



# Transferrable skills –

How to market your PhD towards the industry

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## Inward

## Outward

### Forward

### **Inward** - Perform a self inventory:

- What motivates you? (driving forces)
- What factors are important for you in your life and worklife? (values)
- What are your strengths? (personality)
- What skills have you earned during the years? ("hard" and "soft")



When was the last time at work that you experienced "flow", i.e. that time flew not in a stressful way but because you were really involved in and enthusiastic by what you were doing? What did you do? How did you feel?

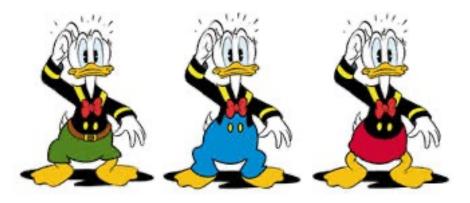
### Outward - Explore possibilities

- Which parts of the labour market may be interesting to you?
- Who would benefit from your competencies and strengths?
- Use and explore your network it's much bigger and useful than you think!
- Perform informal information interviews ask for 15 minutes.
  - What do you like the most /the least about your job?
  - What competencies are needed to succeed in your work?
  - If you did not have this job, what would you be doing then?
  - Who else should I talk to for more information?



### Forward - Take action

- Use info from Inward and Outward steps to decide
  upon direction
- Make an action plan. Write down what you need to do next, and when you should do this!
- Spread the word: Let everyone know what you are looking for, how else will they be able to help?
- Prepare CV, cover letter, job interview



## What is competence?

An individual's ability to handle situations in an appropriate and satisfactory manner by applying knowledge and skills

Sometimes experiences, personal qualities and social skills are included in the definition

# Hand of competence



Kerstin Keen

# Transferrable skills - what are they?

Core skills that apply in every organization – whether in academia or industry, the private sector, or the public.

- Analytical skills
- Problem solving
- Critical thinking

- Team work ability
- Leadership and management qualities
- Building trustful relations

- Project management
- Time management

And more...

 Communication skills – oral, written, intrapersonal



### 1. Figure out what skills you have

Write down all the roles and responsibilities you had in the past.

What did you do in order to get results?

What skills have you been complimented on in the past and why?

### 2. Categorize skills into:

- Motivating skills enjoy using and would like to use more
- Development skills believe that I enjoy using but need to develop further
- Burnout skills prefer not to use
- Skills not important at this time

### 3. Cross-reference your transferable skills with job requirements

Explore responsibilities of different positions and find out what attributes are searched for in suitable candidates, by looking through job posts, performing informational interviews, listening to career podcasts etc.

### 4. Explain why you are valuable

Prepare examples of how you have used your transferable skills to achieve results in your career, academically and otherwise.

STAR method

## **STAR**

- -Situation
- -Task
- -Action
- -Result
- Short success stories with concrete examples
- Very useful for CV:s and cover letter

 <u>https://www.theguardian.com/careers/careers-blog/star-</u> <u>technique-competency-based-interview</u>

# Example STAR-story

**Situation**: I was responsible for a laborative part in a course for medical students. This lab exercise was perceived as very unstructured by the students, which made it hard for them to grasp the aim of the exercise.

Task: Improving the exercise

Action: I talked to the person responsible for the course, after which I held a meeting with some of the students. In collaboration with them I developed the lab part so that it was better connected to the theoretical parts of the course.

**Result:** The students got a better understanding for the aim of the lab and thereby also understood the theory behind it in a better way. This was reflected in the course evaluation, which raised from  $2.8 \rightarrow 4.1$ 

## Useful links for further exploration

#### https://biosciencecareers.org/career-choice

Designed to help you to navigate the job market and to start to formulate some preliminary career decisions. It won't give you 'the answer' but it may provide clues about the types of jobs which might suit your interests and skills.

#### https://myidp.sciencecareers.org/

Web-based career-planning tool tailored to meet the needs of PhD students and postdocs in the sciences, exercises to help you examine your skills, interests, and values.

#### https://www.euraxess.se/career-development/researchers

LOADS of tools and links to useful web pages.

#### https://www.nature.com/careers

#### https://www.sciencemag.org/careers

Nature and Science magazines career sections, many useful articles etc.

And about interview questions:

https://www.job-hunt.org/common-job-interview-questions/

