McCombs Career Webinar

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Change Your Career: Transitioning to the Nonprofit and Public Sectors

by Laura Gassner Otting and Heather Krasna of the Nonprofit Professionals Advisory Group
The Big Questions

- Is now the right time for me to transition into the nonprofit or public sector?
- How and where can I make a difference?
- Will my skills transfer?
- What are nonprofit or government jobs really like?
- How do I deal with the financial ramifications?
- Where do I even begin?
Dispensing of Myths: Nonprofit Sector

- All nonprofit employees are saints.
- Nonprofits are lucky to employ whomever they can find.
- Working in nonprofits is not challenging.
- Nonprofits are all flat organizations.
- Nonprofit jobs are secure.
- Nonprofit managers know how to manage.
- All nonprofits are alike.
Dispensing of Myths: Government Sector

- Government employees are faceless bureaucrats.
- Salaries in government are low.
- You have to move to Washington, DC.
- You have to be a political science major or public policy wonk.
- Government agencies are lucky to employ whomever they can find.
Why Now?

The Leadership turnover in nonprofit organizations leads to changes in staff recruitment and retention strategies; public sector employees are going to be retiring en masse.

- Baby boomers created and lead many of the nation’s nonprofits; and 38% of current federal employees are CURRENTLY eligible to retire.
- Leadership vacuums create ripple effects at every level of a nonprofit or government agency.

Three Critical Imperatives

- Invest in leadership capacity.
- Refine management rewards.
- Expand recruiting horizons.

The nonprofit sector and government will need new talent at every level.
Who Transitions?

- Young professionals wanting to get ahead.
- Professionals looking to gain new skills.
- Experienced executives looking for a better work-life balance.
- Baby boomers searching for a more fulfilling retirement.
- The outraged, the unfulfilled, and the disappointed simply wanting more.
1. Pinpoint Your Motivating Cause or Societal Problem

2. Determine Your Approach to Solve the Pressing Social Need

3. Identify the Skills You Possess

4. Recognize your Best Environment

Finding Your Place in a Vast New Arena
Pinpoint Your Motivating Cause: Nonprofit

- Foundations
- Health
- Social and Legal Services
- Religious Organizations
- Civic, Social & Fraternal Organizations
- Arts, Culture & the Humanities
- Education & Research
Pinpoint Your Motivating Cause: Government
Determine Your Approach

Ending Domestic Violence

- Federal Government
- Local Government
- Advocacy Nonprofit
- Nonprofit Membership Organizations
- Direct Service Nonprofit
- State Government
- Elected Official
- Capacity Building
- Philanthropy
Identify Your Skills

What skills have you amassed in your professional career?

What have you been responsible for outside of work?
Which Nonprofit is Right for You?

- Start-Up
- Grassroots
- Founder-Driven
- In Transition
- Growth-Oriented
- In Decline
- Steady & Stable
Finding the Right Organization for You

Unfriendly Organization

- Interested but have yet to adapt best business practices
- Chasing changing whims of philanthropic community
- Small, grassroots, hands-on, direct service weighted
- Slow pace of change
- Long-tenured board and staff

Friendly Organization

- Already adapted business practices into daily work
- On the precipice of great change, at a key moment
- Use words like entrepreneurial and cutting edge
- Actively recruit change agents
- Seek out new and inventive funding models
1. Networking

2. Informational Interviews

3. Resume

4. Cover Letter, Applications, Tests

5. Interviews

Ready, Set, Search!
Common Stereotypes About For-Profit Job Seekers

- “You expect to be rewarded handsomely for your work while having plenty of support staff.”
- “The impact of your work on the bottom line is the only appropriate gauge of success.”
- “Raising investment capital is not fundraising or engaging the public.”
- “You are looking to work less hard.”
- “You value money more than people.”
- “You think that nonprofits or government agencies should be run like businesses.”
- “If you really cared about the mission, you wouldn’t have sold out to the for-profit sector so many years ago.”
Networking 101

Where?
- An alumni association
- A neighborhood coalition
- A church, synagogue or mosque
- A political campaign
- A citywide cleanup effort
- A local music ensemble
- The Junior League
- A sports team
- A nonprofit board
- A parent-teacher association

How?
- Get active in your issue area.
- Find a buddy.
- Set benchmarks of success.
- Walk in the footsteps of others.
- Don’t discount your corporate contacts.
- Keep detailed notes.
- Have a clear and concise elevator speech.
Informational Interviews: Do’s & Don’ts

**Do’s**
- Introduce yourself to someone who may have a job opening in the future.
- Learn more about the people who work at this agency.
- Receive direction and guidance from someone once in your shoes.
- Learn a name to drop in your networking and personal connections.
- Audition some preliminary answers to obvious interview questions when a particular job isn’t on the line.
- Get tips on the hiring process.

**Don’ts**
- Ask for a job.
- Disrespect the interviewee’s time.
- Be unprepared.
- Talk too much.
- Fail to listen.
- Forget to be thankful.
Building Your Nonprofit Resume

- For profit resumes differ from nonprofit resumes.
  - Size matters.
  - Numbers count.
  - Specificity rules.
  - Boasting is welcome.
  - Language is key.
Building Your Government Resume

- For profit resumes differ from government resumes. Sometimes they want applications, not resumes.
  - Size matters: federal resumes can be up to FIVE PAGES LONG. State and local length varies.
  - Numbers count.
  - Specificity rules.
  - Use keywords from the job description.
  - You may need to include information you otherwise never would: prior salaries; names of past supervisors; in-depth descriptions of ALL past jobs and coursework.
What Not to Include

- Objective
- Personal interests
- Pictures
- Health
- Age
- Marital Status
- Number of Children
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For-profit employees…</th>
<th>Nonprofit/government employees…</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>…work for a company.</td>
<td>…work for an organization/cause.</td>
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<tr>
<td>…earn a profit.</td>
<td>…generate revenue.</td>
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<tr>
<td>…achieve a return on investment.</td>
<td>…achieve impact from donated funds (or taxes).</td>
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<tr>
<td>…sell a certain number of goods or services.</td>
<td>…serve a certain number of community members.</td>
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<tr>
<td>…rely upon staff.</td>
<td>…rely upon volunteers and champions and partners.</td>
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<tr>
<td>…develop sales leads.</td>
<td>…research potential funders, stakeholders, and partners.</td>
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<td>…create customer-focused marketing campaigns.</td>
<td>…advocate to impact social change; or have civic engagement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>…lobby for favorable policy change.</td>
<td>… educate stakeholders about effect of policies on issues.</td>
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Highlight Skills that Transfer Well

- Leadership and influence
- Managing up, down and sideways
- Delegating with kindness while demanding accountability
- Adaptability and openness in management style
- Ability to manage a broad portfolio of responsibilities
- Knowing how to get to yes
- Managing dotted line relationships
- Delivering impressive results
- A long term view
- A distinct passion for the work of the agency
Improving Your New Nonprofit or Government Resume

• Get on Board

• Get Active

• Get Smart
The Four Paragraph Cover Letter

Paragraph #1: An introduction
Paragraph #2: A little about them
Paragraph #3: A little about you
Paragraph #4: Contact information and current situation
Government Application Tips

- Civil service positions require you to compete based on merit, not connections
- Still in school? Look for internships to convert to F/T, or fellowship programs
- Federal jobs nearly always for US citizens
- Make sure applications are extremely detailed; follow all instructions
- Take a long-term view
- Consider tests/exams
Mastering the Interview

- Phase One: Mind Your Appearance
- Phase Two: Above All, Know Thyself, the Organization, and its Needs
- Phase Three: Tag, You’re It!
- Phase Four: The Follow Up
The $64,000 Question

- Avoiding the Question: Taking the Fifth
- Know When to Say When
- Do Not Lie
- Note: Government salaries are more structured, and are public information
A Few Nonprofit Salaries

- President, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
- President, J. Paul Getty Trust
- Surgeon-in-Chief, Children’s Hospital of Cincinnati
- President, Yale University
- Executive Director, Global Health, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- President, United Negro College Fund
- Chief Operating Officer, Public Broadcasting System
- Executive Vice President, Ducks Unlimited
- Chief Legal Officer, Special Olympics
A Few Government Salaries

- Federal job for Master’s graduate (GS-9, in DC): $51,630 to $67,000
- Same Master’s graduate, after 2 years in government: $74,872 to $97,000
- Average salary of city manager: $95,000
- Average salary, local government CFO: $79,000
Dealing with the Dollars

- Determine your readiness factor.
- Learn to value intangibles.
- Change your lifestyle.
- Don’t settle for less.
- Rethink your value.
- Think ahead.
- Just say no.
- Consider the benefits (i.e. government pensions, student loan repayment/forgiveness, telework, vacation)
Strategic References

- Prep Your References
- Expect the Negative Reference
- Thank Your References
Change Your Career

TRANSITIONING TO THE
NONPROFIT SECTOR

SHIFTING YOUR FOCUS FROM THE BOTTOM LINE TO A BETTER WORLD

LAURA GASSNER OTTING
Founder and President of the Nonprofit Professionals Advisory Group
Jobs That Matter

Find a Stable, Fulfilling Career in Public Service

Heather Krasna
Director, Candidate Services,
Nonprofit Professionals Advisory Group
Thank You!

- The recording of today’s presentation, along with the PowerPoint slides, will be available on our Career Programming Web page by next week:

  http://www.mccombs.utexas.edu/alumni/careers/programming/

- Save the date for our April 21st Career Webinar: “Get Paid What You are Worth: Negotiating Job Offers and Asking for Raises” with Laura Hill, BBA ’75.