Career Success In Policy

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SOMGEN 211

What would you say you do here?

- **Read**: publications, newspapers, websites, briefings, laws
- **Research:** scientific information, opinions/reactions, previous policies/laws
- **Watch/attend:** briefings, media presentations
- **Write:** publications, opinions/responses, policies
- **Collaborate:** exchange information/sources, generate ideas/alternatives
- **Present/Debate:** options, options, ideas, facts
- **With:** attorneys, lobbyists, activists, both political parties, the public, media, scientists, educators, leaders in education/business

What do you love about your job?

- ✓ **Impact:** "I have the ability to help millions of people at once – what other job allows you to do that?"

- ✓ **Challenge:** "I am surrounded by brilliant people – even the ones I disagree with push me to new limits!"

- ✓ **Constant Change:** "Every day something big comes up, someone says something big…it's always something!"

- ✓ **Obvious fit:** "I use my scientific training every day."

- ✓ **Location:** "Washington DC is alive, aware, passionate, busy."

- ✓ **Benefits:** "All of the positions I've held are much more consistent than in private industry. Good benefits, retirement."

What *don't* you love about your job?

- ✓ **Lack of independence:** "We are in the office 9-5; government is pretty strict about overtime, coming and going as we please, etc. I do work more than that but it's not recognized. It's worse if you have to be mindful of security clearance."

- ✓ **Location:** "If I want to be in policy, I'm pretty much bound to DC."

- ✓ **Security:** "If the administration changes, I lose my job. It's motivating and demotivating at the same time."

- ✓ **Constant Change:** "Politics are everywhere. I'm never quite free."

- ✓ **Conflict:** "I spend my day disagreeing with people. It's hard not to take that home!"

- ✓ **Pay:** "You can make a lot of money but you have to start at the bottom first."

- ✓ **Direction:** "I don't think there is an obvious trajectory in policy. You just kind of follow your heart and the jobs?"

Pay Schedules:

https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/2017/general-schedule/

Desired Skills for Policy

- **Research and applied problem-solving skills**: Both strong quantitative and qualitative data-analysis skills are important for being able to solve real-world problems.

- **Communication skills**: The abilities to speak clearly in public and negotiate are very valuable. It also is critical to have strong writing skills, as one may be tasked with writing policy memos on short notice.

- **Leadership and teamwork skills**: Learning to lead others and work collaboratively is important in managing groups, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations, with the goal of achieving positive social change.

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Science Policy – "Options"

- ✓ Academia
- ✓ Agencies & Institutes
- ✓ Branches of Government
- ✓ Non-profits
- ✓ Government Research
- ✓ Industry

Resources:

JOBS
- http://www.science-engage.org/sciencepolicyjobs.html
- https://www.governmentjobs.com

FELLOWSHIPS
- http://sites.nationalacademies.org/pga/policyfellows/
- https://www.aaas.org/program/science-technology-policy-fellowships
- https://www.pmf.gov

STANFORD CONNECTIONS
- http://med.stanford.edu/hrp.html
- https://publicpolicy.stanford.edu
- http://otl.stanford.edu
- http://govcr.stanford.edu

COURSES
- Preparation & Practice: Law (Fall)
- Preparation & Practice: Science Communication (Summer)

Next Steps:

- **Involvement** in your community

- **Research** careers of choice

- **Clarify** values fit with those in that profession

- **Develop** and communicate skills via tailored materials

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QUESTIONS?