

*Blazing a Career Path in
Plant Pathology:
Non-traditional careers in
Government service*

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What is non-Traditional ?

- **Doing what your professors did not want or expect you to do !!**
- **Ending up on the edge of the bell – shaped curve (2 SDs out)**
- **Challenging yourself to do something that may scare (and stimulate) you**

My Experiences / Quo vadis ?

- **Drake Univ. / ISU / Pioneer Hi-Bred Intl.**
- **Dept Plant Path – Univ. Nebraska - Lincoln**
- **Stalk Rot Research – maize / sorghum**
- **Grant Funding – re-direction / tissue culture**
- **Proteomics / Molecular Revolution**
- **Post-doc Bt-Cotton / Agrigenetics**
- **Post-doc DR-sugar beet / Transformation**
- **USDA-ARS – Insect Biocontrol - sugarbeet**

Experiences continued

- **EPA – Office of Pesticide Programs, Biopesticides Division**
- **USDA-CSREES – Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service**
 - **Competitive Programs / Plant Animal Systems**
 - **Food Biotechnology / Microbiology**
 - **Biotechnology Risk Assessment**

Skill Sets / Observations

- **Perseverance (Cranial-rock syndrome)**
- **Flexibility / Generalist vs. Specialist**
- **Desire – passion for your goals**
- **People skills – Schmooz potential**
- **Communication – written and oral**
- **Team membership**
- **Maintain a balance – have a life !!**

Finding a Government Position

- <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/>
- <http://www.fedworld.gov/jobs/jobsearch.html>
- <http://federaljobs.net/>
- <http://www.federaljobsearch.com/>
- <http://www.jobbankusa.com/FederalJobs/federal-jobs-location.html>
- **Agency websites**
- **Network !!!**

Job Hunting – Is this my career?

- **If you feel you want the job, apply for it!!**
- **Don't be afraid to call with questions**
- **Approach people at meetings, by phone, or e-mail, but make contact**
- **Don't fall victim to myths and apathy**
- **Change is not always a bad thing!**
- **Continue courses, workshops, training**
- **Serendipity will visit you often.....**

One Final Thought

- **Try to understand your colleagues by walking a mile in their shoes**

- **.....That way, when you understand them, you will be a mile away and still have their shoes!**