Making Meaningful Career Connections: Leveraging Your Community Mentors

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CAREER EXPLORATION & EDUCATION Student Life

Our Time Together

- 1. An Intro to the University of Toronto
- 2. What makes a conversation meaningful?
- 3. Job Shadowing Program
- 4. Mentor Recruitment Strategies & Onboarding
- 5. Rub Points & Challenges
- 6. Community Sharing
- 7. Q&A

The University of Toronto Context: Students

61,339 students on the St. George Campus

- 17,519 graduate
- 43,820 undergraduate
- **21.3%** of U of T students identify as International (19,187)
- ~ 700 undergraduate programs & +280 graduate programs

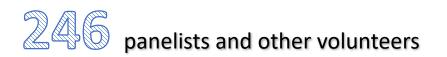


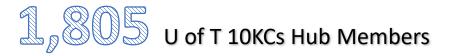


2017-18 Numbers: Community Mentors

How many mentors participated in career exploration?







212 faculty on the Research Catalogue

That means we engaged and partnered with 2,353 co-educators!





What makes a conversation meaningful?

What makes a conversation meaningful?

Based on answers from participants in U of T's Job Shadowing program:

- Two-way dialogue
- Sharing knowledge
- Mutually beneficial
- Evokes emotion
- Rewarding
- Transformative



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Career Exploration: Job Shadowing Program

- ¹/₂ to five day experience for 1-8 participants
- 3 Components:
 - Workplace Tour
 - Career Conversation(s)
 - Simulated Activity

Purpose: connecting U of T students and recent graduates to community professionals to engage in meaningful career conversations that help them...

- Explore and learn about careers
- Answer the question "what can I do with my degree?"
- Practice career-related skills (e.g. networking)





Pop Quiz!

How long does it take to **recruit** a host?

a) 2-3 Weeks

- b) 5-13 Days
- c) 2-4 Months
- d) 2-8 Months

Job Shadowing Program (2017-18)

90 hosts

- 585 placement vacancies
- Top Industries
 - Health Services
 - Education
 - Legal & Security Services
 - Community & Social Services
 - Government



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How Do We Find and Recruit Our Hosts?

- 1. Annual Host Recruitment Plan
 - Student Interest
- 2. Targeted Approach
 - Industry Research
 - Professional Titles and Organizations
 - Alumni vs. Non-Alumni Individuals
- 3. Non-Targeted Approach
 - In-reach
 - Referrals (Employer, Alumni, etc.)
 - Personal Connections



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Getting the "Warm Yes"

- Career Programming and Alumni Engagement Coordinator
 - Joint role: Division of University Advancement + Career Exploration
- Employer Recruitment & Engagement
 - Weekly Report
 - Events
- U of T Alumni Offices





Host Onboarding

Someone wants to host! Now what...?

- Coffee Chats
 - 75% conversion rate
 - "Quality Control"
 - Goal setting
 - Managing expectations
- Host Resources
- On-going support



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This all sounds great, but...

Pop Quiz!

How long does it take to recruit, onboard, and manage **ONE** host?

- a) 11 hours
- b) 3 hours
- c) 30 minutes
- d) 5 hours

Rub Points & Challenges

Recruitment

- Red tape
- # of outreach vs. # of recruited
- Expiration of the 'yes'
- Program integrity

Onboarding

- Budget requirement
- Resource allocation
- Participation**

Student Safety & Insurance

Why do we do this work?

Host Feedback

"Great to connect with students interested in my field, and great to be able to give back to the community. I had the chance to observe as a student, and I am happy to be able to repay the favour!"

"I think it is important for business professionals to better understand the perspective of young people entering the workforce. I think it helps in the recruitment and hiring process to better understand their challenges, barriers and experiences in trying to gain entry."

"The experience was an opportunity to renew my passion for the job, it served as a nice reminder of why I got into this field. I loved meeting someone who was as eager and excited about the field as me."

Why do we do this work?

Student Feedback

"Networking previously seemed to be a cold process. With the [Job Shadowing] process, it removes some of the awkwardness, as it is a sharing of information without conditions, with people who are willing to talk about themselves and what they do."

"Understanding that others are also going through similar experiences makes me feel that I am not alone and that this is a common struggle for people in university, and it reminds me to keep going and working hard."

As a result of this program...

25% of participants can see a clear relationship between the skills and knowledge gained in their studies and a range of career opportunities

11% of participants feel <u>more confident</u> approaching professionals for career related information

Leverage Your Professional Networks

- What are some strategies you use to recruiting mentors for your programs, services, or events?
- How do you prepare mentors to have meaningful career conversations with students?
- What challenges do you face in your work?

Community Sharing Forum





Questions? Let's Chat!

thank you!

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