CAREERS IN SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

Sarah Blackford
Bioscience Careers Group
What is science communication?

Outreach
Policy
Teaching
Publishing
Journalism
Medical writing
CAREERS IN SCIENCE OUTREACH
What do outreach professionals do?

• Communicate science to schools and the public in lay terms
• Use a variety of tools to do this – lab demos, exhibitions, web-based media
• Develop exciting and interesting ways to inspire children about science
• Engage in debate with adults
Who employs outreach professionals?

Museums
Science Centres
STEMNET
British Science Association
Learned Societies
Universities
Research institutes
CAREERS IN SCIENCE POLICY
Science Policy

Who works in policy?

Government
- Civil Service
- MP

Scientists working in Policy
- Scientific Advisory Committees
- Chief Scientific Advisers

Policy professional specialising in science
- Professional bodies
- Charities
- Think tanks
Science Policy

Campaigning and lobbying
Policy briefings from the Parliamentary Office for Science and Technology
Policy blogs
Interested in current affairs
Subject is quite academic in process, and there is close working with science and scientists
Can be quite dry
CAREERS IN SCIENCE PUBLISHING
CAREERS IN SCIENCE JOURNALISM
SCIENCE JOURNALISM

Broadcast; Print; Internet
TV, radio, Magazines, newspapers
Technical, topical, political, interest
Questioning, interviewing
Communication: Long articles, short pieces
Short deadlines, flexible working
No obvious career structure in many cases
Science Press Officers

Work for an organisation to promote them
Source science stories
Write and publish press stories
Act as a bridge between scientists and the media
CAREERS IN MEDICAL WRITING
MEDICAL WRITING

Working for the Pharma industry
Outsourced companies – Med Comms
Structured entry; Structured career
Writing and comprehension skills
Analytical skills and the ability to assimilate new and complex knowledge
Flexibility – lots of diversity
Science Communication

Getting in (+ science background)

Experience and knowledge:
Voluntary, internship, workshadowing, social media (Twitter, blogs)

Qualification
Postgrad course (Diploma, MSc/MA), FT/PT, long distance, on-the-job

Entrance Assessment: Aptitude tests
Science Communication

Getting in (+ science background)

Outreach - experience
Policy - experience
Publishing – experience/PG Diploma
Journalism - experience/PG Diploma
Medical writing – assessment
Science Communication

Skills & Qualities required

Excellent communication skills
Writing, speaking, listening, comprehension

Resourceful and flexible

Excellent interpersonal skills

Organised and able to meet deadlines

Good sense of humour
Further information

- Departmental schools liaison officer
- University alumni office
- University press/communications office
- Learned societies & other organisations

Next Steps booklet - resources
Bioscience Careers Group stand
CAREERS IN SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

Thank You!