

# FROM THE DESK OF DR JENN HARDY

A quarterly-ish newsletter



## Welcome to Newsletter #4!

Be sure to check out my previous newsletters. You can find them posted in the 'Writing Projects' section of my website. I've also been keeping that page up-to-date with my various podcast and print media interviews. I filmed a couple more podcast episodes that I can't wait to share with you!

For the last couple of weeks, I've been chewing on topics to write about. Honestly, nothing really struck a chord. I decided to pay attention to topics that aren't being talked about and noticed that relatively little is written by therapists on Instagram about career issues. Bingo. I had my topic.

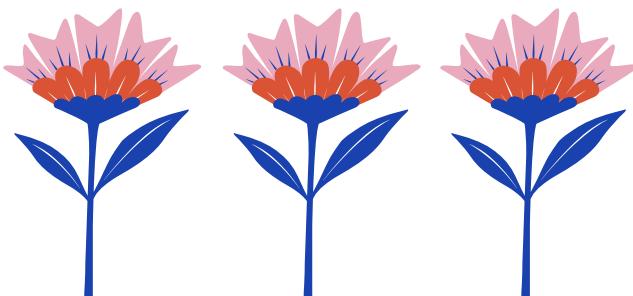
I was fortunate enough to log a couple thousand hours as a career counselor during my doctoral training at Penn State. Their Career Services Center has been nationally ranked for many years and was a highlight of my PhD experience. I've helped hundreds of people pick a career, apply to grad school and jobs, interview, network, and prep a resumé. I've supported people as they transition into new careers and into retirement. If it has to do with career development, then I've probably worked with someone on it.

And so, I've decided to dedicate this edition of the newsletter to my top 10 pieces of career-related advice. As with any advice you receive, take what is helpful and leave the rest.

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## Career Advice Top 10

- Treat everyone like they are in your career network...because they are.
  - AKA: "Don't be a jerk."
  - You simply don't know who will be working at your ideal job 10 years from now. You don't want it to be the boss you yelled at on your way out the door.
  - Be a decent human being. It makes it so much easier to reconnect with people down the road if you were kind and professional.
- You are unlikely to stay in one job your whole career.
  - Be a life-long learner.
  - I am required to do a certain number of continuing education hours as a part of my licensing. I use these hours as opportunities to train up on emerging trends in psychology (e.g., telehealth, integrated healthcare). I want to be well-positioned to adapt rather than react to changes in my field.
  - Stay open to change. Trust yourself to adapt.
- Ask for help.
  - Don't expect others to do the work for you. You need to learn these skills.
  - Instead, practice interviewing with them. See if they will edit your documents. Mobilize your networking connections. Ask a ton of questions.



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- Make sure your application "looks pretty."
  - Look at your resumé and cover letter up close and then again at arm's length.
  - Do they look like something you would want to read? If not, fix it. Ask a friend, and see what they think, too.
  - More isn't always better. Dense writing overwhelms and turns people off.
  - Potential employers are unlikely to spend extra time on your application just because there is more to read.
  - Direct them to the most important parts through formatting. Summarize.
  - Don't pressure yourself to tell the whole story of your life in a cover letter.
- Proofread. Proofread. Proofread.
  - I typed this suggestion three times for emphasis!
  - Once you've been working on your application materials for a certain amount of time, it will get harder to spot issues.
  - Find someone to proofread who will be both kind and honest. Ask someone who is good with details or has experience with reviewing applications.

## The Rest of the Top 10



- No career test will tell you the one job that is perfect for you because there is no perfect job.
  - There are a lot of excellent matches for your interests, skills, and values.
  - People can get caught in a scarcity mindset, believing they need to find their job "soulmate" in order to be happy. Don't fall for that trap.
- Don't rely on your day job to fulfill all of your interests.
  - Again, there is no perfect job.
  - Career counselors view everything we do as a version of our career identity.
  - Remember that your time outside of work is an opportunity to explore other interests and balance out what is missing from your job.
- There is an amazing amount of good career information available online. Use it!
  - Stick to the credible sources.
  - Search for university career centers as a starting point, especially if you are early in your career.
  - Job posting sites have also branched out by creating content that covers just about every career topic that you could think of.

- It's important to explore your career values and find a position that aligns with them.
  - Here are some examples of career values: autonomy, recognition, safety, prestige, friendships, balance.
  - You can take a free assessment by searching online for "Work Values Inventory."
  - It pays to identify your values. You may find that you like the tasks of your job, just not the work culture you find yourself in. If that is the case, then you could search for similar positions with a better fitting work culture.
  - Ask potential employers about workplace values during your interviews.
  - I've been happy working in jobs that are mismatched with my interests. I deeply valued the relationships I found there. My work friends offered me an important buffer for an otherwise unsatisfying job.
- Be sure to have an identity outside of your job.
  - You are more than your job. You are more than the work you produce.
  - Plus, it makes the transition into retirement much less stressful if you can imagine a life after work.

