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## Doctoral Career Resources
Organizational Leadership and Development

A career in organizational leadership and development relies on knowledge in your field and the confidence that comes with exceptional skills in communication, collaboration, organization, innovation, critical thinking, analysis, problem-solving and decision-making. Leaders use these skills to guide the development of strategies, build culture, cultivate relationships, set goals, manage change and performance, and motivate others to move an organization forward in alignment with the organization’s vision and mission. Higher-level leadership roles are typically given to those who, in addition to their educational credentials, have progressive experience in taking initiative, supervising others, and seeking more responsibility in their field. If you are making a career transition and aspire to a leadership role, start gaining experience in your new field as soon as possible. Employers include government, corporate, and nonprofit organizations.*

Select search terms for jobs in organizational leadership and development: Executive director, director, associate director, manager, coordinator, supervisor or leadership jobs in the areas of program development and management, business development and management, finance, education, healthcare, security, marketing, energy, human resources, business intelligence, knowledge management, change management, performance management, equity and inclusion, social impact, nonprofit management, training, learning and development, project management, administration, operations, or information systems (Leadership terms may vary by profession and may require specific certifications or licensure such as administrator certification or licensure for a k-12 principal). Salaries vary depending on multiple factors.

For salary information, visit Glassdoor.com or Paysa.com.

Requirements & Strategies

Requirement: Expertise and experience in a targeted area.

Strategy: Build relevant expertise through your academic studies and capstone project. Consult with faculty on possible capstone project topics related to your professional interests and goals. Build experience through employment, internships, and skills-based volunteering opportunities.

Requirement: Leadership experience.

Strategy: Build your self-confidence and leadership skills by taking on additional responsibilities and leadership roles in your current position, a professional association, an internship, a volunteer position for a community organization, or join a board of directors. For example, take initiative to lead a team to collaboratively solve problems and improve processes.

Requirement: Advanced listening, writing, communications, presentation, and public speaking skills.

Strategy: Hone your writing skills during your academic program by taking advantage of the Walden Writing Center resources. Polish your writing skills by taking an optional Walden CAEX writing course. Visit the Academic Skills Center resources on how to prepare and deliver quality presentations and consider joining a local Toastmasters International group to further build your presentation and public speaking skills.

Networking Opportunities

- Join and take on a leadership role in a professional association. Visit CareerOneStop: Professional Association Finder to explore professional associations related to your specialized field and in organizational leadership and development. Also, check to see if there is a local chapter of the association in your geographical area for opportunities to do face-to-face networking.
- Join LinkedIn groups related to leadership and development.
- Hold informational interviews with leaders in your field.
- Connect with peers throughout your academic program and take time during academic residencies to build relationships.
- Join relevant Walden student organizations.

*Career options may require additional experience, training, or other factors beyond the successful completion of a Walden degree program. (Adapted from language on the Walden University website)
Policy and Advocacy

A career in policy and advocacy involves examining the impact of current policies, developing new policies, and advocating for change. Policy work often involves extended periods of highly detailed research and analysis, expert writing, and the ability to condense and summarize complex issues for diverse audiences. Advocacy involves skills in analysis, collaboration, and persuasive writing and public speaking. Experts in policy and advocacy are needed in almost every field including healthcare, education, business, criminal justice, civil rights, human rights, human services, immigration, labor, employment, technology, environment, food and agriculture, energy, transportation, consumer protection, housing, urban planning, access for people with disabilities, security, and research. Potential employers include national, state, and local government agencies, international NGOs, nonprofit organizations, and corporations. Explore public policy research institutes and think tanks, and for more information on advocacy, learn about advocacy groups and explore special interest and advocacy organizations.*

Select search terms for policy positions: policy analyst, policy associate, policy manager, policy director, policy administrator, research analyst, research director, regulatory and compliance analyst, program analyst, quality assurance manager, government affairs officer, government agency director, nonprofit director, director of equity and inclusion.

Search terms for advocacy positions: advocate, advocacy jobs, organizer, program director, program coordinator, community engagement, lobbyist, activist. Also search by specific fields, for example: education policy, health policy, health advocacy.

For salary information, visit Glassdoor.com or Paysa.com.

Requirements & Strategies

Requirement: In-depth knowledge in a targeted area.

Strategy: Build relevant knowledge through your academic studies and capstone project. Consult with faculty on possible capstone project topics related to your professional interests and goals. Build experience through employment, optional internships, and skills-based volunteering opportunities.

Requirement: Research and data analysis skills.

Strategy: Build your ability to analyze quantitative and qualitative research through your academic studies, capstone project, employment, and skills-based volunteering projects.

Requirement: Advanced writing, summarizing, and presentation skills with the ability to read and understand highly detailed and complex documents.

Strategy: Hone your writing skills during your academic program by taking advantage of the Walden Writing Center resources. Consider enhancing your doctoral level reading and writing skills by taking an optional Walden CAEX writing course and the optional Reading Techniques for Graduate Study course and explore the Critical Reading resources on the Academic Skills Center website. Join a local Toastmasters International group to build your presentation skills and explore presenting your research at Walden’s Research Symposium.

Networking Opportunities

- Join a professional association related to your area of interest in policy and advocacy and attend events. Visit the Walden Career Services resources or the CareerOneStop: Professional Association Finder to explore professional associations, such as the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management. Also, check to see if there is a local chapter of the association in your geographical area for opportunities to do face-to-face networking.
- Join LinkedIn groups related to policy and advocacy.
- Hold informational interviews with policy professionals and advocates in your community and beyond.
- Connect with peers throughout your academic program and take time during academic residencies to build relationships.
- Join and become active in relevant Walden student organizations.

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Consulting

A consultant provides specialized expertise to individuals or organizations. Consultants work independently or for consulting firms, and frequent travel is often required. Government, corporate, and nonprofit organizations hire consultants for a wide range of projects including:

- Strategy development and problem-solving
- Research and data analysis
- Customized education, training, and coaching
- Transition and change management
- Innovation and technology implementation
- For more information on consulting, view the video: What Does a Consultant Do.*

Select search terms: consultant, consulting jobs, freelance jobs. Also search by specific fields, for example: education consulting, healthcare consulting, human services consulting, human resource consulting, management consulting, public health consulting, policy consulting. View top fifty consulting firms. For salary information, visit Glassdoor.com or Paysa.com. Salaries vary depending on multiple factors. Independent consultants must plan financially for the possibility of time with minimal or no income between projects.

Requirements & Strategies

**Requirement:** In-depth expertise and experience in a targeted area.

**Strategy:** Build relevant expertise through your academic studies and capstone project. Consult with faculty on possible capstone project topics related to your professional interests and goals. Build experience through employment, optional internships, and skills-based volunteering opportunities.

**Requirement:** Research and data analysis skills.

**Strategy:** Build your quantitative and qualitative research and data analysis skills through your academic studies, capstone project, employment, and skills-based volunteering projects.

**Requirement:** Advanced communication skills including active listening, writing, and presentation skills.

**Strategy:** Hone your writing skills during your academic program by taking advantage of the Walden Writing Center resources. Polish your writing skills by taking an optional Walden CAEX writing course. Perfect your active listening skills through interactions with colleagues, peers, and faculty. Visit the Academic Skills Center resources on how to prepare and deliver quality presentations and consider joining a local Toastmasters International group to further build your presentation skills.

**Requirement:** Motivation, flexibility, time management, and project management skills.

**Strategy:** Reflect on whether you have the self-motivation and flexibility to be comfortable with the independent nature of consulting work. Also, focus on steps to strengthen your time management and project management skills.

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Networking Opportunities

**Requirements:**
- Join a professional association related to your area of interest in consulting and attend events. Visit the CareerOneStop: Professional Association Finder to explore professional associations. Examples of associations include:
  - Institute of Management Consultants
  - Independent Educational Consultants Association (IECA)
  - American College of Healthcare Executives: Healthcare Consultant Forum
- Also, check to see if there is a local chapter of the association in your geographical area for opportunities to do face-to-face networking.
- Join LinkedIn groups related to consulting.
- Hold informational interviews with consultants in your field.
- Connect with peers throughout your academic program and take time during academic residencies to build relationships.
- Join and become active in relevant Walden student organizations.
Communications, Writing, and Editing

A career in communications, writing, and editing can range from a corporate communications position to freelance writer, editor, or published author. There are expanding opportunities for freelance writers and editors with social media and self-publishing expertise. Opportunities will require exceptional communication and writing skills including extensive knowledge of grammar and style. The ability to adjust your writing and communication style to various audiences, work simultaneously on multiple projects, and meet tight deadlines is also important. For more information and resources for a career in writing, visit the sites 100 Best Websites for Writers in 2019 and Writers and Editors.*

Select search terms for jobs in communications, writing and editing: writer, editor, communications director, communications specialist, corporate communications specialist, business communications specialist, communications manager, public relations manager, public affairs manager, technical writer, content writer, digital media content writer, freelance writer or editor, social media specialist, speechwriter, copywriter, grant writer, publications officer, information officer.

For salary information, visit Glassdoor.com or Paysa.com. Freelance writers will need to plan financially for the possibility of time with minimal or no income between projects.

Requirements & Strategies

Requirement: Advanced communications, writing, and editing skills for multiple audiences.

Strategy: Hone your writing skills during your academic program by taking full advantage of the Walden Writing Center resources. Consider enhancing your doctoral level writing skills by taking an optional Walden CAEX writing course.

Requirement: Presentation and public speaking skills.

Strategy: Join a local Toastmasters International group to build your presentation and public speaking skills. Present at professional conferences, deliver workshops, and lead formal and informal presentations.

Requirement: In-depth knowledge in a targeted area.

Strategy: Build relevant knowledge through your academic studies and capstone project. Consult with faculty on possible capstone project topics related to your professional interests and goals. Build experience through employment, optional internships, and skills-based volunteering opportunities where you contribute through using your writing skills.

Requirement: Digital and publishing expertise.

Strategy: Build your experience and create content for multiple forms of digital media, including LinkedIn, blog platforms, and Facebook. Gain an understanding of the use of keywords for Search Engine Optimization (SEO).

Networking Opportunities

- Join and take on a leadership role in a professional association. Visit CareerOneStop: Professional Association Finder to explore professional associations related to your specialized field and in communications, writing, and editing. Also, check to see if there is a local chapter of the association in your geographical area for opportunities to do face-to-face networking.
- Join LinkedIn groups related to communications, writing, and editing.
- Hold informational interviews with professionals in your field.
- Connect with peers throughout your academic program and take time during academic residencies to build relationships.
- Join relevant Walden student organizations.

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Research and Data Analysis

Research and data analysis are used to provide the evidence and data necessary to guide sound decisions, strategies, processes, and policies. “Evidence-based” and “data-driven” are now common phrases throughout career fields. A doctoral degree positions you to design, organize, and implement research projects; summarize and analyze the data; create reports; present findings; and offer recommendations based on the results. Funding for research projects may involve applying for research grants and may be dependent on continued grant funding. Potential employers include across industries, government agencies, universities, research institutes, and nonprofits.*

Select search terms for jobs in research: research associate, research analyst, research specialist, research scientist, research fellow, senior research associate. Also, search by specific areas of interest, such as education research jobs or health research jobs.

Select search terms for jobs in data analysis: data analyst, data scientist, analysis specialist, quality analyst, quality assurance specialist, business intelligence analyst.

For salary information, visit Glassdoor.com or Paysa.com.

Requirements & Strategies

Requirement: In-depth knowledge of your target area of research interest.

Strategy: Build relevant expertise through your academic studies and capstone project. Consult with faculty on possible capstone project topics related to your professional interests and goals. Build experience through employment, optional internships, and skills-based volunteering opportunities.

Requirement: In-depth knowledge of research methodologies and data analytics.

Strategy: Build strong quantitative and qualitative research and data analysis skills through your academic studies, capstone project, employment, and skills-based volunteering projects. Attend a Walden New Scholars Workshop upon graduation.

Requirement: Expertise in the use of data analytics software.

Strategy: Become an expert in the use of SPSS, the statistical software used in Walden doctoral programs, through your research courses and attending the Walden Academic Skills tutorials.

Requirement: Advanced writing skills with the ability to clearly explain complex statistical concepts.

Strategy: Hone your writing skills during your academic program by taking advantage of the Walden Writing Center resources. Consider polishing your writing skills by taking an optional Walden CAEX writing course. Consult with faculty on strategies for publishing your dissertation findings. Consider submitting an article for possible publication in a Walden peer-reviewed journal.

Networking Opportunities

- Join and take on a leadership role in a professional association. Visit CareerOneStop: Professional Association Finder to explore professional associations related to your specialized field and in research and data analysis. Also, check to see if there is a local chapter of the association in your geographical area for opportunities to do face-to-face networking.
- Join LinkedIn groups related to data research and analysis.
- Hold informational interviews with professionals in your field.
- Connect with peers throughout your academic program and take time during academic residencies to build relationships.
- Join relevant Walden student organizations.

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Higher Education

What typically comes to mind when thinking of a career in higher education is a faculty position, but there are many other opportunities that use the skills developed during a doctoral program. For example, there are leadership and administrative positions in admissions, enrollment, financial aid, registration, academic skills and support, advising, student affairs, writing centers, library, disability and accessibility services, military services, field experience, study abroad, student health and wellness, residence life, alumni relations, technology, curriculum and assessment, training, institutional research, social media and marketing, finance, grants management, fundraising and development, facilities management, institutional review boards, governance, accreditation, contracts, regulatory compliance and policy. Potential employers include public and private non-profit and for-profit colleges, universities, technical schools, accrediting organizations, and government agencies that focus on higher education policies, as well as non-credit, professional skills-based training and certificate programs.*

For more information, visit the higher education resources on the Career Services website and HigherEdjobs- Administrative positions.

Select search terms for higher education jobs: Search broadly by “higher education administration and leadership jobs” or by specific fields such as jobs in higher education admissions or student affairs. For faculty positions, search faculty jobs, adjunct faculty jobs, contributing faculty jobs, academic jobs, or higher education teaching jobs.

For salary information, visit Glassdoor.com or Paysa.com.

Requirements & Strategies

Requirement: In-depth knowledge in the targeted area.

Strategy: Build relevant expertise through your academic studies and capstone project. Consult with faculty on possible capstone project topics related to your professional interests and goals. Build experience through employment, optional internships, and skills-based volunteering opportunities.

Requirement: Experience in higher education, delivering professional presentations, teaching, and using technology.

Strategy: Consider joining a local Toastmasters International group to build your presentation skills. Deliver presentations at professional conferences. Explore opportunities to provide training within your current position, if employed. Offer to be a guest presenter at a local college or university on a topic related to your expertise. Explore available Walden Graduate Assistant positions for students. Explore presenting your research at Walden’s Research Symposium. Explore opportunities to provide training within your current position, if employed. Offer to be a guest presenter at a local college or university on a topic related to your expertise. Explore available Walden Graduate Assistant positions for students. Explore presenting your research at Walden’s Research Symposium. Pursue training on educational technologies, such as webinar delivery systems, online learning platforms, and video conferencing.

Requirement: Research and data analysis skills.

Strategy: Build your quantitative and qualitative research and data analysis skills through your academic studies, capstone project, employment, and skills-based volunteering projects. Attend a Walden New Scholars Workshop upon graduation.

Requirement: Advanced writing skills with the ability to clearly explain concepts.

Strategy: Hone your writing skills during your academic program by taking advantage of the Walden Writing Center resources. Consider polishing your writing skills by taking an optional Walden CAEX writing course. Consult with faculty on strategies for publishing your dissertation findings. Consider submitting an article for possible publication in a Walden peer-reviewed journal.

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As a part of the Doctoral Career Pathways Conference, several students and alumni contributed stories that highlight ways they applied their doctoral skills in the workplace. Story contributors share their career journey and offer strategies and advice for career success at the doctoral level.
Andria Coleman, DBA

Doctor of Business Administration Alumna
Walden University

DBA Consulting Capstone: Attraction and Retention of Individual Donor Funding in Nonprofit Organizations.

Career Pathways:
Organizational Leadership and Development Consulting

Current Job Title: Food and Nutrition Operations Manager at a hospital system.
(4 years of experience in this role).

Career Progression:
I started working at an insurance company after college and earned an undergraduate degree in business, then earned my master's in nutrition. I became a Registered Dietician and, after 3 years, I advanced into a Clinical Nutrition Manager role. I received an MBA and shortly advanced into a Food and Nutrition Operations Manager role.

Professional and academic skills I gained during my doctoral program:
I completed a doctoral consulting capstone project where I gained consulting experience and learned how to use a consulting framework to improve performance. I learned how to evaluate an organization's processes, apply analytical skills, and identify critical areas for performance improvement. Specific skills I gained were how to apply a balanced score card and the Baldrige Performance Excellence Framework, a specific leadership and performance management framework that was new for me. My doctoral program taught me how to interact with clients to build relationships and trust, and how to come together for the common goal of performance improvement.

Using doctoral skills in the workplace:
My doctoral program helped me take on additional leadership roles. Within my organization, I participate in several Food and Nutrition quality groups and I am also a Zero Employee Harm coach. Outside the organization, I participate on two quality improvement committees. I am a National Baldrige Examiner and a National Quality Examiner. In my organization, part of my role centers around performance improvement and my participation as a Quality Examiner and Baldrige Examiner have helped institutions become more efficient and effective.

Advice for Walden students and alumni:
1) Think how you can apply the skills you gain (e.g. analytical, writing, and time management skills) in the workplace to improve processes and make a difference.
2) Commit yourself to social change and social justice—don’t be afraid to try something new during your doctoral program.
Suzanne Collins, DBA

Doctor of Business Administration Alumna
Walden University

DBA Consulting Capstone: Strategies for Identifying and Selecting Performance Measures of Effectiveness for Nonprofit Organizations

Career Pathways:
Research and Data Analysis
Organizational Leadership and Development

Current Job Title: Information Technology Manager at a small manufacturing organization.

Career Progression:
I started working as a temporary agent in the capacity of an electronic technician, then landed a position as a network technician. From there, I advanced into a business analyst role where I was responsible for acquisition, licensing, and compliance. When the IT manager retired, I moved into that position. I now supervise six staff, including program analysts and system administrators.

Professional and academic skills I gained during my doctoral program:
I learned how to make more advanced decisions in my organization. Also, there is a lot of information out there on the internet and it takes an advanced level of knowledge to recognize that not all answers are correct.

Using doctoral skills in the workplace:
My doctoral program made me a better writer. I can “dig deeper” to analyze information and make better decisions.

Advice for Walden students and alumni:
1) Apply your skills in your organization or through volunteering. One idea is to reach out to a nonprofit and give them a few hours of your time a week to set up a mail system, help with their hardware, or assist with applying business practices in other areas.
2) Have a good foundation of knowledge to build upon. Along with your doctoral program, continue to update your new skills. Since technology is always changing, consider adding or updating basic certifications in networking, security, wireless, cloud, and other areas.
3) As a professional at the doctoral level, try to lead by example through continuous learning. Always follow your passion as you don’t know where it will lead you professionally. It may lead you to that job you really want.
Sanja Hudson, DBA

Doctor of Business Administration Alumna
Walden University

DBA Consulting Capstone: Strategies for Increasing Volunteer Engagement in Nonprofit Healthcare Organizations

Career Pathways:
Organizational Leadership and Development
Consulting

Current Job Title: Independent Consultant helping to improve operations, processes, and procedures within large hospital systems. (28 years of experience in healthcare)

Career Progression:
My career in healthcare administration started when I volunteered at a community health organization as a greeter. While I greeted patients, I also sought out opportunities to learn new skills. When the organization was short-handed, I offered my help to staff members and, during that process, I learned to use a new health informatics system. This was the start of my healthcare career. From there, I earned my bachelor’s degree, then landed a Manager of Billing position at a federal qualified healthcare center where I built a department of up to 40 employees. I kept learning and eventually I progressed into director and executive director roles at healthcare organizations. Currently, I consult multi-million university hospital systems on healthcare operations.

Professional and academic skills I gained during my doctoral program:
Most of all, my doctoral degree taught me how to be patient; I take time to research information and put it together in a strategic way. Also, my heightened research skills helped me gain a deeper understanding of the healthcare field and stay up to date on new policies and procedures.

Using doctoral skills in the workplace:
I apply the Baldrige framework, which I learned during my doctoral program, with my healthcare organization clients to help outline their strengths and weaknesses; they love it!

Advice for Walden students and alumni:

1) If you are considering career advancement in the healthcare field or would like to become a consultant, consider volunteering at a nonprofit to gain new skills in an area of expertise. Nonprofit healthcare organizations need volunteers so reach out to ones in your area.

2) Find out about what is happening in your state; attend state conferences and get out there so you can network with others.

3) Local staffing agencies can offer ways to help you gain skills in a specific area. The important step is to take action to gain new knowledge and skills you can add to your bio.

4) When you make it as a consultant or leader, always remember your clients’ or employees’ needs first; stay flexible and open to their input. Ultimately, find something you love to do and go for it.
Career Progression:
In 2004, I was living in Michigan and graduated with an undergraduate degree in marketing during the recession. My sister, who was working at a university in Arizona at that time, encouraged me to apply for an international academic advisor position there. I relocated to Arizona for this position, then moved back to Michigan to take on a manager position in Academics one year later. From there, I transitioned to a small university in Wisconsin where I served as the Center Director. After that, I was contacted by the recruiter of a private university and relocated to Florida. This is where I work now as the Dean of Academics.

Professional and academic skills I gained during my doctoral program:
My doctoral program helped me enhance my leadership skills through new conceptual frameworks and theories of leadership. I learned more about situational leadership; how to provide solutions and resolutions to advocate for the university and the students and faculty involved. Also, I gained advanced critical thinking skills to help me put together a case for why a new program would work.

Using doctoral skills in the workplace:
I gained an understanding of grant writing and fundraising during my doctoral capstone project. This unique skill set was especially useful when the university where I work transitioned from for-profit to nonprofit status. Having a doctorate also helped me relate to faculty who I manage and be a role model for students who are pursuing their degrees.

Advice for Walden students and alumni:
1) Be open to making life changes to advance your career, especially for opportunities that align with your values. For example, I was not afraid to relocate several times with my family for the right career opportunities.
2) Make sure that your current or future supervisor’s vision aligns with your goals and that he or she can provide you the mentoring and guidance you need to prepare for the next level.
3) If you are considering a career in higher education, a terminal degree will help you stay one step ahead, even if it is not required for your current position.
Jennifer Niswonger

Doctor of Business Administration Student
Walden University

Career Pathway:
Organizational Leadership and Development

Current Job Title: Administrative Director of Operations for a large healthcare system.

Career Progression:
I started working in business as an administrative intern and was hired over the phone. This internship exposed me to healthcare. From there, I took on whatever job came my way. I have been a privacy officer, compliance officer, performance excellence director, project manager, clinic operations director, hospital operations executive, and performance excellence director. I worked in a variety of roles, and it seemed like every 14 months I was doing something new. Currently, I am managing high-level system projects such as defining core systems and products in healthcare and restructuring programs to provide a focus on performance excellence. In the near future, I will also be managing a performance improvement/performance excellence team. I also teach for the national Baldrige Performance Excellence Program and at the state level.

Professional and academic skills I gained during my doctoral program:
I enhanced my research and writing skills during my program and I was able to share my prior knowledge of the Baldrige framework with other students.

Using doctoral skills in the workplace:
I have the skills to conduct in-depth research and validate sources using the wealth of knowledge and information available through library databases. A clear understanding of the research helps me change the conversation with leaders within my organization; there are facts and relevance behind the research, and I can site studies and authors to defend my point.

I no longer write using a passive voice; I switched to a more active voice which has changed the conversation to one of ownership. Using active voice has helped improve my communication style in the business world as I learned to write with intent, clarity, and simplicity.

Advice for Walden students and alumni:
1) As you consider your career, don’t be afraid to switch roles often to learn new skills. No task is too small, especially if it contributes to your professional growth.
2) Find mentors or supervisors who encourage your success. Through my career, I was lucky to have two CEOs who encouraged my growth and helped me expand my skill set.
3) Seek out people who believe in you and in your abilities and apply yourself in everything you do.
4) Pay it forward and help others through mentoring and coaching; this will help you become a true leader.
Career Progression:
After completing my bachelor’s degree in early childhood, I worked as a preschool teacher and then found a job as an 8th grade life skills teacher. During that time, I realized that I had a passion for technology and caught on to new technologies very easily. I started branching out to different programs, engaging in professional development activities for teachers, and attending technology conferences. I completed a master’s degree in curriculum development and started delivering technology and curriculum workshops for teachers. I also decided to pursue my PhD in Educational Technology at Walden. I started to apply for technology-related positions on Indeed.com and sent my application materials to 50-100 openings before I was called in for an interview. With my unique combination of technology, curriculum development, and visual design skills, I landed my current position as an Instructional Systems Designer.

Professional and academic skills I gained during my doctoral program:
My doctoral program helped me strengthen my skills in education technology. When I applied for my current position, pursuing my PhD helped me stand out from other candidates regarding the depth of my knowledge and ability to analyze data reports.

Using doctoral skills in the workplace:
I gained many technology, design, and curriculum skills through my classes, including knowledge of models for analyzing and evaluating curriculum. I use this knowledge on a daily basis. For instance, we were doing an analysis on an existing course that the FAA offers at their academy. We had to go in and work with training administrators to create surveys, collect data, and make the right decisions on updating and modernizing their curriculum.

Advice for Walden students and alumni:
1) Branch out to learn new technology programs such as Adobe, Articulate, Storyline, and other programs that you are comfortable with and enjoy working with. Branding yourself with knowledge of specific technologies can make you stand out and facilitate career changes.
2) Go out and find conferences related to your areas of interest. For instance, I attended the Future of Education Technology Conference, which helped me communicate the latest technology trends to employers, exposed me to other professional development opportunities, and connected me to technology professionals.
Catherine Smoyer, DBA

Doctor of Business Administration Alumna
Walden University

DBA Consulting Capstone: Building Workforce Capability in Nonprofit Organizations

Career Pathways:
Organizational Leadership and Development Consulting

Current Job Title: Senior Vice President/Chief Risk Officer for a large, nonprofit credit union.
(20 years of experience as an executive leader)

Career Progression:
Originally, I wanted to become a physical therapist. I quickly found out that working in the medical field was not for me. I got a job working at a bank and realized I liked both the finance and the people side of it. After that, I stayed at home for seven years to raise children. During this time, I stayed engaged in my learning and finished my bachelor’s degree. I returned to the workplace and ran a fraud claims team. After that, I accepted an internal auditing role working in risk and regulations, which led to my current role as Senior Vice President/Chief Risk Officer where I oversee six Vice Presidents and operations in five states.

Professional and academic skills I gained during my doctoral program:
My doctoral program taught me to look at organizational issues from a holistic perspective, gain leadership buy-in, and build trust in the organization. Learning processes, technology and communication can help you get your hands around the issue.

Using doctoral skills in the workplace:
My industry is continuously changing and there are many gray areas, which makes it exciting and never boring. My doctoral program taught me how to “get to the why” and ask if we should be doing something differently. One example was last fall, when I was involved in making improvements to our Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) system. This system is very complex. I was able to evaluate if the system still made sense and aligned with serving and protecting our members. I was able to remove outdated legacy procedures and modernize the process.

Advice for Walden students and alumni:
1) Make sure you have a passion for what you are doing. The frameworks, concepts, and theories you learn during your doctoral program can be applied in many different situations and industries.
2) Try to be valuable to your peers by sharing your doctoral level knowledge with others; help them think differently and understand the data.
Allen Turner, DBA

Doctor of Business Administration Alumna- Walden University

DBA Consulting Capstone: Strategies for Assessing the Effectiveness of Certification Programs for Youth Workers.

Career Pathways: Research and Analysis Organizational Leadership and Development Consulting

Current Job Title: Emergency Manager at NASA Glenn Research Center

Career Progression:
In 2010, I retired from the U.S. Coast Guard after 23 years of service. After retirement, I transitioned into a civilian position where I served over two years as a Maritime Preparedness Specialist for the Department of Homeland Security. In 2012, I went to NASA as an Emergency Management Specialist and currently serve as the Emergency Manager and Federal Special Agent. In this position, I develop contingency plans with researchers, scientists, and engineers on planning and testing for aerospace and aeronautical propulsion research. I am also responsible for the management of all emergency incidents and continuity of operations for the Center.

Professional and academic skills I gained during my doctoral program:
The writing and professional communications skills I gained during my program helped me tremendously. I look at writing more critically and use Grammarly to improve my technical writing and grammar. When I started, I had no consulting experience whatsoever. During my doctoral capstone, I learned how to ask open-ended questions to get to the deeper issues.

Using doctoral skills in the workplace:
Having the skills to conduct business reviews helped when I sat on a 12-month source selection evaluation board for evaluating medical contractors to do human space research. Also, knowledge of Agile performance plans was useful in my work. Since 67% of people at my work have doctorates, doctoral skills allow me to understand better the technical aspects of their research. I can interpret data and work with researchers, scientists, and specialists to make more informed decisions and plans. After completing my degree, leadership saw me as someone with higher abilities and aspirations. For instance, I was asked to attend a high level, 3-day symposium on high tech aerospace engineering concepts after receiving my doctorate.

Advice for Walden students and alumni:
1) If you are interested in federal jobs, getting your foot through the door is a process that requires patience. Applications are often lengthy; mine was 11 pages! Keep applying to different organizations and don’t give up. The process may take many months.
2) Find mentors who have completed the doctoral journey and ask them for advice. Not so much to review your doctoral study, but to bounce stuff off of such as how to approach your chair, questions to ask, time management and, most importantly, encouragement.
Use these resources to further explore the six doctoral career pathways, communicate your value, and prepare for your future career.

**Career Exploration Tools:**
Visit these online sites to explore career opportunities related to the doctoral pathways:

- Career Services' Doctoral Resources page
- Imagine PhD
- O*NET Online
- Career One Stop
- Glassdoor
- LinkedIn

**OptimalResume Career Management System:**
Get started with OptimalResume to build CVs, resumes, cover letters, and career portfolios. Use OptimalResume’s 400+ templates to create professional-looking documents and practice mock interviewing skills.

OptimalResume’s Resume Builder houses six CV templates related to the following career pathways:
- Organizational Leadership and Development
- Policy and Advocacy
- Consulting
- Communications, Writing, and Editing
- Research and Data Analysis
- Higher Education

**Career Planning:**
Ready to start gaining experience, meeting new people, and communicating your career story to others? These documents can help you develop your career action plan:

- Experience-People-Story (EPS) Model
- Career Advancement Plan

For additional career resources, visit the Career Services website.