

Comm 318—Professional Communication

Review & Reflect #2: Setting Job Search/Career Readiness Priorities

Part I: Please rank the following items from 1 to 7 in order of priority to be addressed during career readiness and job search processes (1 = area where you feel you require the most assistance). Highlight the subcategories under each that you are most interested in pursuing now or soon after graduating.

7 **Exploration and Assessment**

Understanding your personality type in relation to job satisfaction

Knowledge of transferable skills, interests, and values

Coping with barriers such as stress, lack of support, confidence issues

Creating a new professional objective that incorporates the above

6 **Industry Trends**

Learning about trends in your field and their impact on your objectives

Obtaining knowledge or credentials needed to stay competitive in your field

5 **Market Research**

Identifying opportunities and researching organizations

Finding your target job market

Defining effective search criteria

Identifying the search techniques that suit your professional objective

4 **Personal Marketing Materials**

Resumes, cover letters, references, and thank you notes

Personal branding

Creating an online presence

(Continued on next page)

3 **Networking**

How to network effectively

Updating contacts and maintaining relationships with colleagues

Cultivating new professional connections

Informal networking opportunities

1 **Interview Techniques**

The behavioral interview

Developing interview skills

Interview practice

2 **Evaluating and Negotiating Job Offers**

How to navigate the process

Salaries and benefits

Weighing other factors such as hours, location, company culture, and opportunities for growth

Part II: Answer these questions (use regular type style for responses):

- **How would you measure career success for yourself?**

I, personally, would measure career success by factors such as enjoyment of the work done and seeing a difference made due to said work. Since my ideal career is as a professional dog trainer, falling “out of love” with the work needed to train a dog and their owner(s), it is not a career to dread coming in to work each day. Additionally, my goal is to see positive change in my clients due to the work I put in, so if that is not happening then I would need to find out what the issue is before I consider my career successful. To me, my career is different from just having a job to make ends meet. This is my goal and my main driving force that I’m willing to put as much time and energy into as it takes to make it not just a successful career in terms of profit, but also to myself for the effort I put into it.

- **What steps have you taken toward preparing yourself for success?**

The first step was taking my time considering if dog training is what I wanted to do. It was an interest growing up and then finding the thriving community online around the end of middle school to early high school. I then took the knowledge I was gaining and put it into training my family dog, who was the best “test subject” I could have ever asked for, as he bounced back from

any mistakes I made in the learning process. I have since been working with my parents' adolescent dog, alongside offering (free, no guarantees) tips, tricks, and sessions with friend's dogs. This knowledge has all come from content available by certified trainers I extensively studied over the years, and my goals from here are to continue this process of learning information (even if it is contradictory to my current knowledge). I also plan to, when I have the time and money to do so, go through an extensive certification program to round out this education with professionals. In the meantime, I would like to keep in touch with the trainers I have gotten for my informational interviews and potentially shadow under one or multiple of them prior to this certification. The biggest step I have taken in all of this is patience. Patience to see if this is the right fit, and patience that this plan takes time and will not be something to immediately jump into without the correct foundation.

- **What do think will be “next steps” to prepare for full-time employment before or after you graduate?**

The best thing for me to focus on is making connections in all areas of the dog world (from showing, to grooming, to sports, to training) and getting myself set up with business-ready materials with my resume, cover letter, etc. Getting my foot in the door of either a pet store trainer (Petco Basic Certification) or shadowing under one of the aforementioned connections is ideal, but not necessary. I also feel I need to work on the expectations for me when being interviewed, as I largely “go with the flow” which has worked for my prior jobs but having these skills fine-tuned would definitely improve my chances of getting hired to get closer to my goals and in general makes me a better communicator, which is necessary for my career as well. Preparing for the interim jobs I will have is the best way to allow time to plan out the steps to my career.