Virtually all respondents actively participated in extracurricular training during their time in graduate school. They recall these activities, including internships and fellowships, as basic elements for a successful transition to a career in Science Policy.

Most participants also recommended engaging in additional activities during graduate school, including science outreach, teaching and mentoring and founding extracurricular organizations.

Most Valuable Skillset

- Discipline-specific technical skills

Most Valuable Qualities

- Humility and respect

Where did you learn...?

- Discipline-specific technical skills: In class and/or lab
- Interpersonal skills: During extracurricular activities

Top 10 Skills and Attributes for Science Policy Success

Sees it as a relevant skillset

- Written communication: 92%
- Oral communication: 88%
- Managing projects: 73%
- Humility and respect: 73%
- Interpersonal skills: 69%
- Curiosity and openness: 65%
- Navigate the Government: 58%
- Persuasion and influence: 46%
- Working within teams: 46%
- Managing people: 38%
METHODOLOGY: Semi-structured in-person and phone interviews conducted between July 22nd and August 15th 2019 to 26 individuals working in science policy jobs. Respondents were divided in three (3) cohorts: 1) PhD-trained scientists working in science policy; 2) Masters or PhD in policy working in science policy, and 3) mid-late career science policy professionals from varying academic backgrounds who have extensively hired, mentored, and/or managed individuals transitioning to a science policy career. See full report for differences between each cohort.

SCIENCE BACKGROUND vs POLICY BACKGROUND

**Positives of Science training**

✓ Builds up resilience and persistence.
✓ Provides analytical skills and curiosity.
✓ Familiarity with uncertainty and nuance
✓ Provides knowledge of the scientific process.

**Positives of Policy training**

✓ Teaches how to navigate the government.
✓ Emphasizes soft-skills training (e.g. persuasion.)
✓ Allows for a broad exposure to policy issues.
✓ Offers practical policy skills (e.g. memo writing.)

**Gaps in Science training**

❌ Lack of “government navigation” knowledge.
❌ Insufficient communication skills training.
❌ Poor soft skills practice (e.g. leadership.)
❌ May prioritize Science over Policy.

**Gaps in Policy training**

❌ Lack of technical expertise.
❌ Poor understanding of scientific technicalities.
❌ Limited familiarity with the university research system.
❌ Little knowledge of the scientific process.

“There is no single right way to have success in science policy but having a diverse range of skills from both technical and interpersonal realms is vital.”

12 WAYS TO PREPARE FOR A SCIENCE POLICY CAREER

- Enroll in **fellowships**
- Take **cross-registered** courses
- Join **professional societies**
- Engage with **University Government relations**
- Read **Science Policy Foundational Texts**
- **Teach and mentor** others
- Take part in **student government**
- Find a **mentor** outside the lab
- Read the **news**
- Lead and found **extracurriculars**
- Participate in **informational interviews**
- Engage in **science outreach and communication**