

Welcome to Unstick your career for RIT alumni!

We will be covering some resources which will help you become “Unstuck” whether you are just looking at some options, looking to change jobs, or think you may want a career change. My name is Janine Rowe, and I am here with Carolyn DeHority, Assistant Director of Career Counseling and Kris Stehler, Assistant Director of Alumni Programming. When we scheduled this webinar, I did not know that I was going to come down with a head cold, and I am sorry for the way my voice sounds this evening!

Housekeeping – this webinar is being recorded for alumni who were not able to join us today. You will also be able to access it after if you choose.

We’ll be sharing several web-based resources with you today, many of which we hope you will review later on. We will be sending you a document with all of the links after the webinar, so don’t feel that you have to memorize or write down our resources.

Also, we will be sending you a brief evaluation to fill out at the end of the webinar to ask you for your feedback, and we would love for you to fill that out.

If at any point you have questions, feel free to put them in the chat feature on the left, we will be checking it throughout our time together. Also, you run into any technical difficulties during the session, like if you can’t hear the presenter, please just note that in the chat box so we can address it.

We will also leave about 20 minutes at the end of the webinar for your questions, which you can submit via the chat feature, or by using your microphone.

And lastly, please have a piece of scrap paper and a pen handy for a few exercises we would like you to try as you follow along with us.

Here is our outline today. In a moment, we will be reviewing common “sticking points” for career changers, we’ll give you a quiz to help you determine whether you would like a job change or a career change, give you our suggestions on “how to get unstuck” and of course, give you plenty of time for discussion of your questions.

And now it is time for our first poll, to get a sense of who is in the room today.

Let’s start off by discussing feeling stuck. I am a strong believer, as many of you probably are, that we can learn a lot from animals and that we may identify with their experiences.

Elephant is also feeling stuck, let’s take a look at what these elephants do – he’s a bit stuck – then we’ll talk about how that might be related to your experience.

Think about your own stuckness. What is the “mud” that you are stuck in? What is your environment? Are you alone? Or are your peers around you? Where is this young elephant trying to go? Where are you trying to go?

What solutions does this elephant have to being stuck? He can stay right where he is, and make the most of it. He could try his best to dig himself out, which is what it looks like he’s trying to do. He could ask his friends or the employee for help. He could look for another way out. These are all strategies that we will discuss today – how to identify the factors that have you stuck, and how you can release yourself from the “mud” and get unstuck.

Here are some common presenting issues that we sometimes hear from Alum.

I want something more, but I’m not sure what would fit me best – looking for assistance finding fit between your personal characteristics and jobs

I’m not sure about my options or resources – the world of work is rapidly changing – sometimes it is hard to keep abreast of what is out there

My industry is in a downturn –

Does a change seem likely or inevitable or have you been laid off?

The world is changing and there are some things that we have very little control over like outsourcing or a company moves

My circumstances have changed: Looking for more financial stability

Injury or illness to self or family member

Changes in the home or the workplace

Want work to satisfy a different value (i.e. work life balance)

Conducting a job search can be very time consuming, especially while balancing other responsibilities and completing some of the self-reflection that is necessary to make a change.

It can be easy to get discouraged with the amount of time, energy, and effort required, especially if you find that additional training or education is necessary for careers you are considering.

We aim to give you some tips on how to manage this stress in this webinar.

Poll question 2: The statements that best describe my situation:

It can be hard to tell if you are looking for a job change (looking to do the same type of work, but perhaps in a different environment, with different co-workers, or in a different geographic location), or a career change involving a change in job role, responsibilities, and perhaps using different skill sets.

Activity: Draw a table with two columns. As we describe the circumstance, make a tally line either on the right or left hand column for which phrase best describes you.

You have experienced a life change, and want an employer that will value you

You have experienced a major life change that causes you to reevaluate your interest in your current path

You're not sure about job prospects in your field or the outlook of your current field is declining.

You might be ready to move to the next level but worry that your employer doesn't see it, or you do not see opportunities for growth or new challenges in your field.

You would be much happier in your role if you could change an aspect, such as your supervisor, a co-worker, or your work environment. or, you are so stressed at work that you feel your current job is detrimental to your work life balance, health, and wellness.

You find yourself looking at postings in your current field with interest, or when looking at opportunities in your field, you cannot imagine yourself doing these jobs.

Number 6, you still feel passion for your field, just not your current role. Or, you have identified a hobby, interest, or skill that could become a potential new career.

You can identify ways to enhance your skill set at work and increase your daily job satisfaction, such as maintaining friendships at work or taking on new projects, or you feel a lack of interest in your career or are not motivated to learn new skills in your current field.

Add up your tally marks – which side, job change, or career change, has more points? That can be a guide of whether you should focus on a new job in your industry or whether you want a more complete job change.

Hi, this is Carolyn DeHority, the Assistant Director of Career Counseling at the RIT Career Services Office.

We are going to be taking a look at each of the five possible sticking points that you might be encountering in your career development. Note which of these circumstances best describes you, or perhaps multiple ones do. I do want to tell you that there is a great deal of overlap between the 5 sticking points that we have delineated. Resources that we think might be helpful for one sticking point may well be useful for another, so use whatever you think will be helpful to you. We will e-mail you a list with all of the links for resources we are showing you, so be sure to note what websites you would like to return to.

If you think that you would “like something more, but are not sure what would fit you best”, it is time for some self-assessment and reflection. What would you identify as some of the reasons for your current dissatisfaction? Are you unemployed and want to be working? Are you bored or unchallenged in the work portion of your life? Are you feeling frustrated? If so, why? Might you be feeling under paid or under-appreciated? Is your current work environment unacceptable or are the people in your workplace incompatible? Take a moment to write down several of the things that you are dissatisfied with in your work-life, if any.

As we think about doing career-related self-assessment, there are four main categories that we each need to pay attention to. These are our career and life values, our interests, our personality traits, and our skills and abilities. We will briefly touch on each of those today as a beginning to a more in depth self-assessment that I hope you launch into as you contemplate options. I will be showing you some resources that I hope you will take the time to complete at your own pace later.

### **(Values)**

Our values are the guides to our behavior that give meaning and direction to our life. If we know what is most important to us values-wise and can articulate that, it can be very helpful as we pinpoint our dissatisfactions and make decisions that lead us to a better place. Over the years I have often found that what may lead someone to think of either a job or career change is a reprioritizing of their values.

However, it can be difficult to state what work and life values are really most important to us. A values card sort can be a helpful way to prioritize your values, and I will do a demonstration of the sort. The goal here is to identify your top five values (out of about 50) and to put them in a rank order. Remember, no one value is better than another, the important thing is to be able to articulate what is most important to you.

### **(Interests)**

One of the values that is important to many of us is that we enjoy our work and find it interesting. Each of us will probably spend over 80,000 hours of our life working, and it makes sense to maximize our enjoyment during that time. That is why it is important to do an assessment of our interests. First, do a self-assessment by asking yourself some of these questions:

What are aspects of your former and current jobs that you liked and did not like?

What are some of your hobbies, things you like to do for fun, and things you do in your free time?

What topics intrigue you and do you like to learn about? What websites do you visit and what kinds of books do you like to read?

Do you volunteer your time? Where and doing what?

Talk with a trusted friend or colleague about your interests and values and their correlation.

It is also possible to take a free online Interest Profiler that will generate ideas of possible occupations to investigate. Here is what this looks like, and the URL will be available to you at the end of the webinar. Here at the Career Services office at RIT one of our career counselors could administer and interpret the Strong Interest Inventory, which is most useful to people who are searching broadly for options.

### **(Personality)**

Some types of people and personalities prefer some types of work and work environments more than others. For instance, if you are a person who is outgoing and finds great satisfaction from interaction with and helping others, there are some isolating work tasks and environments that would not be a good fit for you. Perhaps you have taken the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, which helps to identify some of your personality preferences. If you have not taken it and would like to, the Jung Typology Test is a short, 64 question, 10-minute, free assessment that attempts to identify your personality preferences on four dimensions. Here it is. After you have a sense of your personality type, the Personality Page website has lots of information that will give you more food for thought-how personality type relates to careers, to interpersonal relationships and to your own personal growth. Use this personality theory information to give you additional things to think about and to react to, not to define you...after all you have lived with yourself a lot longer than it took you to take an inventory. That said, many people have found it to be very useful to consider personality type information as they complete a self-inventory.

### **(Assess Your Skills)**

An honest assessment of your skills and abilities is an important element of self-assessment and can help prepare you for the resume-writing and interview process.

As you look back at the jobs and experiences you have had, what stands out as things that you have done well?

What have you taken pride and satisfaction in?

Specifically, what skills did you develop that helped you achieve?

Look back at performance appraisals or think back on conversations you have had with others. What have they told said you are good at?

What are skills that you have that you particularly enjoy using?

The O\*NET online Skills Search will help you figure out how your skills may fit with potential job opportunities.

As we move on, perhaps you are not sure about your options or resources.

As you are doing your self-assessment, you are likely starting to generate a list of occupations that you want to know more about. I am going to show you four websites that we think give especially useful occupational information.

My Skills My Future is useful in thinking about how the skills you have gained in your current job might translate into other job or occupational possibilities. Here is an example. Let's say that you are currently a financial planner and wonder what other jobs might require similar skills. Look at compare skills and the occupation description. This site will even give you job listings for your area as well as education and certification options.

The Occupational Outlook Handbook is a US Department of Labor publication. I am going to go to "Life, Physical and Social Sciences" and then to "Biochemist." Here we can find information about what they do, how to become one, what they get paid, where they work, other related occupations, and where to learn more.

The O\*NET is also a government website. I am going to put in the key word "Advertising." Then I will choose "Advertising and Promotions Manager". This will tell me about tasks, skills and abilities needed.....If you click on "Local salary data", you will go to another site called Career One Stop. Here you can actually see a short video about the occupation, state and metropolitan area salary data, and can find links to other websites with information about this occupation.

The Vault website is an awesome source of information for a number of career fields, but not all. I will demonstrate how to access the Vault website and guides. If you already have access

to our office's Job Zone, you will have access to this site. If you don't, as an RIT Alumnus you can get access by contacting our office. So here is our office's alumni website. Click on Job Zone, and then give your username and password. The link for Vault's Career Insider can be found under "Shortcuts." You will need to register to gain access, which is a very short process. There is a lot here, but I am going to point you to two areas in particular. If you go to Industries on the far left side, you can learn about a lot of fields. I am going to choose real estate as an example. Then I will go to "Workers in the Industry", which will include a list of job titles that you can click for even more information. I also want to show you the Career Guides. These are books on career fields, occupations, and industries that are chock full of information. You can download the book for free, because RIT has a subscription to this site.

As an alumnus you still have access to a Career Services Coordinator who works with students and alumni in your major. These professionals have job search process expertise and have connections with employers that seek our students and alumni. Here is how to find your coordinator. Type your major in the text box (Mechanical Engineering) and your coordinator's contact information should appear.

If your industry is in a downturn and jobs are scarce, I would encourage you to learn more about the changes in your industry. Vault, which I showed you earlier would be a good place to start. Think about how your skills might be used in alternate jobs and industries. My Skills My Future, also shown earlier, could be useful. Connect with your Career Services coordinator in our office, and be sure to come back for sessions 2-4 of this webinar.

If you have had change in your circumstances that are causing you to be thinking of new options, carefully assess what that change is. Here are a few examples:

Are you looking for more financial stability?

Was there an injury or illness to yourself or someone in your family?

Have there been changes in your home, your marital situation, or workplace?

Do you want your work to satisfy a different important value, or perhaps you are looking for fulfillment after retirement.

This is going to look like a somewhat familiar list of suggestions, so I will mention some of them quite quickly. Take time to do an assessment of your interests, values, traits, and skills as discussed earlier. Network with people who can assist you, both in person and through social media. The next sessions in this series will focus on this. Contact your career services coordinator by sending an e-mail or making an appointment. Perhaps you can experiment with new options by doing some volunteer work or shadowing. Certainly you should use some of the resources that have been mentioned to do some research.

If you are at the stage in your life that you may be thinking of retiring, or want a different experience for your "end of career" employment, you might want to investigate the [Encore Career Resources](#) on our website.

And now we will return to Janine who will talk about finding time to focus on career development.

Tools to keep motivated and maintain keep stress in check

Conducting a job search can be very time consuming, especially while balancing other responsibilities and conducting self-assessments.

It is easy to become discouraged with the amount of time and effort required to make a career change.

It is also very difficult to estimate how long a job or career change might take.

Also, we may find that we need additional training or certifications for a career we are interested in which can be frustrating.

The number one tip that we have, in addition of course to working with RIT Career Services to help you, is to break tasks down into smaller pieces

So, for example, many people have a goal to “Get a new job” This of course, includes multiple steps as you know. Try breaking it down into smaller, more manageable steps

During the career and job change process, there are a huge number of factors that are totally out of your control, like the number of job openings in your area or personal/family concerns. There are, however, a number of things that are in your control.

We’re going to complete a quick assessment of 10 things – ingredients of happiness, that you can work on integrating into your career search.

So jot down on a sheet of paper a quick 1-10, and then you’re going to indicate the number that best matches your level of agreement.

Number one: My work is aligned with my values.

I experience little things each day that bring me joy.

I am taking steps to optimize my physical health

I manage my stress effectively

I acknowledge my feelings and manage my feeling effectively.

I feel a sense of purpose in my work, resulting in a commitment to my work.



I accept feedback to grow in my work, resulting in an appropriate amount of challenge.

I concentrate my energy at work mostly on things I can do something about.

I have a sense of support from and communication with other people.

I feel thankful and express appreciate to those around me.

Add up all of your points for each question, and divide that by 10. You will have a score that gives you a sense of how you incorporate these ingredients of happiness.

No matter how well we engage in self-care and stress management, there are always a few areas that we can improve upon. I ask you to indicate which areas you would like to spend more time on – they can help you manage the daily stress of your current employment situation, and handle the stress of a job search. Now we will have our third poll, which areas do you wish to improve on?

Wrap up, what is one step you will take as a result of attending our webinar today.

Now we will leave time for discussion, and we will unmute your microphones.

If there are no questions, I thank you for joining us this evening.