

Fast-Forward to Realizing your Career Goals: Career Management for New Professionals in the Public Service

**IPAC Toronto Regional Group
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Jeffrey Stutz, Public Policy Adviser, kicked off the session by informing everyone about IPAC and the benefits of being an IPAC member. IPAC is an organization of mutual support and fellowship working to promote excellence in public service. IPAC is very much interested in supporting New Professionals by providing opportunities and events such as these to allow New Professionals to learn, share and network. As a member of IPAC and the Toronto Region program committee Jeffrey enjoys the constant activities and dynamic ideas and events that the committee organizes. Jeffrey encouraged event participants to consider joining the TRG Programming Committee.

Jeffrey noted that all of us should feel privileged to have the opportunity to work for such an important and influential institution as the public service. This IPAC event is about providing each participant with the tools required to manage their career and be able to “swim in the public service river”.

Anne Marie Cargnelli, Manager for the Youth and New Professionals Secretariat, set the tone for the session by sharing her experiences in the public service and illustrating the many reasons of why working for the public service is unique and beneficial. Over the past 10 years Anne Marie has built a diverse and meaningful career in the Ontario Public Service. Given her experiences and knowledge, she provided a top ten list of why building a career in the public service is a smart decision. The list covered the fact that the public service is devoted to service standards, dynamic leadership and public service values. A career in the public service allows us to work horizontally to make a difference and address pressing issues in a wide-range of areas. Anne Marie reminded all of us of why we chose to build our careers in the public service.

Guest speaker **Barbara Kofman**, Principal CareerTrails, led the balance of the session with valuable ideas, tools and hands-on exercises. We started off with an evaluation of how career management works. It is an ongoing process of reflecting on who you are and what your strengths, values, and goals are, researching opportunities, networking, and positioning yourself for opportunities.

Barbara asked the participants to picture themselves 20 years in the future as respected professionals and asked them to think of what advice they would give to a new public servant about the secrets of career success. All 120 participants provided great ideas and suggestions related to dos and don'ts. After reconvening and sharing everyone's ideas, Barbara shared her own top career dos and don'ts. Click [here](#) to see the full lists.

Barbara also provided participants with **5 tips for kick starting your career:**

1. **If you're not given a formal orientation create one.** Discuss with your boss who the key people are that you'll be working with, key challenges, and how your manager prefers to work with people
2. **Having effective discussions is a Key to Success.** Drop any personal agenda and begin seeing yourself as a member of a team. When interacting with people, you should always practice active listening and be trusting and respectful.
3. **Analyze how you manage your time & yourself.** Some activities are drains on your energy and some build energy. Certain times of day you are energized and certain times of day you aren't. It's also important to know the value added of the work you do. Identifying all of these things will help you better manage your time.
4. **Build & Convey Personal Confidence.** Keeping a record of what's going well for you at work and looking at it when you've received a setback will remind you that this is only temporary.
5. **Build a Personal Support Group.** Sign up for a mentorship program if there is one available to you. If not, find your own informal mentors.

Everyone also shared their ideas regarding successful networking. The group was split in two with half the table groups brainstorming on research tools and resources available to people who are transitioning their career and effective strategies for moving into a position you want. The second half of the table groups brainstormed on networking – why it's important, when you should do it and strategies to help you network successfully. Click [here](#) to see the full lists.

Overall, as participants we were given the opportunity to reflect upon our past experiences and our current situation, and were provided with numerous tools and suggestions that we can utilize as we continue on our career journeys. Being a new professional in the public service can sometimes feel overwhelming, but this session succeeded in providing concrete, tangible strategies that we can all apply as we move forward in our professional lives.