

# Finding an Administrative Job at Harvard or MIT: An Exclusive Workshop for Partners and Spouses of Harvard and MIT Ladder Faculty

Part 2: Panel of Faculty Partners

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## [Introductions]

ELIZABETH ANCARANA: So we have Paige Johnston is the Assistant Director of Public Programs at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. Next to Paige is Jesse Howell, who's the Academic Programs Manager and Associate Director of the AM Program and The Center for Middle Eastern Studies in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Harvard. And in the middle we have Omar Alvarez, who is the Senior Sponsored Research Administrator at the Institute of Quantitative Social Science at Harvard University. Next to Omar is Daphne de Baritault, who's the Program Director in the Office of Corporate Relations at MIT. And then we have Faye Dang, who's the Quality Engineer at Mathworks.

And we thought that this would be a nice blend of job search stories of finding a position at Harvard or MIT or perhaps elsewhere. So we thought it would be helpful that Faye could join us as well. So why don't we get started. Paige, you'll start. And then just go right down then I'll come back up, and we'll take questions.

## PAIGE JOHNSTON:

Thank you. Can you hear me? I'm I getting-- So as Elizabeth said, I'm the Assistant Director of Public Programs at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. And I want to use this brief time to talk about how I arrived at the GSD but also how I have changed this role in the two years that I

have been in it. So before coming to Harvard I'd been working in the art world for about 15 years. And in the years immediately before coming here I had an art consulting business.

When my partner and I were trying to decide whether or not Harvard was the right next step for us as a family, I was really thinking about and reflecting on what the consulting experience had been like for me and that I actually found it to be very solitary. And even though I'm a textbook introvert, I really enjoy collaboration and working as part of a team. So I saw the opportunity to come to Harvard as a chance to get back into an office environment that would really allow me to enjoy the experience of working closely with colleagues again and being part of a team.

So I actually went to BU and I had a sense of what the relevant institutions or organizations might be because I had gotten my start working at the MFA. And yet, that had been a almost 15 year break between when I left the city to when I was coming back. So I went to the Assistant Dean for Faculty Development at the time and used her as a resource to get my search started. She's no longer in that role. I'm not sure.

ELIZABETH ANCARANA: --School of Publications.

PAIGE JOHNSTON: Yeah. I'm not sure if there's someone else in that role now or--

ELIZABETH ANCARANA: Yes.

SPEAKER 1: She's here.

PAIGE JOHNSTON: Ah. OK. Great.

SPEAKER 2: [INAUDIBLE] is the new Assistant Dean for Faculty Development  
[INAUDIBLE]

PAIGE JOHNSTON: Great. Hi.

SPEAKER 2: [INAUDIBLE]

PAIGE JOHNSTON: So I worked with the previous one. And she presented me with some different possibilities for using Harvard's resources as help for looking for jobs. And the aspect

of that that I ended up using the most was my conversations with her. She really helped me look at my materials and also my goals to think about what did I think I wanted to do, and what might I not be thinking about that might also be relevant. So she was able to know even more intimately the field across Boston, Cambridge, and also the surrounding areas because I was casting a wide net.

And we would come together, and she would bring postings that she had found, things that weren't necessarily posted externally yet. And I would bring to those meetings things that I had found, and then we would debate those and discuss all the kind of nuances. In the end, she ended up finding the job that I went on to apply for and then got at the Graduate School of Design. But we went back and forth a lot about whether or not it was the right opportunity because it was, as posted, quite a bit below what my experience level was, the amount of years they were asking for, the title, and the salary.

So she and I both had a lot of reservations about applying for that job. And I think we both felt that there was some kernel there of possibility that maybe the job would be able to grow and change. And that kernel was in some degree based on the research I had done about the position, and I knew through my research that the person who had held the role previously had held it at a higher title. So we used that as a reasoning for, OK, there there's enough in this posting of interest to me and enough possibility there that I'm going to go through with the application process. And if I get an interview, then I can try to tease out how much room for growth there might be in the position.

In the end, that was the only job that I applied for, and I wouldn't suggest that that be the approach that you take. We had been living in rural upstate New York, where the cost of living is much lower than the cost of living is here. And so I think I also came to this process with a lot of anxiety about how the costs of living would impact or weigh on my need to get a job to contribute to our family because we also have a small child. So I think I also was motivated to jump at this job that seemed reachable because I was also concerned about finances.

So I was invited for an interview. After having, I think, eight interviews overall, which speaks to the lengthy process of getting a job at Harvard, they made an offer to me. And it was through the

negotiation process that I was able to push for a three month review of the title. And that was written into the offer because I really felt like if they wanted me enough in that role-- and they also understood and voiced that we all felt like maybe I was overqualified for it but could grow in it. I really wanted to get that in-- it wasn't that they made a concrete commitment to change the title, but they made a concrete commitment to discuss that at the three month mark.

But it was really then on me to follow up with that. So over the past two years-- I've been in the job for two years and a month or two years and two months. At the three month mark I went for those meetings and pushed for it and ended up getting the title change and a salary change. It was a little bit challenging because Harvard's system there are positions that are in the union and then there are positions that are at the professional class, if that's what it's called, level. And the title change and promotion moved me out of the union into the professional level, which seemed like a great step. There are a lot of benefits to being in that professional higher up level.

But the issue for me was that the job was requiring me to work 50 hours every week. And in the union I was being paid overtime for those 15 hours over my scheduled hours, which accumulated quite a bit of additional income for all the additional labor. And moving into the upper level meant that I was no longer eligible for overtime. But yet, the job itself wasn't going to change in a way that would mean I could cut back those 15 hours. So rather than take what would have amounted to maybe \$12,000 of a pay cut by accepting that promotion, I was able to negotiate with them also because of the way Harvard's grading system worked.

The grade number for that that I was going to be moving into was actually the only grade that exists in the professional class and the unions. So I was able to keep the title, and still get the pay bump, and keep the grade, but I was able to stay in the union so that I could still earn overtime for those hours. So the job, I was able to start pushing, and changing it, and growing it a bit not because my colleagues or supervisors really were asking me to do that, but because I knew that if I was going to stay in this position and try to make changes in that school, that I think there are changes that need to be made within the work that I do. I wanted to see how much I could push it and grow it.

So after maybe a year of working on my own in this role with no support staff and no team, I did a lot of advocating and finally was granted an assistant position. So that has helped me both grow the program, grow my role, and grow my supervisory responsibilities. And then this spring I started pushing again for a title change for myself. And because I had grown the role-- And at this point I had to go through quite a lengthy process of, sort of, proving why the job had changed, how it was benefiting the institution, how it mapped on to, sort of, the Harvard wide positions that were similar to mine. And in the end that was successful.

So I want to stick to my time and wrap up by saying that I wouldn't recommend only applying for one job. It was purely luck that I applied for one and got it. But I have been able to grow and change this role that might not have been exactly what I wanted on paper on day one. But that I've been able to transform into something that has a title and a salary that I do want and I do feel like is relevant to my experience and my earning potential and that will lead me to a better job and a better title after this. So I want to pass it on to Jesse. But I just want to say if anyone has specific questions about the GSD or also some of the questions that I know have been coming up about moving from being a faculty member to being on the staff side, I also have some experience with that myself and I'd be happy to talk about that, so thanks.

## JESSE HOWELL:

Hello. Hello, partners. Is that weird for anybody else besides me? Being like, partner. Good. You'll have a long time to get used to it. I'm still getting used to it myself. Luckily, we have these nice images about transformation and change over time on the wall to remind us that we're always evolving, the seasons come and go, so hi. My name is Jesse Howell. I started my job six months ago. April 1st I started. I work at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, which is a small center. We have a master's program and a PhD program, and my primary job is looking after the graduate program's students.

So it's pretty much student facing. We also have visiting researchers. We have postdocs. So I'm there, kind of, primary person point of contact. I do lots of stuff from before they come, reading applications, making sure they take their required courses if they're taking courses, et cetera. This was my program. I actually did my PhD here at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies joined with the history department. So I finished my PhD in 2017. I thought I knew Harvard. I thought I

knew the Center for Middle Eastern Studies super well because I spent this super long time finishing my degree, but it turns out I only knew one very specific layer, the academic layer. I know all the good places to sleep in every library, but what I didn't know was the multitude of places like this.

So what I didn't know was the administrative layer. And I didn't have administrative background. I wasn't interested in academic administration, per se. But my wife got a job here because she's a star. And she's an Assistant Professor in the History of Art in Architecture. She teaches Italian Baroque and Renaissance Art if anybody's interested. And we found ourselves back here. I actually was able to get a postdoc. I was still in the academic track until really quite recently. I had a postdoc here at The Mahindra Center. A couple of months into that the person who was my predecessor at my current job left because they actually went back into an academic track at another school, which I won't name. So they reached out to me.

They started talking to me, I think, in November so about a year ago, a little less than a year ago. And there was a lot of negotiation. There was a lot of also-- there were questions about the job. The job was renamed, or whatever it was. There was a lot of-- the job evolved. And then there's a question about was it going to be a union job, was it going to not be a union job. So there was a delay. I was trying to exploit the delay so I could keep my postdoc. And then ultimately I was trying to delay because there was a more-- I don't want to say existential question, but a real career decision that I needed to make.

I didn't want to do this job and then leave it because it's a place that I cared about. I didn't want to-- they had just had a person come and go. I knew if I took it, I was going to want to stay for a certain amount of time. But that also meant not going on the job market. That also meant that there's this job at UCLA right now right in the line of what I want to do and, I'm, like, not applying for it. So you can tell I'm still ambivalent about it. But overall I'm very happy. And we're here. It's an incredible relief, I think, maybe also if you've been freelance. If you've been in this academic world of postdocs, short term things, to have something, to have a retirement plan, which I'm supposed to start accruing soon after six months. Just to not be in that position of dependence and uncertainty is incredibly relieving.

So I don't know. It's not necessarily for everybody. This was just something that worked out for me. I think everyone's story is very idiosyncratic, which is, kind of, like, if I have a message, it's to not worry so much about being that ideal candidate and coming to these positions in a kind of orthodox way. My experience at Harvard is that my colleagues and the people that I've met and gotten to know in admin all have really interesting backgrounds. None of them come through it in this legible, kind of, from this stage to the next stage to this promotion.

I studied theater in college. And I used that. It doesn't relate to my position as Academic Programs Manager, but it relates to my ability to communicate with people. So I just draw from that. I said, these are things that I did in the world of theater and contemporary dance that are actually quite relevant to speaking with groups of people. Hopefully I'm doing it OK and I'm not just deluded. So I'm delighted to talk to anybody who's doing the transition academic to a possible administrator, kind of, track. There's a lot of openings. I mean, there are a lot more openings career-wise in my field, anyway, I think, many people's fields. So there's a lot of upside to it.

But there is a lot of weird, inevitable, angst that goes along with it because you've put a huge amount of time into a specific direction. You've built something. You've accomplished something. And there's a way, you're kind of like, OK. I'm going to let that go and pursue something that's adjacent to it but not that. I'm going to be the partner of the academic person. It's a funny thing to wrestle with, but ultimately, there's a lot of upside to it. Is this resonating for anybody or-- OK. So it's not just-- OK.

So some things that I could kind of maybe amplify-- thank you. It really helps to just be known by administrators and not faculty members because faculty members don't hire administrative positions. I had run a small program in the winter. It was a three week program in Turkey. So I was known because I was working and doing receipts and stuff. So I was dealing with the nitty-gritty of taking students on international program. So that's how the executive director of my center knew me. She didn't know me as a graduate student who studied like caravan roads in the Balkans. She knew me as this guy who could deal with a group and deliver them back to the airport when it was over and not go too badly over budget.

So I was an internal candidate. Sorry. I feel, kind of, like a bad person. But I also almost didn't take the job. So just because there is an internal candidate, they don't necessarily take the job because, you know, people are unpredictable. Those are two of my primary points. What I've observed-- what I mean about getting into the door is that I see a lot of side promotions and direct promotions with people once they're hired. Chuck was talking about temps becoming permanent. I've met a lot of people who started here in temporary, kind of, low level positions who are now, like, have serious jobs and have had careers of over 10 years or more.

So I wouldn't be too hung up on is this my perfect dream position because things really can be quite, I don't want to say volatile, but things can really grow. I would say, especially for people-- academics aren't necessarily known for their people skills, so it's a funny thing to say. But I think people skills can be a really important, kind of, super weapon. You've taught, if you're coming from an academic role, you've likely taught. So you have these people skills and these communication skills. And a lot of hiring has to do with like this as a person we're going to be in the office with day to day, possibly for the rest careers. So people want to be comfortable with the person.

So the soft skills are really meaningful. Don't worry so much about if you look perfect on paper or not. Like as long as you're able to meet the minimum requirements and then you bring a lot more to the table based on your own backgrounds, that makes you a really viable candidate as far as I can tell. So I have some other, like, helpful thoughts for general people. But I'll wrap it up there, and if anybody wants to talk to me at lunch, I'm happy to talk to anybody. Thank you.

## OMAR ALVAREZ:

Hi, everyone. So my name is Omar, and I'm currently working as a Senior Sponsored Research Administrator at the-- I call it IQSS because I always pronounce quantitative when in English it's different but I think in Spanish in that way. The Institute for Quantitative Social Science. I started this position about almost two months ago. But I wanted to share with you a little bit about my background, which is in engineering. And I used to work for the oil industry in South America before moving to Boston with my spouse.

And when I moved to Boston I knew I wanted to pursue a career within higher education. But I also knew it meant a complete transition, career change. At the moment I saw a very drastic career change and I didn't-- and another layer was that I was familiar with job search processes in a few countries in Latin America but not familiar at all with that process in the US. So I was kind of lost. So this same event took place in October 2014, five years ago, organized by Elizabeth. And we received the information, the invitation, and fortunately I was able to join that first cohort. And like you now, I was able to meet other faculty partners, HR recruiters, and a little bit learn the stories of other faculty partners that were successfully through their process of finding a position in Harvard.

And eventually that also connected me with the Office of Faculty Development and Diversity, which provide a fantastic support in helping me to really brainstorm ideas for possible positions. Really target specific positions within the university but also receive some advising and coaching for how to navigate the interview process here, resume design, even get my LinkedIn account up and running. And through that process I connected with an organization called Laspau, which is a non-profit organization affiliated with Harvard University. So I had the opportunity to meet the executive director there. And I can't believe that was five years ago. And they didn't have any openings, but they worked a lot, and they are working a lot with Latin American and building projects with Latin American University. So I found that very interesting.

And the great possibility to bring my experience even though it was from for-profit world and in focusing on how to tell my story and focusing on the soft skills as you mentioned, Jesse, and how to tell my story. So I had a few informational meetings. And these informational meeting that I had with the Executive Director of Laspau. They didn't have any opening at the moment. But they cared to meet me and a few, like, probably a month later, they opened a temp position. And they offer me the temp position. I was ready for it. And again, that bring us to the question of taking something that is at a lower level. But for me it was about exploring and getting people to know me because I know it was hard for me to tell my story through the resume because it was a big change.

So I started that temp position and ended with it the last 4 and 1/2 years, two promotions in between. It was a great experience. I got to know the Harvard system through the positions in

Laspau. And also it really helped me to define what was my career path within the university. And during that process I knew why I want to go through proposal development, grant, [INAUDIBLE] financing and research administration. So I defined that during that period. And then last year I knew I was ready for the next move.

So this was my strategy. I started looking at what it was-- well, it used to be called Aspire, and now Harvard Career System-- I started just looking for positions there without going further in applications or anything. Just trying to match whatever I could offer for my next steps and career growth in proposed development grants with potential applications and opportunities within FAS and other schools in Harvard. So I spent a few minutes every day probably for a couple of months just targeting potential, seeing job descriptions, titles, but more importantly, department, units, which schools are really posting positions in what I was looking for.

And then when I had an idea of potential positions, I reach out to Elizabeth, to the Office for Faculty Development and Diversity because I knew I needed some help in setting this strategy and a mapping potential informational meetings in different departments to learn more of these positions in Research Administration. I wanted to make sure I was able to target different places where I could learn more about environment, the culture, the team itself, and the line of work, the field itself. So in the beginning of the year-- so this process probably start in November 2018. And by the end of January, February I started having informational meetings within central administration, FAS, and I remember, I think, the third one was [INAUDIBLE]

And those informational meetings ended up creating other informational meetings because people wouldn't necessarily respond on my questions or held me in certain way, but they probably saw the opportunity of me meeting other departments, connecting me, thinking about my background, my interests, probably, Omar, you should be someone from this particular department. So I think I ended up having like 10 informational meetings before going ahead and formally applying to positions. And I believe I applied to five or six positions.

And not only that, when I applied to the positions I knew what departments I wanted to target. And that information I got through the in meetings like, again, not only the department cultures, the team, their portfolio. And I already had, like, this is my apartment number one, my number

two choice for applications. I wish this department could post something in the near future. And they did like a month later of that reflection. And I immediately applied. The first day they posted the position I applied for it. And not only that, I reach out to the people I had previously met through informational meetings and let them know I apply for these positions in case you have any feedback, or possible recommendation, or something.

And I know in this field of working and in many fields of working within Harvard, it is a very well-connected university. So I knew somehow people will help me to inform and help within the process of providing information about my background to other people in the field. So probably I apply to the position in April and I got the call in May and a job offer in July. But I actually started in November 2018. It probably took me, like, nine month, the whole process. My take away from it is that just applying for positions. At least in my experience in 2014 and now was not enough. For me the most essential part was networking and getting to know people in informal setting. Yeah. I'm going to pass it to you because probably took more than 10 minutes. Thank you.

DAPHNE DE BARITAULT: Thank you.

OMAR ALVAREZ: Yeah. Thank you.

## DAPHNE DE BARITAULT:

So good morning, everybody. My name is Daphne de Baritault. I'm a faculty wife. My husband is a professor at MIT. So it's been how to gather my thoughts to, you know, what can I say in 10 minutes to this room of people I don't know. I don't know what they want. So I'm going to try to be not repeating everything we heard and trying to give some practical advice that I wish I had received a little bit. So I want to make sure I touch on MIT's culture, which is different from Harvard's culture. And we are in shortage of good people so this is a point too.

So not that I want to share personal information, but sometimes it's nice to know who is here. So I'm 38. I got two kids. I used to live in France. I'm in the US since 10 years now. And my career has been a professional dancer, product marketing manager, now I work at the MIT. Since two months I'm doing a yoga teacher training. So I want to say that we have several lives in one in

our life. And just changing environment from corporate world to academic world can feel a little bit like that. But it's to be taken like a great adventure. So it's not always been my discourse, but today I'm saying it this way.

So 10 years ago I arrive in the US and I was trying to find my feet again. My husband had this great job and like a lot of us I was like, yeah, what about me. So I've been through several processes working in some corporation, and sometimes reorganization in a corporation, or a change of visa had to, you know, I got to resign from jobs. So it can be a very frustrating process to have to go back to job search again and again. And I decided to work in the academy environments once I had my first child just because I felt so anxious about the possibility of again losing a job, again trying to build up my credibility in the workplace. And then you don't know. The carpet gets swept off of your feet.

So this was one really strong point in I need this academic environment because I knew it's more stable in terms of the duration of the job. It's kind of connected although it might be super decentralized, but it doesn't really matter. It's kind of connected you can change job while staying in the same environment. So at this time five years ago I applied to position and the person who-- and I asked the connection of my husband if he could just also pass my resume just in case I could at least have an informational written interview. And through that I met with Donna [? Brehmer. ?] So Donna is in the middle of this room and really recommend you network with her. Get her card.

So a little bit like Paige's story, Donna has been very helpful in helping me to connect and take some chances in some jobs that I would never applied. Like some job I was like, whoa. I'm definitely under-qualified. And Donna was like, pfft. Why do you say that? And I didn't have much thing to say. I was actually under qualifying myself in my head. So all the jobs I was thinking that, you know, I don't really understand what this means, probably not for me. But once you go over, and over, and over-- it's basically you go to the dictionary and you find the synonyms. It's actually very simple description of the the skills that looks super fancy on paper. But it's basically sending e-campaign.

So I go to apply to way more position than I would have done if I had worked alone. And also, it's not for everyone, but having someone working with you, you can call it a mentor, or coach, or just a sounding board, is really helpful for you because, as we all know, looking for a job is a job itself. So it's nice to have a, kind of, manager you checked in with every two weeks. You share your frustration. You share your hopes. You help formulate, articulate your ideas.

So fast tracking, like Omar did, a lot of informational interviews, meeting different departments at MIT, not being sure where I was going. I applied to probably 10-15 positions and until I landed in the Office of Corporate Relations at MIT where nowhere I saw I would be qualified for that. But I met someone who worked there and who told me, well, the boss is like this and like that. But you can maybe bring something because you're a female. And we are a lot of males. So I was, kind of, gathering a lot of information on how I would build up my whole interview thing because the average age in my group when I arrived was probably 65 years old. And now we kind of brought it to something like 50 years old. So it was pretty good.

And so I had, like-- you know how are these things are. You go, like, two interviews on the phone and then you get a two full days of interview where you meet like 20 people. You try to check them on the internet, try to relive your stories, not bring always the same example, but you end up bringing always the same example. That's OK. It's OK. Some people don't really talk with each other, so, you know, that's what gets you-- it's important to sound like your story is consistent. Yeah. Stick to the script always. And if they think you're not good for them, maybe they're not good for you. Also so just relieve that tension. There are plenty of job. And I think today in the message she said, we're pretty lucky because there are more job than candidates.

And then when I had prepared some challenging question as well to the people when I got the interview. And I've been challenged on a couple of questions. So one question I, kind of, recommend to everybody now when you meet the Executive Director, for example, you ask him, OK. So where in my resume do you have a doubt that I'm not a good fit for this position? And so you ask them to articulate their doubt. And so this gives you a chance for last strike to maybe reformulate something that didn't really got heard at the first time. Like, oh, I think you're not technical enough. Oh, hang on. I got this Bachelor of Science. I know, it's 15 years ago, but this is still in me so blah, blah, blah.

So that was kind of my story. I mean, I'm in this job since almost five years so working on my promotion now. And just to, kind of, take a way in my last two minutes I want to give is well, do not stay alone. Well, unless you really like that. But do not stay alone. Sometimes we earn a place in our life where we're looking for a job and sometimes we're looking for a career. It's a different type of effort. And that's OK. We can have a break and just do a job for six months. The MIT work culture was very new to me. It's very decentralized.

What I find is that people who strive there are people who can be a go-getter. They can figure things for them self. And the relationship aspect is so, so important to be friendly. These academy people, they've been striving to be the tenure. They are usually not great communicators. So there is this whole weird stretch between the tenured professor nerfy and then all this admin people or relationship people in those roles. So this really stand out if you can bring that. And also, MIT, certainly like Harvard, a little bit more, it's very innovation and is a culture of finding discoveries and bringing innovation to the market, entrepreneurship as well.

So this whole go-getter thing, if you have that, if you have a weird background, this is also something that can be a quality because you've been figuring yourself out in all sorts of situations. So you've got something to bring on the table because you can you can land on your feet anytime, basically. So, yeah. I guess I'm going to stop there, but I'm around. Thank you.

## FAYE DANG:

Yeah. Good morning, everyone. My name is Faye. And I am now a Software Quality Engineer at Mathworks, which is a software company. I don't know how many people here are also interested in finding a industrial job. But I think at least my story can let you know that the finding experience share some similarities. And the job hunting experience is some how frustrating, but don't give up.

So my story starts in 2015 I was a post doc at Harvard on [INAUDIBLE]. So I'm doing, like, applied physics, doing friction studies. And my husband got a position at MIT as an assistant professor in the summer. So I was thinking about it we should settle down in this area. And I want to find a job. So I started searching process at the very beginning. So I ask myself two

questions. What can I do? What are the skills I have? The second one is what I want to do. And the third one is, who or what can help me?

So at the very beginning in my mind, so what is my skill and background. I have a PhD in solid mechanics. And I have some experience in industry. I was engineering in oil industry. And I did a lot of study in advanced materials. So a very straightforward goal for me is that I want to find a position like researcher in oil industry or advanced material companies. And then I've done my searching in LinkedIn, and that's the thing I rely on to help me.

Very soon I got a job interview of a material company in the greater Boston area. I went through all the whole process. So I did a phone interview, on the site interview, but finally I didn't get the job. I don't know why, now. I don't know why at that moment. I don't why now. But I got so frustrated because I spent a lot of time in that. And I'd taken it very seriously. I think I should slow down. And at that time I met Donna, and I got to know this program, the MIT spouse and faculty connect program. And I talk to her. We had a lot of discussions, and I think we met every week. Yeah. We exchanged our thought and we polish on the resume and cover letters.

And Donna helped me to prepare the elevator pitch. And also she opened my mind. I adjusted my goals and my skills in the resume. So after a few months, actually, we tried a few other companies, such as consulting company in the industry area, and some startup companies. And finally we saw this one, the Mathworks. So the founder is MIT alumnus. So this is the connection with this program.

So Donna helped me to connect to someone there. And there was a manager contacting me, and I found a position that is marketing job. At that moment I already changed my skills to, like, in both industrial and academia environment. And I have worked with crossed function teams, so I have that experience. I know how to do modeling and imaging that shows my skills in my academia environment. So my position, my goal, now changed to I want to find a job in high tech companies that can use my experience and knowledge. I don't specify that into a research position.

So I found a marketing position, which I thought can connect to my background and my interest. So I talked to the manager and we had a phone interview, actually. We talked for, like, about one

hour. And she asked me some questions, my background, what I have done, and what is my expectation about this job. So after that, we both found that this is not a good fit to me. And then she offered me that, oh, I can do research on the home page of Mathworks. And there is a career page and there was a lot of positions to list there. And she asked me that, you can do the search and let me know what are the positions you are interested in.

So I did that search. I found a very interesting position. And that is called application engineer. And it's in a program called EDG. It's engineering development group. It opened to all the fresh grads that has the engineering background, but don't know or not sure which direction want to go. Now you can go there and help customers solve the problems. And then you have-- they have time you can do projects with any team inside the company. So you can choose your directions. And usually people will do like two or three different projects with different teams and then decide which position you want to go to finally.

So I talked to the hiring manager. And the manager, she got my resume and then she transferred my resume to the hiring manager of EDG. And then we talked on the phone for one hour. And she also asked me some questions about so what is my expectation to this job, and what is the most thing that attracts me, and what I want to get from the job. So after that I went to on-site interview. And they offer me this position. And EDG is actually the start of my position in that company. So after I got the job and I spent nine months study what other teams I'm interested in and [INAUDIBLE] I transferred to quality engineer team. So now I'm a quality engineer.

So during this process, I think, my takeaway for you is that first of all, talk to people. Talk to people that can help you. And this discussion can help you to reshape your goal and reshape your resume. And when you write a resume, be specific to that company. So people can tell if you use the same resume and send it to different companies. People can tell. Another thing is that when I was in EDG I also serve as an interviewer position in that team. So we have an interview group and we interview different peoples. So as an interviewer we really value the person that has the passion. And also we can tell you if you are a good communicator or not. We really care about that.

Let me check, I have some notes. And also a good thing is that be prepared about questions. So when you take a phone interview or on-site interview at the end they will ask you, do you have any questions for me. Be prepared and ask some good questions. Show your interest about the position in the program. Yeah. And I think that's all. And if you are interested, I'm not joining the lunch, so if you are interested, my name is in the email list. And you can contact me through email. Thanks.

ELIZABETH ANCARANA: Thank you to all our panelists. That was great. So informative.