



White House Initiative on Historically  
Black Colleges and Universities



2018 NATIONAL HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES  
AND UNIVERSITIES WEEK CONFERENCE

# HBCU COMPETITIVENESS:

## Aligning Institutional Missions With America's Priorities

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**September 16-19, 2018**

Washington Marriott Wardman Park  
2660 Woodley Road, NW  
Washington, DC 20008





# Federal Government Career Exploration

For Career Development Professionals



SHAPE AMERICA'S FUTURE  
**USAJOBS**



# What We'll Cover

- A Person
- A Story
- Explore Careers
- Review Resources
- Understand a Process
- Analyze Data
- Develop a Career



# We'll use a persona

## Anna      Friendly      Leading      Driven



**Age:** 24  
**Occupation:** Student  
**Status:** Graduate student—seeking her first job  
**Major:** BS, Economics, pursuing a Master of Public Administration  
**Location:** Los Angeles, CA

### Goals

- To embark on a career and not just “get a job.”
- To serve her community through her work.
- To set goals and to achieve personal success.

### Motivations

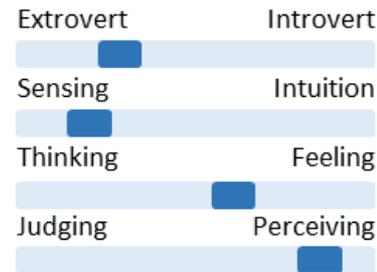
- Service to others.
- Challenging herself physically and mentally.
- Working on a team of great people.

### BIO

Anna is an Honors student and leader of a student organization. Her presence on-campus begins at 6am with a morning jog or visit to the gym and usually ends with late-night study sessions in the library. Anna is focused on her studies and improving her campus community. She wants her first job to reflect her values.

**Favorite Quote:**  
*“Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on Earth.”*  
 —Muhammad Ali

### Personality



### Frustrations

- Unsure how she can best serve others.
- The Federal hiring process is unclear.
- There are many different agencies, but only a few align with her values.
- She’s seeking out the career services office later than she should.
- Desires more than just a “job.”





We'll  
tell a  
story

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A Character

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Has a Problem

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And Meets a Guide

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Who Gives Them a Plan

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And Calls Them to Action

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That Helps Them Avoid Failure

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That Ends In Success

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\* Adapted from *Building a Storybrand: Clarify Your Message So Customers Will Listen* by Donald Miller, Harper Collins Leadership, 2017



## Discussion/Activity

Anna



At this time, we would like to brainstorm with you.

Let's outline 5 specific fears that Anna might have about the Federal hiring process.



## Discussion/Activity

### **Five Fears about the Federal Hiring Process**

- My education is not suitable for Federal jobs
- Applying for Federal jobs is too complicated
- A Federal job doesn't offer good compensation
- Federal work is not good for the long-term
- I don't want to be a Government Administrator.



# Discussion/Activity

## Job Seeker Questions

- Does Federal Government employment match interests? Personal values? Style?
- Is the occupation consistent with the job seeker's academic achievement and/or experience?
- Do the job seeker's preferred values relate to the desired occupation?
- Are the employment requirements acceptable?



# Career Exploration

- Which occupation is most appealing to the job seeker?
- What are the academic or training requirements, if any, for the desired occupation?
- Are internships or apprenticeships available?
- Are other personal needs addressed?
  - Compensation, benefits, location, preferred work environment, and other needs



# Career Exploration

## Where to work?

- **Executive Branch**—Enforces laws and runs the day-to-day operations of the Federal Government through 15 executive departments
- **Legislative Branch**—Makes laws and levies taxes to fund the Federal Government's services
- **Judicial Branch**—Interprets the meaning of laws and how they are applied



# Types of Employment

## – Competitive Service

- The competitive service consists of all civil service positions in the executive branch of the Federal Government with some exceptions. The exceptions are defined in section 2102 of title 5, United States Code (5 U.S.C. 2102)
- In the competitive service, individuals must go through a competitive hiring process open to all applicants (i.e., competitive examining) before being appointed



# Types of Employment

## – **Excepted Service**

- Appointments in the Excepted Service are civil service appointments within the Federal Government that do not confer competitive status

## – **Senior Executive Service**

- The Senior Executive Service (SES) is comprised of the men and women charged with leading the continuing transformation of Government



# Where to Look

## Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)

[\(BLS.gov\)](https://www.bls.gov)



[Working for the Federal Government: Part 1 \(Career Outlook\)](#)

[Employment and Wage Estimates \(May 2017\)](#)

*The BLS provides data on the public sector employment and wages including specific information on Federal Employment.*



# Where to Look

## Exploring Federal Careers

[USAJOBS.gov](https://www.usajobs.gov)

[USA.gov](https://www.usa.gov)

– [A-Z List](#)

– [Career Information](#)

[U.S. House of Representatives](https://www.house.gov)

[U.S. Senate](https://www.senate.gov)

[Bestplacetowork.org](https://www.bestplacetowork.org)

– **Rankings by large, medium, and small agencies**

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*Individual agency websites provide job seekers information on jobs, mission, people, and culture.*



# Understand the Hiring Process

## The Hiring Process

Notification of application receipt

Review applicant eligibility and qualifications

Conduct assessments

Rank candidates based on qualifications

Selection interviews

Selection

Job offer

Notification of non-selection



# Understand the Hiring Process

## USAJOBS



### Save your favorite jobs and searches

Receive email updates from jobs you're interested in.



### Upload your resumes and documents

Save and manage resumes and documents for your application.



### Make your resume searchable

Your resume will be visible to recruiters searching our database.



### Apply for jobs in the Federal Government

You can only apply online with a complete USAJOBS profile.

## Explore Hiring Paths

The Federal Government offers unique hiring paths (also known as a hiring authority) to help hire individuals that represent our diverse society. If you fall under one of these groups of people you may be eligible to receive preference when applying for jobs.



#### Open to the Public

Never worked for the Federal Government, U.S. citizens or nationals



#### Federal Employees

Current or former



# Understand the Hiring Process

## The Résumé

- The résumé is an application
- There is no page limit
- A reverse chronological résumé is standard
- Tailor the résumé to the listed qualifications
- Volunteer or unpaid work counts as experience
- Narrative statements and keywords are not required



# Understand the Hiring Process

## Interview and Assessment

### – Training and Experience (T & E) Evaluations (OPM)

- The T & E Evaluation is a common method used to assess previous experience, education, and training of job applicants based on critical job requirements and competencies
- Agencies evaluate the résumé, occupational questionnaire, and supporting documents submitted by the applicants



# Understand the Hiring Process

## – Occupational Questionnaire

- An Occupational Questionnaire typically consists of multiple choice, yes/no, or similar types of questions that cover a variety of competencies related to the position
- An applicant's résumé needs to support answers in the Occupational Questionnaire



# Understand the Hiring Process

## Occupational Questionnaire (Sample)

Select a response that best fits your completion of college coursework that required preparing and delivering oral presentations in a manner appropriate to the given audience.

- A. I have not completed any coursework that required oral presentations.
- B. I have successfully completed one college course that required oral presentations.
- C. I have successfully completed two college courses that required oral presentations.
- D. I have successfully completed three college courses that required oral presentations.
- E. I have successfully completed four or more college courses that required oral presentations.



# Understand the Hiring Process

## – Structured Interviews

- Structured interviews employ rules for eliciting, observing, and evaluating responses in relation to critical competencies
- The structure limits the amount of discretion an interviewer is allowed in evaluating candidate responses
- The most common job-related questions are in the situational or behavioral format



# Understand the Hiring Process

## – Assessment Centers

- An assessment center employs multiple assessment methods and exercises to evaluate a wide range of competencies used to make a variety of employment decisions (e.g., employee selection, career development, promotion)
- Assessment centers can be used to concurrently assess small groups
- Many assessment center exercises resemble work sample tests designed to simulate the actual challenges found on the job



# Understand the Hiring Process

## Selection

- Reference Checks
- Hiring manager makes a decision to hire a particular candidate and informs human resources

## Offers

- Tentative Job Offer
- Final Job Offer
- Pay Determination



# Understand the Hiring Process

## Tentative Job Offer

- Offered upon selection by hiring manager
- Usually contingent upon a successful Background Investigation
- References any other contingencies

## Final Job Offer

- Provided upon completion of all contingencies contained in the Tentative Job Offer



# The Pathways Programs

## Highlights

- For students and recent graduates
  - Internship Program (current students)
  - Recent Graduates
  - Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) (leadership)
- Designed for professional development of participants and to encourage long-term careers
  - Participants work closely with supervisor, Human Resources (HR) and the Pathways Programs Officer to ensure they meet goals/outcomes and are successful



# The Pathways Programs

## – Pathways Participant Agreement

Details on duties, work schedule, length of appointment, opportunities for training and mentorship, and requirements for successful completion

## – Onboarding

- Learn agency culture and values
- Get up-to-speed, productive, and engaged



# The Pathways Programs

## Program-Specific Features

- Training (Formal, Interactive)
  - 40/80 hours per year for Recent Graduates/PMFs
  - Recommended for Interns
- Rotational Assignments
  - Required for PMFs, along with developmental assignments
  - Recommended for Interns and Recent Graduates
- Mentors
  - Required for Recent Graduates and PMFs
  - Recommended for Interns



## Discussion/Activity

Anna



Develop five specific agreements we can make with Anna in order to respond to each of the fears identified earlier.



# Our Hero Achieves Her Outcomes

Anna,  
our  
Hero

Did not understand Federal hiring

But met with experts in Career Services

Who recognized and addressed her concerns

And provided her the tools and direction

To align her career search with her talents

Which led her to her ideal career with the right agency

A happy ending (or is it the beginning?)



# Questions

