlight the congruence between your values and those of the institution.

Tip 3: Read Before You Leap
All search processes are different (online systems, giant interview fairs, etc.) and most employers try to clearly outline the process to prospective candidates. Please be sure to carefully read detailed candidate instructions as well as all correspondence received from potential employers. Although it may sometimes be tempting to overlook the instructions and jump right into the process, this can be a fatal misstep. By accidentally not following the instructions correctly or asking a question that was addressed in a written communication, you risk making a poor first impression. Be sure that when you do have a question, it is not one that could be easily answered by the employer materials or checking their website.

Tip 4: In 48 hours this message will self-destruct
After the interview it is easy for panic to set in. Why are not they contacting you back? Are they ignoring you? At this point it is important to remember that you have done everything you can to make a good impression. Do not ruin the positive impression you made during the interview by bombarding interviewers with emails, leaving multiple voice messages, and/or calling everyone you know at the institution to find out if a decision has been made. Most of the time if they have not gotten back to you right away, there is probably a good reason. It is important to put yourself in their shoes and remember that your interviewer has multiple responsibilities to attend to every day. If the interviewer has given you a timeline for contacting you, please give them at least 24 before contacting them. In fact waiting 48 hours would be best, especially if it is not an emergency.

Tip 5: “Thank You. Thank you very much.” – Elvis
Most people know to send a thank you after an interview, but have you considered sending a thank you before or even during the process? A simple thank you can make all the difference. An example of this could be sending a note to the secretary who helped arrange your visit thanking her for coordinating your interview schedule. Appreciation goes a long way, and those on the receiving end will remember you for it.

Conclusion

your chances of being offered the position. Creating a compelling resume, writing an inspiring cover letter, clearly reading the instructions, giving the employer time to notify you of the search results, and saying thank you— paying attention to these details will set you apart from the competition. Above all else, remember to do unto others what you would want others to do for you, because before long you will be the one hiring people!

SCGSNP Alumni Spotlight: Eddie Wright

Lena Kavaliauskas

For Eddie Wright, the SCGSNP has been both a springboard into new pursuits and a professional home for longtime friends. Now the Associate Director of Admissions at Mount St. Mary's University, Wright balances this responsibility with continued involvement with ACPA, serving on the planning committee for NextGen and on the Directorate for AOFYE. Additionally, Eddie is the President-Elect for the Maryland College Personnel Association. In his spare (haha) time, Eddie enjoys chasing his two puppies and 8-month-old daughter, Fiona, and is grateful to his wife, Jen, who "is always around to keep us from breaking things." Read on for Eddie's reflections on early ACPA involvement, the parallels between law enforcement and student affairs, and Fiona's literature of choice:

Where did you grow up and complete your education?
I grew up in Hazleton, PA- a small coal-cracker town. I received my BA from Mount St. Mary's University in Sociology/Criminal Justice and Theology and my MS from Canisius College in College Student Personnel Administration.

When did you become involved with ACPA? Why?
I first became involved with ACPA as a junior in undergrad by attending the NextGen Conference. I had two great mentors, Dave Turner and Sean Adams, who encouraged me to attend and the Mount provided funding to make it possible. It was an awe-evoking experience to see so many professionals all working towards the same goal. This experience helped solidify my decision to work in higher education.

Did your involvement with the SCGSNP lead to other professional/development positions?
My long list of ACPA involvement can all be traced back to the SCGSNP. Many grad students have a hard time finding a home in ACPA at first because they are unsure of their role. SCGSNP is the perfect place to start. From there, you learn about all the different ways to be involved. You become more confident in your skills as a leader and new professional. SCGSNP is very open and a fun home to come back to!

What advice do you have for graduate students and new professionals?
Your voice matters! It is important to get involved on the regional, state and national level when it comes to professional organizations. You will network with many colleagues who you will later turn to for help with a situation, job advice or just a great friend that you need to catch up with. Find a home, such as SCGSNP, and then start to explore the other entities and leadership opportunities.

If you weren't in higher education, what career path would you have chosen? Why?
I used to think I wanted to work in federal law enforcement- and when I worked in res life it was very similar- but now I think a career in event planning might be where I would end up. My current job has brought out my inner

after planning a few accepted students' days.

What are you currently reading?
Outside of professional journals and newsletters, the only books I am reading have really big pictures and about ten pages, but Fiona loves them.

Questions or Concerns about the ACPA'S SCGSNP Eigth Vector?

Please contact Dale O'Neill, Newsletter Editor, at dmoneill@uno.edu or 504-280-6349