

Jobs Outside Academia



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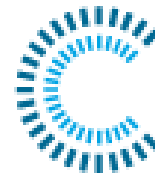


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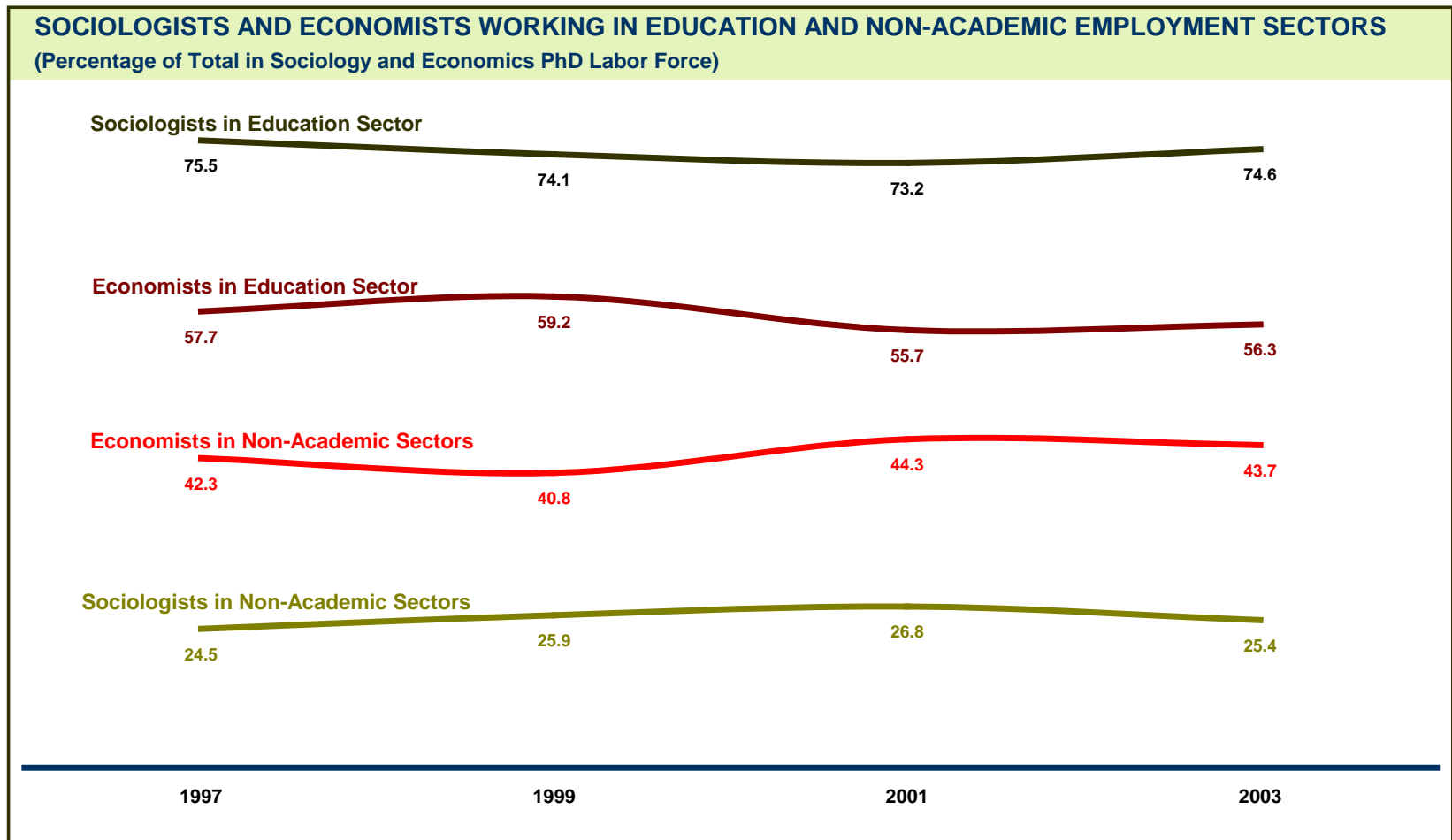


CATALYST
Changing workplaces. Changing lives.



McKinsey & Company

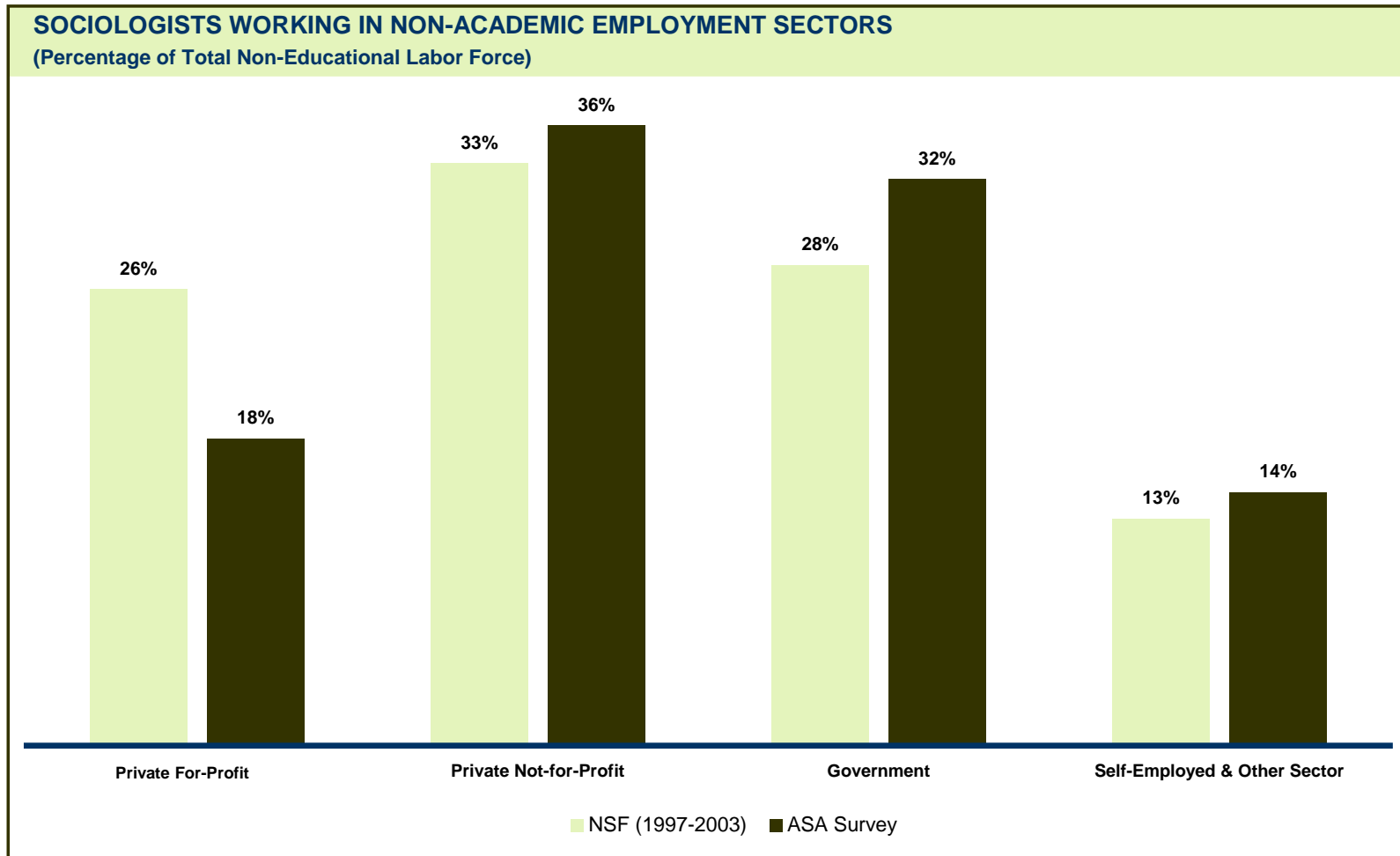
Few sociologists work outside academia.



* Sociology and Anthropology PhDs are combined in these years.

Source: National Science Foundation, Science Resources Statistics, *Characteristics of Doctoral Scientists and Engineers in the United States* (Arlington, VA: NSF, 1999 – 2006), retrieved March 26, 2007 (http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/pubseri.cfm?seri_id=13#1993).

Where do sociologists outside academia work?



Source: American Sociological Association, Research and Development Department, *Beyond the Ivory Tower: A Survey of Non-Academic PhDs in Sociology* (Washington, DC: ASA, 2006); National Science Foundation, Science Resources Statistics, *Characteristics of Doctoral Scientists and Engineers in the United States* (Arlington, VA: NSF, 1999-2006), retrieved December 15, 2006 (http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/pubseri.cfm?seri_id=13#1993).

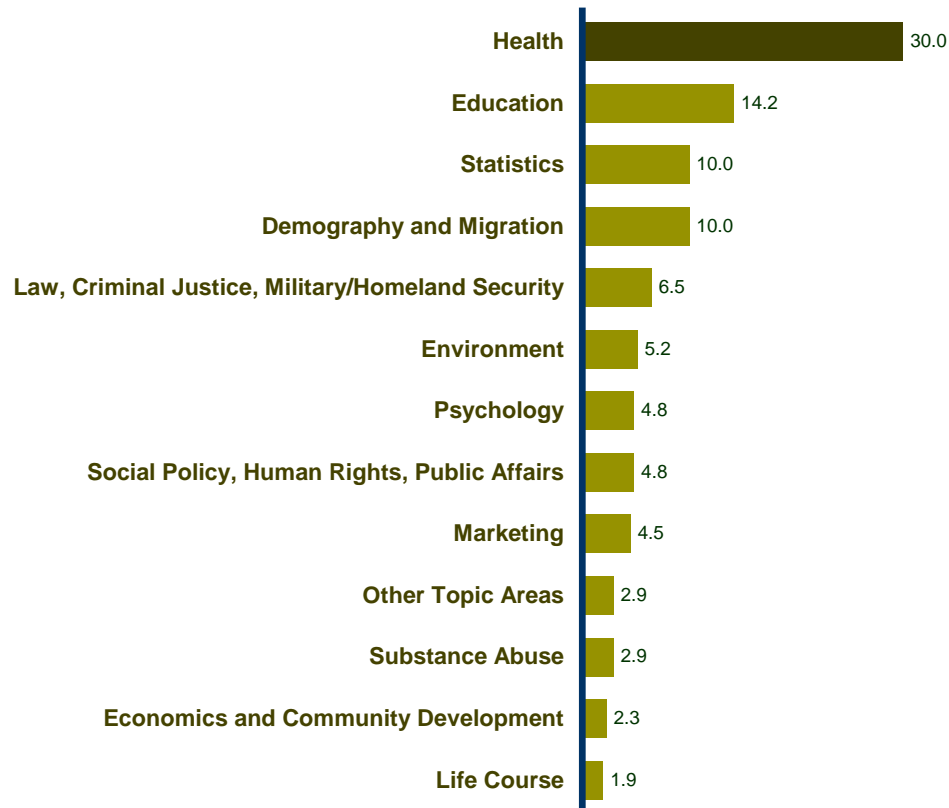
Opportunities in the Bay Area: Organizations that (Might) Hire PhD Sociologists

- **Bridgespan** (SF; non-profit consulting)
- **McKinsey** (SF; for-profit consulting)
- **Google** (Mountainview; for-profit internet services)
- **Mathematica Policy Research** (Oakland; non-profit research)
- **Public Policy Institute of California** (SF; non-profit research)
- **MDRC** (Oakland; non-profit research/policy evaluation)
- **SRI International** (Palo Alto; non-profit research)
- **The State of California** (Sacramento)

Specialties of Sociologists Working Outside Academia

TOPICAL AREA CHARACTERISTICS OF NON-ACADEMIC PHD SOCIOLOGISTS

(Percentage of Respondents)



Source: American Sociological Association, Research and Development Department, *Beyond the Ivory Tower: A Survey of Non-Academic PhDs in Sociology* (Washington, DC: ASA, 2006).

Examples of Non-Academic Jobs for Sociology PhDs

- A sociologist serving as vice president for research in a large insurance company applies both methodological expertise and understanding of ethnicity and gender in developing staff training programs and employee benefit packages.
- A sociologist specializing in urban and community research consults for a multinational corporation developing new towns.
- A sociologist in a large advertising company supervises marketing research operations and organizational development workshops.

Example: (Anonymized) Non-Academic Job Posting

[Organization] is an independent research organization in [Major City]. We collaborate with government agencies, educational institutions, nonprofit organizations and businesses to provide data analysis and compile reports that contribute to informed decisionmaking in health, education, economics, crime, justice, and the environment.

We are seeking a Senior Research Analyst who will:

- ✓ Take the lead on key tasks related to research design, data collection and analysis while assisting the project manager to keep projects on track
- ✓ Develop qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments
- ✓ Analyze quantitative and qualitative data
- ✓ Draft report and presentations
- ✓ Assist with management, coordination, and budgeting of projects

Requirements:

- ✓ Masters' degree plus a minimum of two years' social science research experience (this includes experience playing a lead role in study design)
- ✓ Experience using and designing qualitative data collection tools including surveys, interviews, site visits, and focus groups
- ✓ Strong analytic ability, writing, and organizational skills are required
- ✓ Quantitative research experience using statistical software packages such as Stata or SAS preferred

Real Example: Pinterest (thanks, Tamera!)

Market Researcher

- We're looking for an experienced market researcher to help us reveal deep and actionable insights about the millions of people using Pinterest. The right person will be a career researcher who can design, execute and communicate strategic research on a deadline. Bonus points if you have previously researched brand, commerce, and platform in discovery, social or graph based product.
- We're looking for someone who is creative, is a talented methodologist, says "yes" and is excited to try new things, is a radical collaborator, cares most about shipping products and helping people have great experiences

Responsibilities

- Develop market research at Pinterest. Your research may include brand, commerce, positioning analysis, copy testing, partner relations and competitive analysis (international and domestic).
- Do research that varies in approach, scale, scope, timeframe and research methodologies
- Collaborates with a variety of project teams at Pinterest.
- Proactively communicate and share your research findings with team members, the Pinterest community and other audiences.
- Lead research projects from beginning to end. This will include ideation, brainstorming, prototyping and launching products.

Requirements: degree related to research (social sciences, marketing, digital media etc.), 3+ years experience researching consumer-facing products, expert in market research related to commerce, brand and platforms, comfortable with qualitative and quantitative methods, able to travel for work

This is a full-time position in San Francisco reporting to the research manager.

General Issues to Consider

- PhD's entering the non-academic realm are undertaking a full-fledged career change
- This process can be energizing and exciting, but often brings with it a great deal of anxiety
- There are steps you can take to reduce your anxiety, and increase your successes out there in the “real” world....

What's in your way? Emotional

- You've been socialized to see a nonacademic career as a personal failure.
- A typical PhD education tends to stamp out the voice inside us that tells us what we want, what comes naturally, and what we love to do.
- You may feel that leaving academia means leaving all those accomplishments, sacrifices, years of investment behind you.
- You're convinced you know nothing.

What's in your way? Functional

- You're surrounded by academics.
- Your mentor, advisor, or greatest advocate may not support you if you leave the fold.
- Your accomplishments are hard to communicate to people outside of academia.
- You don't have a traditional work history, and may be judged as overeducated, yet under-qualified.

What can you do?

First things first...

- Broaden your value system beyond that of academia.
- Reconnect with your preferences, passions, and long-term goals.
- Connect with PhDs working outside of academia.
- Reframe your education (what it can do for you, not what its keeping you from doing).

Exploring the Non-Academic Job Market

An effective job search requires some focus and some flexibility:

- **Research** fields and industries through informational interviews, Career Center libraries, and the Internet.
- **Learn** the language, values, and culture of the industries that interest you.
- **Be open** and flexible in the face of unforeseen events and opportunities.

Assessing Yourself

- Move away from thinking in terms of your accomplishments, and think in terms of the skills you've developed.
- Reframe your research or teaching experiences to match the industry you're entering.
 - For example, a consulting firm would be interested in your strong communication skills, training skills, and complex problem solving skills.

Presenting Yourself

There is no substitute for a clear, concise, targeted resume.

- Study resumes from the industry you're entering.
- Apply their language and constructs to describe your background and experience.
- Keep it short (1-2 pages), and easy to read.
- Get feedback on your resume from someone who works in the industry.

Resume Tips

Reframe, rather than disregard, your academic experience:

- Translate knowledge...
 - e.g.: My dissertation described the impact of nongovernmental organizations on the development of democratic institutions in Kenya.
- ... into skills
 - e.g.: Researched and wrote a dissertation. Identified research problem and designed criteria to evaluate possible explanations. Developed timeline, cultivated contacts in Kenya, and supervised a team of undergraduate researchers.

Skills? What skills do PhDs have?

- Supervision skills
- Interpersonal and communication skills
- Research and planning skills

Supervision Skills

- Scheduling and monitoring groups of students
- Managing conflict
- Training, coaching, managing groups, delegating, coordinating events
- Promoting and facilitating change
- Developing new ideas, solutions to group problems

Interpersonal & Communication Skills

- Public speaking, professional presentations, lecturing
- Active listening, motivating, representing others' ideas
- Writing, editing, abstracting
- “Performance feedback” to students and colleagues
- Mediation, counseling, collaboration

Research & Planning Skills

- Creating new ideas
- Problem-solving
- Identifying resources and gathering background information
- Needs analysis, program development, outcome evaluation
- Grant-writing and documentation
- **RESEARCH!!**

Qualitative Skills

- Survey and questionnaire design
- Interviewing techniques
- Qualitative textual analysis and software –
ATLAS.ti, NUDIST, ...

Quantitative Skills

- Excel (pivot tables), Stata, SAS, SPSS, Gauss, ...
- Open-source computer languages – R, Python, ...
- Time-series methods (including event-history and event-count methods)
- Hierarchical/multi-level analysis
- Bayesian statistics
- Network analysis – UCINet, Gephi, ...
- Quantitative textual analysis – ReadMe, WordStat, ...

When times are tough...

...managers take few chances:

- Seek out opportunities to get hands-on experience in the field (i.e. part-time entry-level, freelance, volunteer, apprenticeship).
- Show initiative, and be ready to clearly communicate WHY you're interested, convey enthusiasm, and express your willingness and desire to learn.

Resources on the Web

- <http://howtoleaveacademia.com/>
 - Peer-to-peer support network
- www.beyondacademe.com
 - Aimed at historians but also useful to sociologists.
- www.versatilephd.com
 - A web-based community focused entirely on non-academic careers for humanists and social scientists.
- <http://chronicle.com/jobs/archive/advice/beyond.htm>
 - Beyond the Ivory Tower – *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

Conference on Non-Academic Jobs at UCB

- Friday, 22 March – sold out but consider attending if they run a sequel next year – or contact the organizers

http://newscenter.berkeley.edu/2013/03/20/beyond-academia/?utm_source=UC+Berkeley+NewsCenter&utm_campaign=93b8693bae-NC_Email_List&utm_medium=email