



SUSTAINABLE CAREER MAPS FOR [HIRE ED]

**Identifying and Transforming Oppressive Hiring
Practices in Higher Education and Student Affairs**

INTERVIEWS

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WHY THIS RESOURCE?

ACPA’s Report on 21st Century Employment in Higher Education offered “a call to action meant to serve as a guiding framework for a sustainable future for the profession.” To make further meaning of the analysis and recommendations of the report, members of ACPA’s Commission for Career Services, an entity group of educators, developed a suite of supplemental resources intended to support higher education and student affairs (HESA) practitioners as they, “work, lead, and support their career and the careers of those around them.”

While the functional area of career services is primarily toward students, the authors took a collegial lens with aims to inform HESA practitioners for the wellness of their career and the careers of those around them. As career services educators, regular interactions with employers across industries and students across disciplines have led us to believe these resources will help to critically examine problematic workplace norms in higher education that are often not identified or addressed.

HOW TO APPROACH THIS RESOURCE

(1) Begin with clarity for resource intention

- This resource identifies the overt and subtle characteristics of organizational [supremacist] culture in hiring models.

(2) Comprehend the problem deeper

- “Okun’s (2021) White Supremacy Culture framework illuminates the conception, continuation, and legacies of white supremacy in the United States.” Guided by this framework, this resource connects common HESA hiring practices to systems that maintain white supremacist culture in the field.

(3) Review examples and considerations for improvement

(4) Prepare actions for implementing

WHO SHOULD USE THIS RESOURCE?

(PRIMARY) HESA Job Seekers/Candidates

RED COLOR DENOTES THIS AUDIENCE THROUGHOUT THE RESOURCE

- By clarifying the purpose and intent of common hiring practices and acknowledging potential problems with each practice, this resource educates and empowers candidates to make intentional decisions during their searches. Ideally, this will result in candidates accepting roles at HESA institutions with aligned values.

(SECONDARY) HESA Hiring Managers and Allied Mentors*

GOLD COLOR DENOTES THIS AUDIENCE THROUGHOUT THE RESOURCE

- Ultimately, to transform biased practices in higher education, current HESA professionals must also be able to identify and advocate for systemic reform.

WHEN TO USE THIS RESOURCE

While researching and applying for specific roles

When participating in professional development events

During informational interviews

While interviewing/
discussing career opportunities with hiring teams

When finalizing decisions to accept a job offer

*While advising emerging HESA graduates and leading in professional hiring processes

GROUNDING LOGIC + SCHOLARLY FRAMEWORK

The problems and recommendations in this document are based on lived experiences of ACPA professionals and peers. To honor relevant scholars and their work, we also cite a selection of sources to further contribute to a growing body of scholarship on these topics.

REIMAGINING INTERVIEWS

(RE)DEFINING THE PURPOSE OF JOB INTERVIEWS

A job interview is a chance for a candidate to meet with key representatives from the hiring organization. Both parties have the opportunity to learn, share, and determine alignment of qualifications, motivation, and fit factors.

NAMING KEY PROBLEMS

Of Okun's (2021) *seven-domains used to understand the maintenance of white supremacy within HESA culture and organizations*, urgency, or the “disconnection from the need to breath, pause and reflect” and paternalism, or when “those in power are assumed qualified and entitled to define standards and the one right way, and decision maker for the interests of those without power,” are the most salient.

Traditionally, candidates feel significant pressure to align their statements and actions with workplace norms as opposed to presenting their fully-authentic selves.

ANTIDOTAL JOB SEARCH PRACTICES

SETTING YOURSELF UP FOR SUCCESS

The interview process can be intense, time-consuming, and anxiety-inducing for candidates. It is easy to infer you are at the mercy of the employer's requests, which is a problematic power dynamic. You can always communicate your needs during the process so that you are able to show up as your best self.

Workplaces need to set candidates up for success and be mindful of how interview requirements can interfere with a candidate's quality of life. Note which employers are flexible and proactive about prompting you to share needs and expectations.

ANTIDOTAL JOB SEARCH PRACTICES

**Assess and advocate
for your needs**

- Superday and marathon interviews, along with the urgency of scheduling, can disrupt your other responsibilities and interview performance
- If the modality, date, time, and length of an interview does not align with your needs, request and present alternative options rather than automatically acquiescing
- Request for institution to pay upfront for interview-related expenses, like travel

ANTIDOTAL JOB SEARCH PRACTICES

Ask deep, clarifying questions

Before an interview, engage with...

- PREVIOUS (OR CURRENT) EMPLOYEES ABOUT ORGANIZATIONAL PRIORITIES AND/OR SUPPORT
- THE CONTEXT OF INTERVIEWERS' STAKES AND PRIORITIES IN RESPECT TO THE ROLE YOU'RE CONSIDERING

During an interview, ask about...

- HOW TEAMS WORK TOGETHER
- HOW EMPLOYEES ADVANCE WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION
- HOW SUCCESS IS MEASURED AND CELEBRATED
- HOW TO CONNECT WITH EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS OR IDENTITY-SHARING PEERS CURRENTLY IN THE ORGANIZATION

After an interview, process and work towards clarity regarding...

- CLARIFYING QUESTIONS FOR THE RECRUITER/INTERVIEWER
- ANY INCONSISTENCIES (“CAN YOU HELP ME UNDERSTAND...?”)

ANTIDOTAL JOB SEARCH PRACTICES

Prepare for Your Negotiation

- Can you contact last employee in the role to gather honest insight?
- Consult with network to determine if offer is competitive for industry and research on Glassdoor's Know Your Worth, Payscale, Fishbowl, etc.
- Assess your offer holistically: Salary, time off, professional development funds, remote work, sponsorship, health coverage, retirement savings, etc.
- Reflect on your experience of the process: Do you feel aligned with the job and organization?

ANTIDOTAL HIRING PRACTICES

***Hiring team: Set your candidates up for success**

- When possible, avoid “superdays” and marathon interviews
- Allow candidates to make decisions around interview modality and scheduling
- Interview-related expenses should be paid for by hiring organization in advance
- Create a culture that inspires thoughtful questioning, keen insights, and innovative problem-solving to foster transparency and healthy management of expectations

NEXT STEPS + RECOMMENDATIONS

Processes, procedures, and policy

- Talk to employers about who they don't hire and why. Listen for language of unconscious biases like "culture fit" and for evidence of [halo effect and horns effect](#).

Effective practices for resource sharing

- What do you do if you find something you can point to? Publish it, print it, and talk about your findings with campus personnel. The last recommendation may require you to dust off those old school networking skills to work some rooms.

CALL/S TO ACTION

There is only so much content to be offered without more personal context. The primary aim of this resource is to inform HESA practitioners about the wellness realities of their career and the careers of those around them.

Regular interactions with job-seekers across disciplines employers across industries (consider the sequence and power dynamics) lead us to believe that: this resource can help critically examine problematic workplace norms in higher education that are often not identified or addressed.

CONSIDER THIS RESOURCE A PART OF PHASE ONE. CONTACT NICK.FAHNDERS@GMAIL.COM FOR ANY IDEAS AND/OR FEEDBACK FOR PHASE TWO.

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