

Studies, Career and Expertise

Hi! The purpose of this video is to consider the connection between your studies and your career, the meaning of a career and career planning, and what we talk about when we talk about the growth of expertise.

Careers and career planning are big words that we primarily associate with the job market. However, as everything in life is connected, you cannot plan your professional life separately from the other areas of your life. Your career is a journey through education, employment and life. You have already made many choices and decisions to achieve what you find meaningful. In other words, your career has already begun. Career planning requires being fully oriented towards the future and poses slightly different challenges for everyone, at various stages of life. However, when you have time, it is a good idea to consider your future plans.

What about expertise? It is another big word that may seem remote, but the growth of expertise is what studies and academic education aim for. Expertise is not a title you receive when you graduate, but something you develop throughout your studies.

In addition to the knowledge and skills you acquire through your studies, expertise includes a wide range of employment and career skills you develop and apply during your studies. The growth of expertise can be viewed as a process involving the accumulation of various types of capital. Let's explore this matter in a little bit more detail.

Your studies naturally focus on skills and understanding relating to your field. This is probably your primary reason for studying at university. However, various forms and methods of study also develop what are known as transferable skills, which are not directly connected to your field. You acquire groupwork and communication skills, learn to analyse and argue, work on a project, solve problems creatively, and so on. Such transferable skills are also part of your expertise.

As your studies begin, you also get to know other students. You may discover that although they are interested in some of the same topics as you are, many of them have very different ideas about their studies and future and that you probably also come from different backgrounds. You also begin to plan your studies. You must find out about the options available to you before you can make the right choices for you. To make your choices, you may also need information on what previous graduates in your field have done and what types of positions they currently hold. Creating contacts, in other words, getting to know other people, and being aware of your options are part of the social capital of an expert.

During your studies, you will also come across various unwritten rules and customs: for example, you may already have heard that lectures at the University of Helsinki always begin at 15 past the hour. Academic discourse may also appear strange at first. All communities have such tacit rules and practices. You may recognise them, for instance, from your hobbies, job or trainee positions.

You may also be surprised to discover that skills you have acquired outside the academic world support your studies: perhaps you have learned to become a good listener for your friends, to schedule your activities due to a time-consuming hobby or to keep calm and work well under pressure as a result of a difficult experience. The ability to tap into the tacit knowledge of a community as well as the skills acquired outside your studies are part of your cultural capital.

As your studies progress, your thoughts about your field and what you find interesting will probably evolve. You may begin to develop a stronger identity as a university student or a student of a specific field or an identity otherwise connected to your education.

You will also face situations in which you must describe your skills and motivation to others, for example, when applying for a job or a traineeship position or taking part in a discussion on your personal study plan. Identifying and articulating your skills, values, motivation and strengths and observing the development of your thinking are related to your identity capital, whose formation is a highly personal process lasting throughout your studies.

Not everything goes to plan in studies or other areas of life. Recognising the limits of your coping, means of recovery, and the ability to tolerate uncertainty, change and disappointment are key parts of your psychological capital, which you will need in your studies, employment and private life. These skills are also crucial for an expert.

As we have seen above, the growth of expertise is a continuous process based on all types of experiences. When considering your future, your skills or your expertise, or searching for support or advice for a traineeship or job-seeking, please explore the sections *Work and career* and *Traineeships* on the Instructions for Students website.

The website also offers information on the University's Career Services. We are here for you throughout your studies and up to a year after your graduation.

Let's be in touch!