

# **Creating Your Career Story for Your Job Search**



# Introduction

- YES
  - Non-profit
  - In existence for 20+ years
  - 3 departments: Entrepreneurship, Artist and Job Search
- Everybody loves a good story.
- Your career story is part of your personal brand

# Example of a long Career Story (from Glassdoor)

- From my childhood years spent scribbling down three-paragraph fairy tales in my blanket fort to graduating from an intensive writing University program in Montreal, I've always been a storyteller at heart. I am a member of the Quebec Writers' Federation where I attend many storytelling workshops. When it came to my career, there was no doubt in my mind that writing and storytelling had to play a key role.
- I had 2 [internships](#) that helped me hone my writing skills — one in Technical Writing (where I worked with stakeholders to produce engaging instructional videos for the organization), and one in Copywriting (where I wrote creative copy, which resulted in an increase in readership). I would say that this is my greatest work achievement to date.
- For my first full-time position, though, I would like to get closer to my storytelling roots. (about 1 mins 19 secs)

# Why a Career Story is Important

- Research confirms the importance of narrative in cover letters, interviews, networking events, informational interviews etc.
- Stories are memorable, therefore you will be memorable
- It could increase your chances of landing a job.
- It's the fastest and easiest way for someone to get to know you
- It will give you confidence
- Shopify asks that candidates be ready to tell their story during the interview process

**You will be writing  
your career story  
today!**



# Outline for Your Career Story

- **Beginning** (decide on a starting point)
- **Middle** (experiences, key words)
- **Ending** Strong and memorable (decide where/when you are going to end the story)

# What to Include in Your Story

In no particular order:

- Education
- Summer jobs
- Part time jobs
- Internships
- Student Exchanges (travel)
- Accomplishments
- Include how your hobbies and travels have affected/influenced your career

Always write about an experience that is unique to you, that had an influence on your university or career development.

- Key words related to your career



# **1<sup>st</sup> Group Brainstorm**

## **Activity: Examples of Experiences**

# 1<sup>st</sup> Individual Activity

- Which experiences would you like to include in your career story?

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Individual Activity

- What common threads are there among the experiences you've had?

# 3<sup>rd</sup> Individual Activity

Please write down the answers to these questions:

- What do I gravitate toward naturally?
- What activities do I lose myself in?
- What do I talk about all the time?
- What do I love to read?

Any themes or patterns that connect all 4?

# **Keywords & Industry Terminology to Include in your Career Story**

- Examples of key words
- Why key words are important

# 4<sup>th</sup> Individual Activity:

- Write down examples of key words from your career/industry

# 5<sup>th</sup> Individual Activity

Now you will write your career story!

- **1<sup>st</sup>** Decide on a starting point
- **2<sup>nd</sup>** Decide where you will end the story
- **3<sup>rd</sup>** Write an outline including the experiences and key words you want to include
- Try to make your career story sound goal-driven. That all parts of your story were decided by you "I sought out ABC..."

# 5<sup>th</sup> Individual Activity

Have a

- very short
- medium
- full-length

version of your career story.

Use the appropriate length for the appropriate situation.

# During the Activity

I will walk around during the activity.  
Feel free to ask me questions

# End of Activity

Would anyone like to read their career story to the group to get feedback?

# Career Story & Cover Letters

- Why write a cover letter?
- What part of your Career Story could be used in a cover letter?

# Career Story & Interviews

- “Tell me about yourself?” Typically the first question an interviewer asks

# Career Story & Networking Events

- “What do you do?” Most popular question at networking events
- Answer must be about 7 seconds long
- “I just graduated from McGill in \_\_\_\_\_. I did an internship at the \_\_\_\_\_ and I want to continue my career in Montreal writing grants to secure funding for NGOs”
- A career story can provide a jumping off point for conversations about you/your job search

# Career Story & Informational Interviews

- Start the interview off by telling the person about yourself (all or part of your career story)

# One-on-One Guidance

- McGill Career Planning Services (CaPS)

Alumni have access to all the CaPS services **free for up to one year** after the end of the last semester in which they paid their Student Service fees.

- YES (Government funded)

Free Drop-In appointment (M-F, appt. between 12pm-1pm)

Free short/long term Career/Job Search Counselling



# Any Questions?

