

Empowering Doctoral Students to *Own Their Future*

Introduction

The notion that doctoral education prepares students for an academic career only is both outdated and inaccurate: PhD graduates work in careers that span all segments of the labour market (Council of Canadian Academies, 2021). Despite this reality, PhD students continue to experience elevated stress and challenges in their career journeys — including a lack of academic career opportunities, gaps in their understandings of non-academic pathways and challenges in recognizing and articulating their skills (Council of Canadian Academies, 2021).

PhD students can enhance their opportunities to find meaningful work inside and outside the academy by better communicating their skills and abilities while they search for and apply for positions (Rancourt & Archer-Kuhn, 2019; Chevrier et al., 2019). Universities must support doctoral students as they navigate individual and structural barriers to ensure that graduates can effectively capitalize on the value of their advanced degrees. Supporting graduates' success is important for individuals as well as society more broadly (Mitacs, 2020).

Own Your Future (OYF) is a professional development program at Western University designed to empower doctoral students to be agents in their career journeys and help them understand the value and applicability of their degrees (Berdahl, 2022). The program's framework includes five competencies: Career Engagement,¹ Communication and Relationship-building,² Intercultural and Social Fluency,³ Leadership⁴ and Thriving.⁵ A central component of OYF is a Career Preparation Series that involves completion of the OYF Skills Self-Assessment, a virtual mock-interview, and attendance in three workshops, which emphasizes the importance of skill articulation, interview preparation, networking and beyond.

Researchers at Western evaluated the Career Preparation Series to answer the following research questions:

¹ 'Career engagement' is the ability to connect interests, values, personality and skills with a variety of career options, and to develop strategies to launch a career.

² 'Communication and relationship-building' is the ability to explain complex ideas to a variety of audiences, use appropriate communication tools effectively and foster positive working relationships.

³ 'Intercultural and social fluency' is the ability to navigate effectively through a complex global world of cultural and social diversity with multiple value systems.

⁴ 'Leadership' is the ability to apply personal strengths, skills and knowledge with integrity to manage projects and teams, make complex decisions and take meaningful risks.

⁵ 'Thriving' is the ability to promote initiative and accountability through self-awareness and self-assessment, time management, work-life balance and seeking help when needed.

1. Did completion of the Career Preparation Series improve students' abilities to identify their transferable skills, recognize areas for improvement and acquire language to articulate their skills, competencies and experiences?
2. What elements of the series delivery and content did participants find most effective? What elements could be improved?

Methodology

A mixed-method approach was used to evaluate the value of the Career Preparation Series. Twenty-eight doctoral student participants completed the following research activities (see Appendix A for a complete description of the series components):

- Students completed a mock interview (see Appendix B for interview questions) and the OYF Self-Assessment (see Appendix C for self-assessment questions) prior to the first workshop and after completing the third and final workshop.
- Students provided feedback via surveys after each OYF Self-Assessment and workshop (see Appendices D and E for relevant survey questions).
- Participants who completed all three workshops were invited to a conversational interview where all aspects of the series were discussed within the context of their PhD experience and career journey.

Findings

Doctoral students confirmed the Career Preparation Series as a valuable opportunity to improve their understanding of their transferable skills. Even those participants who initially believed they possessed a high level of awareness of their skills reported a newfound appreciation for the value and applicability of the skills gained from their PhDs. Participants reported feeling more prepared to identify relevant experiences from their PhD studies and communicate them to employers. Participants also demonstrated measurable improvements in their ability to articulate their transferable skills in mock interviews after participating in the series. PhD students commended the Career Preparation Series for catering to their specific needs when compared to other career development workshops.

The Skills Self-Assessment is an integral tool within the Career Preparation Series specifically designed to guide PhD students in reflecting on the skills gained during their doctoral studies. Eighty-one percent of participants strongly or somewhat agreed that the Skills Self-Assessment significantly improved their awareness of their skills, and 75% strongly or somewhat agreed that the Skills Self-Assessment helped them refine their ability to articulate their skills effectively, confirming the effectiveness of this approach. Participants did, however, raise challenges regarding the self-assessment, citing concerns about its subjectivity and lack of external feedback.

The mock interviews, although at times uncomfortable and seemingly artificial to some participants, were recognized for their utility in solidifying their learning. Despite these reservations, participants acknowledged the value of the mock interview process in preparing them for real-world scenarios and building confidence in their professional communication skills. Notably, 69% of participants demonstrated improvement in their ability to answer interview questions, indicating that the series significantly contributed to their interview preparation. A standout element of the Career Preparation Series to participants was the networking workshop and matching with employers for informational interviews, which students credited for helping them connect with professionals in their fields of interest, identify knowledge or skill gaps and seek sector-specific skill development opportunities.

Discussion and Conclusion

Transferable skills, including communication and time management, can be cultivated during doctoral studies, but students need formalized training to understand and articulate these skills (Pretti & Fannon, 2018; Watkins & McKeown, 2018). While there are examples of structured approaches to supporting students' skill development,⁶ there are few resources designed specifically for doctoral students. Evaluating the OYF career preparation series reveals ways skills-based training can be integrated into doctoral education to ensure that students are well-prepared to articulate the connection between their advanced skills and labour market opportunities. Future career transition programs should consider including direct instruction on skills articulation (e.g., workshops), time for self-reflection and opportunities for students to practice articulating their skills (e.g., mock interviews) to help students direct their own learning and improve their employability in their chosen career.

Learning to articulate skills requires ongoing practice and feedback so that students can understand where and how to improve (Pretti & Fannon, 2018; Watkins & McKeown, 2018). Participating in mock interviews is one effective way to practice skills articulation (Kovalcik, 2019; Pretti & Fannon, 2018). The OYF participants identified the informational interviews as one of the most valuable components of the program and recommended increasing the number and variety of interviews with employers. Doctoral students typically do not have opportunities to engage with employers outside of academia unless they proactively seek them out, which may require access to resources and networks not available to all students (Meyer-Miner, 2021). Professional development programs such as the OYF can enable students to connect with employers during their doctoral training. Networking events, experiential learning or interdisciplinary projects involving industry or

⁶ Waterloo's Centre for Experiential Learning certificate program is an example of a structured approach to supporting students' skill development.

community partners can support networking and help students refine their proficiency in skill articulation.

Given these benefits, the project team reflected on whether it would be beneficial for students to complete the OYF career preparation series earlier in their doctoral degrees. Offering it to first- and second-year PhD students would provide them with more time to reflect on their skill development during their studies and plan accordingly. This presents a challenge, however, as students tend to engage in career development only when they think they need it, which is often towards the end of their degree. Some of the activities would need to be adapted if the series were offered to early-year doctoral students. For instance, one of the workshop activities focused on identifying past accomplishments in their studies. This exercise could be reframed to reflect on accomplishments and transferable skills from prior experiences and identify areas students want to focus on during their studies.

Overall, the Career Preparation Series provided affirmation to students that their time spent pursuing a PhD was worthwhile. In the words of participants, the series made them realize that they hadn't "wasted five years on a project" and allowed them to "make peace" with the fact that they do have a skill set, easing some of the career anxiety PhD students face towards the end of their degrees. By making their skills more explicit, students gained the confidence and competence to showcase their abilities to prospective employers, thus redefining their perception of their PhD journey in an empowering manner.

References

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Appendix A: A Description of the *Own Your Future* Career Preparation Series

Table 1

A Description of the Own Your Future Career Preparation Series

Activity	Time (Hours)	Purpose
Meet and Greet Lunch	1.5	Overview of the series
Mock Interview 1	1.5	Participants completed an online mock interview
Self-Assessment 1	1	Participants completed the online OYF Self-Assessment
Workshop 1	2	"Identifying and Assessing PhD Skills"
Workshop 2	2	"Articulating Your Skills During the Job Search"
Workshop 3	2	"Expanding Your Professional Network"
Informational Interview	1	Participants conducted an informational interview with a pre-matched employer
Self-Assessment 2	1	Participants completed the online OYF Self-Assessment
Mock Interview 2	1.5	Participants completed an online mock interview

Note. Bolded activities were also used for data collection.

Appendix B: Mock Interview Methodology and Rubrics

Participants completed a recorded, one-way, mock interview using the InterviewPrep platform. There were nine interview questions, including one question asking participants to answer, “Tell me about yourself” and eight behavioural-based interview questions, with two questions addressing each of the following competencies: Communication & Relationship Building; Thriving; and Intercultural and Social Fluency. Participants were allowed two attempts to record their responses and could choose which one to submit. Questions were sourced from Human Resources and the Career Education team at Western University. Recorded interviews were evaluated using a rubric designed in consultation with the Career Education team and employers (see below). The team of evaluators included employers, staff from the Career Education team and graduate student volunteers from the Career Education Centre. Each student received scores and feedback from at least two evaluators. Evaluators were provided with a copy of the students’ mock interview recordings via a weblink and completed their evaluation on Qualtrics. The maximum score was 99 plus a bonus point.

Personal Brand Statement (/9)

	Needs Improvement			Average			Excellent		
	Struggles to summarize skills and experience; struggles to articulate vision of what they are looking for in next opportunity			Provides some insight into skills and experience; articulates some insight into what they are looking for in next opportunity			Provides clear insight into skills and experience; articulates clear vision of what they are looking for in next opportunity.		
Question: Tell me about yourself and what you are looking for in your next opportunity.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Ability to Articulate Evidence and Proficiency of Competency (/72)

	Needs Improvement	Average	Excellent
	Little/no evidence; the candidate missed both the essence and substance of the question; little/no demonstrated use of competency	Some evidence; the candidate demonstrated competency at a level compatible with satisfactory performance	Excellent evidence; the candidate demonstrated competency at a level compatible with strong/superior performance

Leadership Question 1. Give an example of a time when you showed initiative and took the lead on a problem.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Leadership Question 2. Talk about a leadership role you have held in the past. Describe the key leadership skills you believe you have and how you demonstrated them in this role. Give specific examples.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Communication & Relationship Building Question 1. Please describe a time when you were successful in getting a complex idea across to another person or group. What was the concept? How did you relay the message? How did you know you were successful?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Communication & Relationship Building Question 2. Describe a situation when you had to address a conflicting viewpoint with a co-worker or someone outside of your immediate team. Describe both viewpoints. List the steps you took to influence your co-worker in	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

understanding your position. What was the outcome?									
Thriving Question 1. Describe a time when you had to handle multiple, competing priorities. What did you do? How did you decide what to do first? Second? Last?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Thriving Question 2. We have all had times when you just couldn't complete everything on time. Describe when this has happened to you. What did you do?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Intercultural & Social Fluency Question 1. What does it mean for you to have an understanding and commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion? How have you demonstrated that commitment?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Intercultural & Social Fluency Question 2. Working with people from different backgrounds or cultures can present challenges and opportunities. Describe a time where differences in background made communication challenging. How did you handle this situation, what did you	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

learn from it, and what would you do differently in the future?									
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Verbal Communication (/9)

	Needs improvement (1)	Average (2)	Excellent (3)
Candidate expresses ideas clearly.			
Candidate avoids saying filler words (umm, like, I mean).			
Candidate emphasizes relevant points.			

Non-verbal Communication (/9)

	Needs improvement (1)	Average (2)	Excellent (3)
Candidate makes direct eye contact.			
Candidate conveys self-confidence.			
Candidate's body language is professional (i.e., has a straight posture, avoids fidgeting).			

Please share any additional feedback for the interviewee.

Appendix C: Own Your Future Student Self-Assessment

The *Own Your Future* self-assessment was developed for PhD students at Western University by the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies in 2017. It includes a series of questions where students rate their ability to perform skills in the context of their doctoral training, covering the competencies Communication & Relationship Building, Leadership, Intercultural and Social Fluency, Thriving, and Career Engagement (on a scale of 0 to 5, with 0 being no experience, 1 being “very low” and 5 being “very high”). After completing the self-assessment, students were emailed a summary of their responses that provided them with a numeric score for each competency, and a list of their strengths, areas for growth and areas with no experience for each competency. The report includes links to resources in *Own Your Future* to develop their skills.

Competency: Communication and Relationship Building (CR)

The ability to explain complex ideas to a variety of audiences, to use appropriate communication tools effectively and to foster positive working relationships.

The following questions focus on your ability to **listen effectively**, using both reflective and active listening in a variety of personal and professional contexts.

How would you rate your current ability to:	No Experience 0	Current Ability				
		Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5
Focus on a conversation without distraction	0	1	2	3	4	5
Engage in a conversation in a non-judgmental manner	0	1	2	3	4	5
Summarize to the speaker the thoughts and feelings you have heard and seen	0	1	2	3	4	5
Establish rapport, empathy and understanding in a conversation	0	1	2	3	4	5
Use non-verbal cues in conversation, such as maintaining eye contact, nodding, leaning forward	0	1	2	3	4	5
Recognize and respond to non-verbal cues in conversation	0	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions focus on your ability to communicate **complex ideas**, to explain your work and to describe your skills effectively in all environments, including to expert and non-expert audiences.

How would you rate your current ability to:	No Experience 0	Current Ability				
		Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5

Deliver oral presentations of your research or work to peers and colleagues in your discipline	0	1	2	3	4	5
Deliver oral presentations of your research or work to a general, 'non-expert' audience	0	1	2	3	4	5
Write for peers, colleagues or experts in your discipline	0	1	2	3	4	5
Write for a general, 'non-expert' audience	0	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions focus on your ability to use **technology and social media** effectively for professional applications and relationship building.

<i>How would you rate your current ability to:</i>	No Experience 0	Current Ability				
		Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5
Develop and maintain a professional online profile (e.g., on LinkedIn)	0	1	2	3	4	5
Write professional and effective emails	0	1	2	3	4	5
Use social media, such as Twitter, blogs, texts, Facebook, Instagram, etc., effectively and appropriately	0	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions focus on your ability to construct **positive working relationships** with your graduate student peers, undergraduate students, supervisor, mentors and employers.

<i>How would you rate your current ability to:</i>	No Experience 0	Current Ability				
		Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5
Engage in productive discussions with your supervisor, mentor and employer	0	1	2	3	4	5
Engage in productive discussions with peers	0	1	2	3	4	5
Engage in difficult discussions with your supervisor, mentor and employer	0	1	2	3	4	5
Engage in difficult discussions with peers	0	1	2	3	4	5
Respond effectively to constructive criticism	0	1	2	3	4	5
Provide constructive feedback to peers and/or juniors	0	1	2	3	4	5
Provide constructive feedback to your supervisor, mentor and employer	0	1	2	3	4	5
Effectively supervise others to achieve a goal or outcome	0	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions focus on your ability to effectively navigate **relationships with power imbalance and/or where conflict exists**.

<i>How would you rate your current ability to:</i>		Current Ability
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	No Experience 0	Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5
Initiate a conversation with your supervisor or others in an authority role	0	1	2	3	4	5
Communicate with junior peers or undergraduate students in a way that appropriately reflects and respects your authority	0	1	2	3	4	5
Take direction from your supervisor or others in an authority role	0	1	2	3	4	5
Provide direction to juniors	0	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions focus on your ability to form **collaborative professional relationships** that involve seeking out mutually beneficial relationships with others both inside and outside the academic environment.

<i>How would you rate your current ability to:</i>	No Experience 0	Current Ability				
		Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5
Identify where and/or when collaborators would be helpful or effective	0	1	2	3	4	5
Establish connections with potential collaborators	0	1	2	3	4	5
Negotiate mutually beneficial relationships with collaborators	0	1	2	3	4	5

Competency: Leadership (L)

Leadership is the ability to apply your personal strengths, skills and knowledge with integrity to manage projects and teams, make complex decisions and take meaningful risks.

The following questions focus on your ability to take **responsibility** for decisions and be accountable for consequences.

<i>How would you rate your current ability to:</i>	No Experience 0	Current Ability				
		Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5
Seek advice from appropriate individuals and other resources	0	1	2	3	4	5
Acknowledge your role in decisions regardless of the outcomes	0	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions focus on your ability to act with **integrity** and make decisions in an ethical manner.

<i>How would you rate your current ability to:</i>		Current Ability
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	No Experience 0	Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5
Identify and consider potential consequences when making a decision	0	1	2	3	4	5
Consult relevant policies, guidelines and/or regulations	0	1	2	3	4	5
Make decisions in accord with relevant policies, guidelines and/or regulations	0	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions focus on your ability to take **meaningful risks**, seek out new challenges, try out new ideas and shake up the dynamics of your field.

<i>How would you rate your current ability to:</i>	No Experience 0	Current Ability				
		Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5
Actively seek new opportunities	0	1	2	3	4	5
Demonstrate judgement in choosing risks	0	1	2	3	4	5
Recognize the need to expand your knowledge	0	1	2	3	4	5
Recognize and embrace the opportunity to advance your field	0	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions focus on your ability to recognize and articulate your own approaches to leadership and your **strengths and weaknesses** as a leader.

<i>How would you rate your current ability to:</i>	No Experience 0	Current Ability				
		Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5
Reflect on your strengths and weaknesses in an honest manner	0	1	2	3	4	5
Talk to others about your strengths and weaknesses	0	1	2	3	4	5
Seek out opportunities to strengthen your areas of weakness	0	1	2	3	4	5
Find opportunities to apply your strengths	0	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions focus on your ability to identify, develop and apply **project management** skills relevant to your discipline and career path.

<i>How would you rate your current ability to:</i>	No Experience 0	Current Ability				
		Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5
Plan the steps involved in a project	0	1	2	3	4	5

Organize the resources needed to undertake a project	0	1	2	3	4	5
Oversee the implementation of a project plan	0	1	2	3	4	5
Troubleshoot, revise and modify a plan as needed	0	1	2	3	4	5
Convey outcomes to the intended audiences	0	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions focus on your ability to **apply your research skills** and capabilities to practical and real-world problems beyond your doctoral work.

<i>How would you rate your current ability to:</i>	No Experience 0	Current Ability				
		Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5
Understand a problem from the perspective of others	0	1	2	3	4	5
Focus and frame an identified problem in an actionable and user-framed way	0	1	2	3	4	5
Brainstorm and generate a range of possible solutions in a judgement-free zone	0	1	2	3	4	5
Iteratively experiment with a range of viable solution(s) or product(s)	0	1	2	3	4	5
Evaluate and rethink the solution or product based on feedback	0	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions focus on your ability to navigate your role within a **team** and recognize and appreciate the role of others on the team.

<i>How would you rate your current ability to:</i>	No Experience 0	Current Ability				
		Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5
Recognize your role and responsibilities within a team in relation to the role and responsibilities of others	0	1	2	3	4	5
Fulfill your responsibilities within a team	0	1	2	3	4	5
Support other members of the team in fulfilling their responsibilities	0	1	2	3	4	5
Flexibly adapt to the needs of the team	0	1	2	3	4	6

The following questions focus on your ability to effectively **prioritize** and **delegate** responsibilities and tasks.

<i>How would you rate your current ability to:</i>	No Experience 0	Current Ability				
		Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5

Objectively evaluate your workload in the context of competing responsibilities, commitments and opportunities	0	1	2	3	4	5
Prioritize your time and attention	0	1	2	3	4	5
Identify opportunities to delegate to others	0	1	2	3	4	5
Delegate responsibilities and tasks to appropriate individuals	0	1	2	3	4	5
Delegate without micro-managing	0	1	2	3	4	5
Ensure the desired outcome is achieved	0	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions focus on your ability to make decisions in complex situations.						
<i>How would you rate your current ability to:</i>	No Experience 0	Current Ability				
		Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5
Assess a complex situation to identify critical needs	0	1	2	3	4	5
Prioritize the needs for action	0	1	2	3	4	5
Consult appropriately	0	1	2	3	4	5
Plan a course of action	0	1	2	3	4	5
Implement the plan	0	1	2	3	4	5
Revise the plan as needed	0	1	2	3	4	5

Competency: Thriving

Thriving is the ability to promote initiative and accountability through self-awareness and self-assessment, time management, work-life balance and seeking help when needed.

The following questions focus on your ability to organize tasks and manage time.						
<i>How would you rate your current ability to:</i>	No Experience 0	Current Ability				
		Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5
Prioritize competing tasks	0	1	2	3	4	5
Limit distractions	0	1	2	3	4	5
Consult appropriately	0	1	2	3	4	5
Plan a course of action	0	1	2	3	4	5
Implement the plan	0	1	2	3	4	5
Revise the plan as needed	0	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions focus on your ability to actively attend to work-life balance.						
<i>How would you rate your current ability to:</i>	No Experience 0	Current Ability				
		Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5

		1				5
Make effective use of non-work activities to promote and restore engagement in work activities	0	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions focus on your ability to engage in self-care and help-seeking .						
How would you rate your current ability to:	No Experience 0	Current Ability				
		Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5
Apply financial literacy skills to your personal finances	0	1	2	3	4	5
Maintain healthy nutrition	0	1	2	3	4	5
Maintain regular exercise	0	1	2	3	4	5
Maintain healthy sleep habits	0	1	2	3	4	5
Set personal and work priorities that support wellness	0	1	2	3	4	5
Promote work-life balance for others	0	1	2	3	4	5
Attend to signs of pressure and stress in yourself	0	1	2	3	4	5
Attend to signs of pressure and stress in others	0	1	2	3	4	5
Create and implement self-care plans for a variety of scenarios	0	1	2	3	4	5

Competency: Intercultural and Social Fluency

Intercultural and Social Fluency is the ability to navigate effectively through a complex global world of cultural and social diversity with multiple value systems.

The following questions focus on your ability to work respectfully and effectively .						
How would you rate your current ability to:	No Experience 0	Current Ability				
		Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5
Recognize diversity as a strength	0	1	2	3	4	5
Recognize potential biases and seek to eliminate them	0	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions focus on your ability to form meaningful working relationships and collaborations.						
How would you rate your current ability to:	No Experience 0	Current Ability				
		Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5
Recognize the strength that diversity brings to working relationships	0	1	2	3	4	5

Capitalize on the diversity to achieve mutually beneficial goals	0	1	2	3	4	5
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The following questions focus on your ability to recognize and acknowledge **ideas within the cultural and social context** from which they are derived.

<i>How would you rate your current ability to:</i>	No Experience 0	Current Ability				
		Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5
Respect individual experiences and perspectives	0	1	2	3	4	5
Understand that cultural and social background shape the perspectives of individuals	0	1	2	3	4	5

Competency: Career Engagement

Career Engagement is the ability to connect your interests, values, personality and skills with a variety of career options and to develop strategies to launch your career.

The following questions focus on your ability to apply **networking skills**.

<i>How would you rate your current ability to:</i>	No Experience 0	Current Ability				
		Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5
Connect with individuals who can advance your career	0	1	2	3	4	5
Maintain mutually beneficial interactions with individuals whose expertise is valuable	0	1	2	3	4	5
Build ties with peers	0	1	2	3	4	5
Support the career development of others	0	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions focus on your ability to engage effectively in the **job search process**.

<i>How would you rate your current ability to:</i>	No Experience 0	Current Ability				
		Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5
Create and maintain a CV	0	1	2	3	4	5
Create and maintain a resume	0	1	2	3	4	5
Consult with a career counselor	0	1	2	3	4	5
Explore career options	0	1	2	3	4	5
Self-reflect on personal goals	0	1	2	3	4	5
Prepare for mock interviews	0	1	2	3	4	5
Search for and subscribe to relevant job posting sites/newsletters	0	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions focus on your ability to make career decisions that reflect an **understanding of the labour market, personal strengths, challenges and desires.**

<i>How would you rate your current ability to:</i>	No Experience 0	Current Ability				
		Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5
Understand labour market opportunities	0	1	2	3	4	5
Be honest about personal strengths, challenges and desires	0	1	2	3	4	5
Articulate your transferrable skills	0	1	2	3	4	5
Align your transferrable skills with a range of careers	0	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions focus on your ability to articulate how your **doctoral knowledge and skills contribute to society** through creativity, innovation, community development and/or economic growth.

<i>How would you rate your current ability to:</i>	No Experience 0	Current Ability				
		Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5
Identify opportunities to apply your doctoral knowledge outside of academia	0	1	2	3	4	5
Seek out opportunities to apply your doctoral knowledge and skills in a way that contributes to society	0	1	2	3	4	5
Make your knowledge accessible outside of academia	0	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions focus on your ability to engage in **continuous reflection and self-development.**

<i>How would you rate your current ability to:</i>	No Experience 0	Current Ability				
		Very Low 1	2	3	4	Very High 5
Continually reassess your career aspirations	0	1	2	3	4	5
Identify a range of potential career options	0	1	2	3	4	5
Accept the uncertainty embedded within the job process	0	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix D: Post Self-Assessment Feedback Survey

Thank you for completing the Power Skills Self-Assessment. You will receive an email with your report shortly. The purpose of this survey is to collect feedback on your experience completing the Self-Assessment. It will take only three to four minutes. Your feedback will be used to help us improve student satisfaction.

Q1. The Self-Assessment gave me a better appreciation for the skills I have developed or will develop in my PhD.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q2. The Self-Assessment tool helped me identify my strengths and opportunities for growth.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q3. The Self-Assessment tool is useful in helping me to articulate my skills.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q4. Learning to assess my skills is useful to me for my future career search.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q5. The competencies, skills, behaviours and tasks described in the Self-Assessment were relevant to my background, social location and identity.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree

- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q6. The Self-Assessment was accessible to me.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q7. How might the experience of completing the Self-Assessment be improved?

Appendix E: Post-Workshop Feedback Surveys

Standard Questions for All Three Workshops

Q1. How valuable was the workshop content?

- Extremely valuable
- Very valuable
- Somewhat valuable
- Not so valuable
- Not at all valuable

Q2. How useful were the learning activities to improving your understanding of the material?

- Extremely useful
- Very useful
- Somewhat useful
- Not so useful
- Not at all useful

Q3. How organized was the workshop?

- Extremely organized
- Very organized
- Somewhat organized
- Not so organized
- Not at all organized

Q4. How likely are you to recommend this workshop to other doctoral students?

- Extremely likely
- Very likely
- Somewhat likely
- Not so likely
- Not at all likely

Q4. The delivery format and methods of participation met my learning needs.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q5. The information was relevant to my background, social location and identity.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q8. What were the strengths of this workshop?

Q9. What were some areas where this workshop could improve?

Questions Specific to Workshop 1

Q6. The workshop improved my understanding of the skills I develop in my doctoral studies.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q7. The workshop helped me notice skills that I am weaker or stronger in.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Questions Specific to Workshop 2

Q6. The workshop improved my ability to prepare responses to interview questions.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q7. The workshop improved my understanding of effective job search strategies.

- Strongly agree

- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Questions Specific to Workshop 3

Q6. The workshop improved my confidence in my ability to network with employers.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q7. The workshop helped me understand how my skills and experiences connect to multiple career opportunities.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree