



a place of mind

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Career Mentoring Panel: Choosing Academic vs. Industry Career Paths with a Graduate Degree





Panelists

- **Saba El-Hilo**
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- **Meg Walraed-Sullivan**
Postdoctoral Researcher, Distributed Systems, Microsoft
- **Bowen Hui**
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- **Ulrike Stege**
Associate Professor & Department Chair, Computer Science, UVic



Panel Outline

- **Audience Polling**
- **Questions Format**
 - How You Got Started
 - What Is Your Job About?
 - Your Job In A Nutshell
 - Future Opportunities
 - Questions & Answers
- **Audience Handout**



Questions to the Audience

1. Who is considering ...
 - An academic career?
 - An industry career?
 - Undecided?



Questions to the Audience

2. Who has experience with ...

- Participating in a technical interview?
- A successful one that landed a job offer?



Questions to the Audience

3. How many of you have had ...
 - A research internship?
 - An industry job?



Questions to the Audience

4. What do you want to get out of this panel?



How You Got Started

- What kind of education, training, work experiences, etc. did you have prior to your current job?
- What were your career options at that point?
- How did you decide on your current career? I.e., what attracted you most to this job?



How You Got Started

- Aside from job related factors (e.g., type of work, promotion opportunities, independence, etc.), what were some other factors that influenced your career choice?



How You Got Started

- As a student, did you have a mentor or someone who you could turn to for advice?
- If so, what did they help you with?
- How important was their advice in your life at the time?
- For example, what decisions might you have made differently?



How You Got Started

- What was the interview process like for your job?
- How many organizations interviewed you?
- How many hours did you spend preparing for it?
- How long did the interview last?



What Is Your Job About?

- What are the expectations for a new graduate in your position?
- What is a typical day like in your life?
- What kinds of tasks do you do and how much time would you say you spend doing them?
- What types of people do you interact with and how regularly?



What Is Your Job About?

- What stage of the career are you at?
- Can you provide us with a brief outline of the promotion stages in your career path?
- What previous experiences did you have that helped you get and survive your job now?



What Is Your Job About?

- Collaboration opportunities: How much time do you spend working with other people?
- Can you give us some examples of the type of people you work with?
- What the process is like?
- What type of work do you work on together?



What Is Your Job About?

- Networking, presentation, initiative, self-direction, problem-solving, ... what's the hype with "**21st century skills**"?
- How important are they in your career?



What Is Your Job About?

- What are some of your favorite perks about your job?
 - Hours?
 - Independence?
 - Ownership of work?
 - Travel?
 - Family benefits?
 - ...



What Is Your Job About?

- If you've worked in other industries before (e.g., small vs. large private company, government lab, teaching position, research position, etc.), how is your job different from those experiences?



Your Job In A Nutshell

- What are the 3 most important skills in your job?



Your Job In A Nutshell

- With respect to your job, what would you say are the most relevant skills you gained as a student?
- How did you get these skills? (E.g., research, conferences, writing, student clubs, etc.)



Your Job In A Nutshell

- Which skills or experiences would you say are the most lacking for new graduates who apply for your position?



Your Job In A Nutshell

- What are some of the most rewarding experiences you've had in your career?



Your Job In A Nutshell

- What do you find the most challenging about your career?



Future Opportunities

- What are the most important things in your life right now?
- How have they changed since you were a student?
- Does your work environment support your life priorities?



Future Opportunities

- How easy is it to advance in your career?
- What are the main challenges?
- What is your experience in promotion?
- What types of professional development activities would you recommend?



Future Opportunities

- How flexible is it for someone in your position to change career paths down the road?
- What options are available?



Questions?

- Want to know more about:
 - Time management?
 - Internship opportunities?
 - Hiring process?
 - ...
- **Coffee break** @ Reboot Lounge

Slides at <https://people.ok.ubc.ca/bowenhui/>