Use What You’ve Got to Get What You Want: Identifying Skill Sets for Career Advancement

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The purpose of this workshop is to help individuals identify the skills developed within the various areas in research, and to provide ideas on how to use the acquired skills, expertise, and knowledge in other capacities within the research profession.
**Objective 1:** Identify skills that can be used as a research professional, and how those skills, expertise, and knowledge can be translated into career opportunities.

**Objective 2:** Identify strategies to develop necessary skills for future opportunities, such as networking, volunteering, and participating on committees within your institution.
According to the Versatile PhD (2019):

“research must be funded, managed, coordinated, regulated, reported and sometimes ultimately commercialized. Collectively known as research administration, these activities surround and influence every stage of research. Research administrators work in many settings, including universities, hospitals, government agencies, corporations, medical schools, and nonprofits. They raise funds, write regulation, coordinate projects, investigate ethical issues, and many other related tasks.”
Areas
Research Professionals
my be Employed

- Academic Departments
- Conflict of Interest
- Cost Accounting
- Corporate Relations
- Faculty Relations
- Foundation Relations
- Government Relations
- Institutional Animal Care and Use (IACUC)
- Institutional Review Board (IRB)
- Research Development
- Sponsored Programs
- Sponsored Projects Accounting
- Technology Management
Typical Careers for Research Professionals

Entry level: Pre/post award assistant, IRB coordinator, grants assistant/analyst

Mid-level: Pre/post award administrator/manager, grants and contract officer, technology licensing associate, team leader, senior officer, sponsored projects accountant

Senior level: Assistant/Associate Director, Senior Assistant/Associate Director

Executive level: Director, Vice Chancellor/Provost, Vice Chair
Common Skills Used as a Research Professional

**Analytical Thinking**
- Analyze Issues
- Problem Solve
- Think Critically
- Think Globally

**Communication**
- Verbal
- Non-verbal
- Written
- Interpersonal

**Financial Skills**
- Budget Development
- Purchasing/Invoicing
- Subcontract Management
- Financial Management
Common Skills Used as a Research Professional

**Human Resources**
- Hiring
- Performance Management
- Staff Coaching

**Policies and Procedures**
- Evaluate and Develop
- Implement
- Monitor
Common Skills Used as a Research Professional

**Project Management**
- Initiation
- Planning and Design
- Execution
- Monitoring
- Closing

**Provide Resources**
- Assist Faculty
- Assist Departmental Staff
- Direct Individuals to Resources
- Serve as a Subject Matter Expert

**Training**
- Evaluate Needs
- Develop
- Implement
- Evaluate Success
Protocol Review
- Understand Regulations
- Monitor Study Progress
- Update Protocols

Award Review
- Understand and Interpret Regulation & Guidelines
- Understand and Interpret Institutional Policies
- Negotiate Agreements

Common Skills Used as a Research Professional
Common Attributes of a Research Professional

- Leadership
- Detail-oriented
- Deadline driven
- Task-oriented
- Goal driven
- Strategist
- Ethical
- Rule followers
What skills do you think are most important to potential employers of research professionals?
Soft Skills

Technical skills are important, but most employers are looking for individuals who have excellent soft skills.
Important Soft Skills to Master

- Champions and Advocates
- Communicators
- Critical Thinkers
- Interpersonal Skills
- Leaders
- Self Awareness
Communication Skills

Verbal & Non-verbal
- Tone of Voice
- Body Language
- Facial Expressions

Written
- Tone
- Concise
- Effective

Listening
- Make Eye Contact
- Don’t Interrupt
- Don’t Impose Solutions
Willingness to Learn
- Adaptability
- Volunteer
- Innovative

Crisis Management
- Calm Under Pressure
- Exercise Appropriate Coping Skills
- Offer Solutions for Issues

Coping with Change and Crisis
Attitude & Outlook

Attitude
- Positive
- Approachable
- What *can* I do versus what I *can’t*

Outlook
- Glass half-full or half-empty
- Provide solutions not complaints
Evaluating Where You Stand
Questions to Ask Yourself

Where do I want to go?

What types of positions interest me?

What are the skills required for those positions?  
- Technical skills  
- Non-technical skills

What education/certifications are required?
Evaluating Position Descriptions
Research Administrator provides administrative leadership and intermediate problem solving in support of unit's research programs and mission. May provide sole support to a small to mid-sized unit or support a portion of activities in a larger unit. May provide lifecycle pre- & post-award research administration ensuring the fulfillment of all grant &/or contract & compliance requirements. Manages overall day-to-day research administration activities & may research & identify funding opportunities & faculty &/or PIs with associated research competencies & interests. Ensures that all activities are completed in compliance with associated local, state, federal & institutional rules & regulations.

Minimum Competencies: (Skills, knowledge, and abilities.)

- Organization, **time management**, detail oriented.
- Multi-tasking, communication.
- Self-starter, **diplomatic**, pro-active, manage stress.
- **Managing interpersonal relationships** across diverse groups.
- Provide leadership by cooperatively anticipating, coordinating, strategizing.
Executive Director of the Institute for Nonprofit Administration & Research

• The Executive Director of the Institute for Nonprofit Administration & Research is a 12-month position leading the department with the following responsibilities: serve as a liaison to the community by connecting students to nonprofit organizations for internship and job opportunities.

• represent the program at national organization membership meetings and seek opportunities within those organizations for grants and research.

• seek new and innovative opportunities to expand the services offered by the department including but not limited to research, seminars, and workshops.

• manage business operations including budgeting, purchasing, MOU’s, contracts, and personnel supervision.

• oversee community relations of INAR including seeking grant opportunities and collaborative ventures.

• oversee the development of nonprofit educational opportunities such as conferences and seminars.

• The Executive Director will market INAR's academic programs and research services to the community and seek new relationships to expand its mission in addition to align INAR with the LSUS Strategic Plan.
NEXT STEPS
Reviewing your Annual Performance Evaluation

- What areas has your supervisor recommended improvement?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- What professional development has been suggested?
- Where can you obtain additional resources?
Evaluating Where You Stand
Complete a Career SWOT Analysis:

- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Opportunities
- Threats
## Example of a Career SWOT Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Strengths</strong></th>
<th><strong>Weaknesses</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work Experience</td>
<td>Lack of Work Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Limited Education, Wrong Major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Expertise</td>
<td>Limited Technical Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transferable Skills</td>
<td>Lack of Job Knowledge</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Characteristics</td>
<td>Weak Interpersonal Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Networking Contacts</td>
<td>Negative Personal Characteristics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Association, Business Groups</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Opportunities</strong></th>
<th><strong>Threats</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive Trends in Your Field</td>
<td>Negative Trends in Your Field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing Education</td>
<td>Competition in Your Field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fields in Need of Your Skills</td>
<td>Training and Educational Obstacles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography-Ability to Move</td>
<td>Limited Advancement in Field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening Your Network</td>
<td>Limited Ability to Develop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilizing Skills in Different Way</td>
<td>Limited Positions in Your Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enhancing Personal Development</td>
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</tbody>
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Career Goals vs. Career SWOT Analysis

1. Compare your career goals with your career SWOT analysis
2. Evaluate alignment
3. Review your technical and non-technical deficiencies
4. Identify areas of improvement
5. Develop a plan of action
Developing Your Career Roadmap
Steps to Developing your Career Roadmap

1. **Review**: Your planned career goals
2. **Evaluate**: Your Career S.W.O.T analysis
3. **Seek**: Areas of opportunity and improvement
4. **Seek**: Resources and opportunities for development
Finding Additional Resources & Opportunities
Networking

Build Relationships

Attend Events

Be Engaged

Be helpful
What is Networking?

Active networking is **vital** to career growth.

Networking is the **exchange of information** and ideas among people with a common profession or special interest, usually in an informal social setting.

Networking is about **building long-term relationships** and a good reputation over time. It involves **meeting** and getting to know people who you can assist, and who can potentially **help** you in return.
Alumni, Fraternity, & Sorority Networks
Volunteering
GET INVOLVED
Volunteering

- Provides an opportunity to develop new skills or build on existing experience and knowledge.
- Can reduce stress, combat depression, keep you mentally stimulated, and provide a sense of purpose.
- Allows you to meet new people you would not typically interact with.
- Participate in something that you find interesting, even if it’s not directly related to your career.
- Opportunity to learn something or teach a something to someone else.
Committee Work
A committee is a group of people who come together to work on a specific project or task.

Members of a committee commit their efforts to accomplishing a specific task, which can be anything from creating SOPs to ending a war.
Mentoring
Mentoring

A mentor's role is to guide, to give advice, and support the mentee:
• This can peer to peer
• This can be more than one person

Mentoring can be formal or informal

Mentoring is a partnership between two individuals

A mentee must decide the amount of help or guidance he/she needs from a mentor.

Mentoring can be bi-directional

A mentor may share information about their own career path, provide guidance, motivation, emotional support, role modeling, and access to their professional network.
What other resources and/or opportunities have you participated in to enhance/advance your career as a research professional?
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<th>Workshop Takeaways</th>
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<tr>
<td>Research professionals possess a wide variety of education, skills, and experience, both technical and non-technical.</td>
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<td>Non-technical (soft skills) skills are what employers are looking for and make the difference.</td>
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<td>Understanding the area of research you want to work in is important for developing your career roadmap.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seeking additional opportunities and resources can help develop new skills, and to build relationships.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Networking, volunteering, serving on committees, and finding mentors are ways to grow and develop your career.</td>
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Questions
Contact Information

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References


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- Using a SWOT Analysis as a Key Career-Planning Tool, LiveCareer.com