

“ONCE YOU KNOW WHO YOU ARE, YOU CAN START TO SKETCH YOUR CAREER PLAN.”



Katrin Büchenbacher, a graduate student at the Sciences Po School of Communication, talks about the discoveries she made during the career building workshop at Sciences Po. She discusses why knowing who you are is all-important when it comes to defining your career plan.

Why did you attend this workshop?

I am interested in many sectors and I have already interned in journalism and in political communication. However, showing an interest for these professional fields does not mean they would suit my personality.

For my next internship, I want to work in a sector that really corresponds to who I am, at both the personal and professional levels. I thought that this workshop could help me make a more enlightened choice.

What was the coach's pedagogical approach?

The coach was really inspiring. As a Sciences Po alumna, she knows what it is like for us at Sciences Po and she helped us break free from what we are expected to do, who we are supposed to become after studying at Sciences Po.

At first, we thought we would be working on our resume and improving how we present ourselves to recruiters. But actually the coach helped us become aware of our personal resources. She helped us define our values, our strengths and our interests; she had us reflect on the environments we like and the sectors we want to go into. It was a demanding and difficult exercise because we are not used to reflecting on ourselves.

She made us scrutinise ourselves but never alone, always in small groups. We had to share our personal discoveries with the others.

We were encouraged to think long term. For instance, one of the exercises was to imagine a newspaper headline about ourselves 40 years from now, then think through all the steps that would have brought us to that point.

What did you get out of this workshop?

Before attending the workshop, I was confused about my future. I knew what I liked and what I didn't like, I had quite a precise understanding of my interests, but still I was confused about the career path I wanted to embrace.

The workshop helped me know myself better. I know that I need independence and that I don't want to join a company with a rigid hierarchy. The workshop also revealed that I am a creative person and that it is important for me to work in a team. Finally, it is clear now that my work has to make sense for me. I want the cause to be central to my job.

Once you start to know who you are, to reflect on the type of place you would like to work in and the level of independence you need, you can start to sketch your career plan.