Women Re-entering the Workforce: Strategies for Success

BOSTON COLLEGE WORKSHOP
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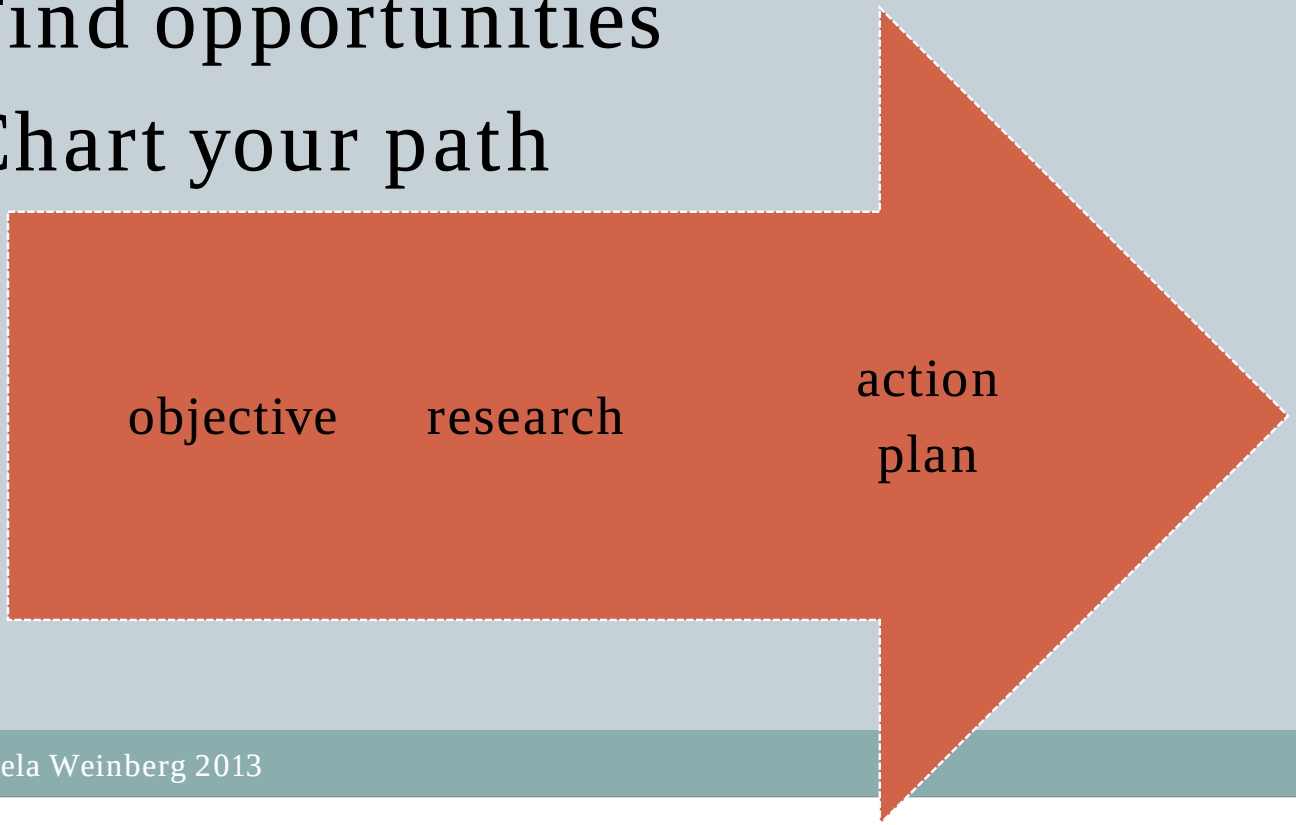
Where to Begin?

Career Re-entry Road Map:

- Define your career objectives
- Find opportunities
- Chart your path



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Women in the Workforce

fact

- 1/3 of all college-educated women leave the workforce or seek part-time status at some point

fact

- Over 1/3 of women who return to work do not resume their prior occupation.

Good News

- 74% of women who want to return to work after a parenting break are successful at doing so

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Today's Job Market

- Emergence of portfolio careers
- Freelancers/consultants/increased movement
- Diversity mandates
- Work/life balance trend
- Flexible opportunities
- Hot Industries: green, healthcare, technology, non-profit, pharma, corporate responsibility

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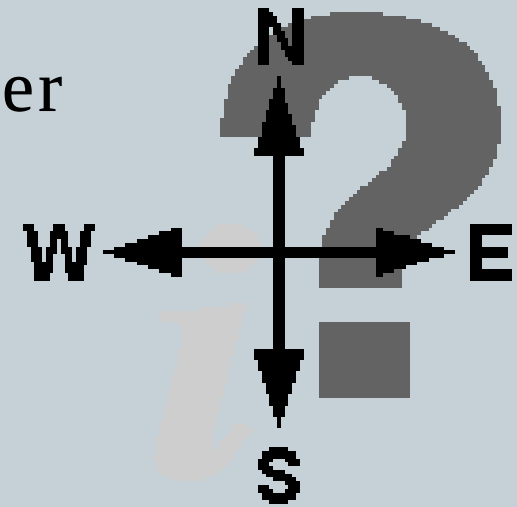
Career Transition Challenges

- Uncertainty
- Limiting Assumptions
- Skill deficits (real or perceived)
- Discomfort being lower on the ladder
- Salary
- Lack of infrastructure at home



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Define Your Career Objectives

- Review skills and interests
  - What do you like?
  - What are you good at?
- Take stock of priorities: values
  - What is important to you?
- Use assessment tools
  - www.careerpath.com
- Assemble a personal board of directors
  - Close friend, family member, former boss, colleague, peer

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Setting Goals

A Personal Mission Statement will Guide your Career Exploration

- A well done personal mission statement should serve as a personal "GPS" for your career and life choices.
- Your statement sets the stage for what you want to focus on and who/what you want to become in this stage of your career.
- A mission statement helps structure and prioritize your time.

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Sample Personal Mission Statement

"To obtain a position in development which will allow me to utilize many of the skills I've developed through volunteer work and through my former career as an attorney. I will do this by taking a class in non-profit management; joining a professional association to network; and by obtaining a volunteer position at a non-profit to gain experience and build my resume."

Featured Resources:

*Access sample personal mission statements and templates at quintcareers.com and timethoughts.com. For a more extensive look at how to develop a personal mission statement, consult How to Develop a Personal Mission Statement by Steven Covey.

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Researching the Field

- Learn about industries and occupations to match your skill set through Occupational Outlook Handbook (www.bls.gov/ooh) and O*Net Online - (www.onetonline.org)
- Research industries and potential career paths via www.vault.com and www.spotlightoncareers.com
- Test out a new career through www.PivotPlanet.com
- Informational interviews

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Building Skills and Competencies

- Classes/Lectures in interest area
- Certificate programs
- Additional degrees
- Computer/technology upgrade

Featured Resource:

Find low cost online classes through SKillShare or Udemy

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Smart Volunteering

- Develop new skills
- Sharpen existing skills
- Make connections
- Build your resume
- Create and capitalize on potential for paid work

Resource: internships and volunteer opportunities can be found through www.idealist.org

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Networking

- Do it!
- Know what you are looking for (memorize your two-minute pitch)
- Carry business cards with you
- Follow-up/keep in touch
- Ask for informational interviews
- Join professional organizations
- Connect on LinkedIn

Featured Resource:
www.vistaprint.com for free or low cost business cards

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Before your First Meeting

- Elevator speech (two-minute pitch)
- Practice and role play
- Know your “personal brand”
- Look the part
- Invest in business cards
- Resume: chronological or skills-based
- Line up references

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Social Media for Job Search

- Google yourself
- View your digital footprint as an extension of your personal brand
- Get to know the advantages of each social media platform for job search

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LinkedIn

- Craft a stand out public profile
  - Appropriate photo
  - Professional summary
  - Keywords in skills section
  - Recommendations
- Connect with former bosses; colleagues; peers
- Follow companies
- Utilize “Search” feature for jobs and connections
- Join groups

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Facebook

- Let Facebook “friends” know you are in the job market
- Post status updates and links to personal blogs, articles, websites
- Join groups and fan pages
- Register for events/seminars
- Manage privacy settings

Resource: Utilize www.inthedoor.com and www.branchout.com to maximize Facebook for business

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Twitter

- Follow companies/people with whom you would like to do business (www.listorious.com)
- Follow leaders in your field and re-tweet their posts
- Share Twitter updates on Facebook, LinkedIn and blogs
- Send direct messages to develop relationships and network
- Search for jobs

Resource: www.twitjobsearch.com to search twitter for job postings

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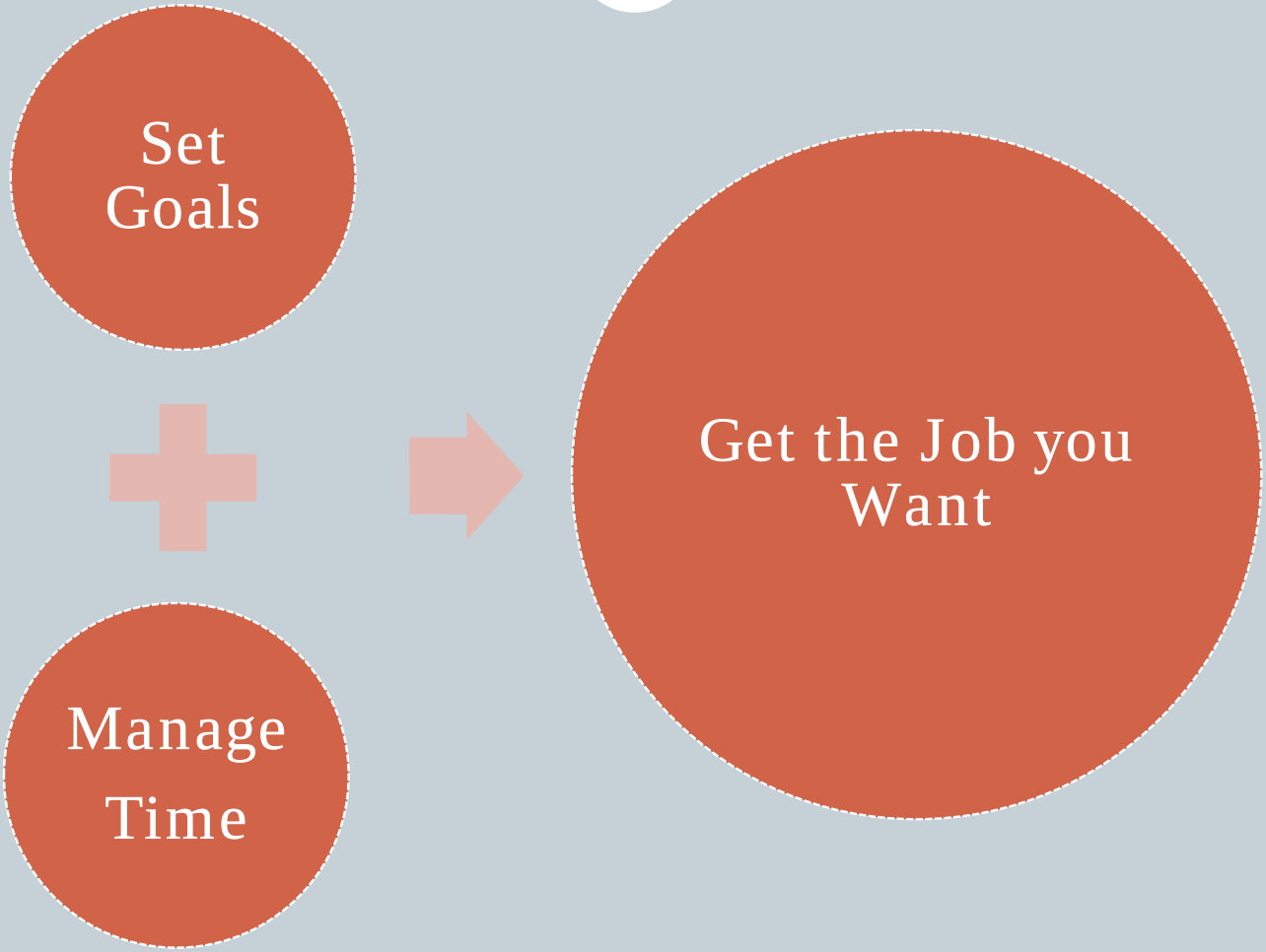
Final Tips for Re-Entry



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