

# Perspectives from Grad Cohort Alums

Pamela Gibbs  
Marilyn Iriarte  
Shruthi Kubatur



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# Pamela Gibbs

Wife, mom of 2 humans & a dog.

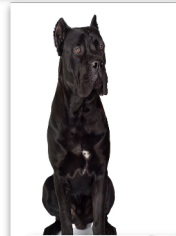
B.S.(2), MBA, DSc. holder

Currently at a Crypto Start-up

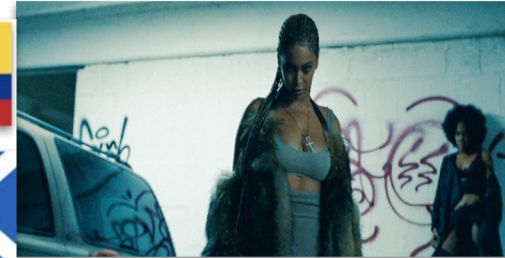
Lover of travel pop culture, & all things Beyoncé.

My career? I go to the beat of my own drum...I'm paid to be nosey.

*"My life is dope. I do dope shhhh."* - Kanye West



UNIVERSITY OF  
BALTIMORE



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# Maximizing your experience during CRA

- Take a moment and recognize that you're here - live in that moment
- Connect with others, network and create relationships
- Expand your experience by attending a variety of talks
  - Coming up with a game plan
- There is no such thing as a dumb question - ask anyway



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# Maximizing your experience post CRA

- Explore the city with friends/new friends
- Find out what makes this city unique
- Try to do at least 1 cultural thing
- Capture memories
- Don't miss the party



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# Lessons learned from CRA

- Embrace your story - it's your secret sauce and it has value
- Recognize that you aren't alone in feeling unsure - imposter syndrome is real thing
- Build community
- Volunteer whenever you can
- Actively develop time management skills, setting boundaries, and saying NO



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# Impact of CRA on my life...



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# Marilyn Iriarte

Third-year Ph.D. Candidate  
University of Maryland

Research Interests: HCI, CSCW,  
Identity Development, Adolescents,  
Underrepresented populations.

Contact: [miriarte@umd.edu](mailto:miriarte@umd.edu)



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# How CRA has influenced me throughout my career?

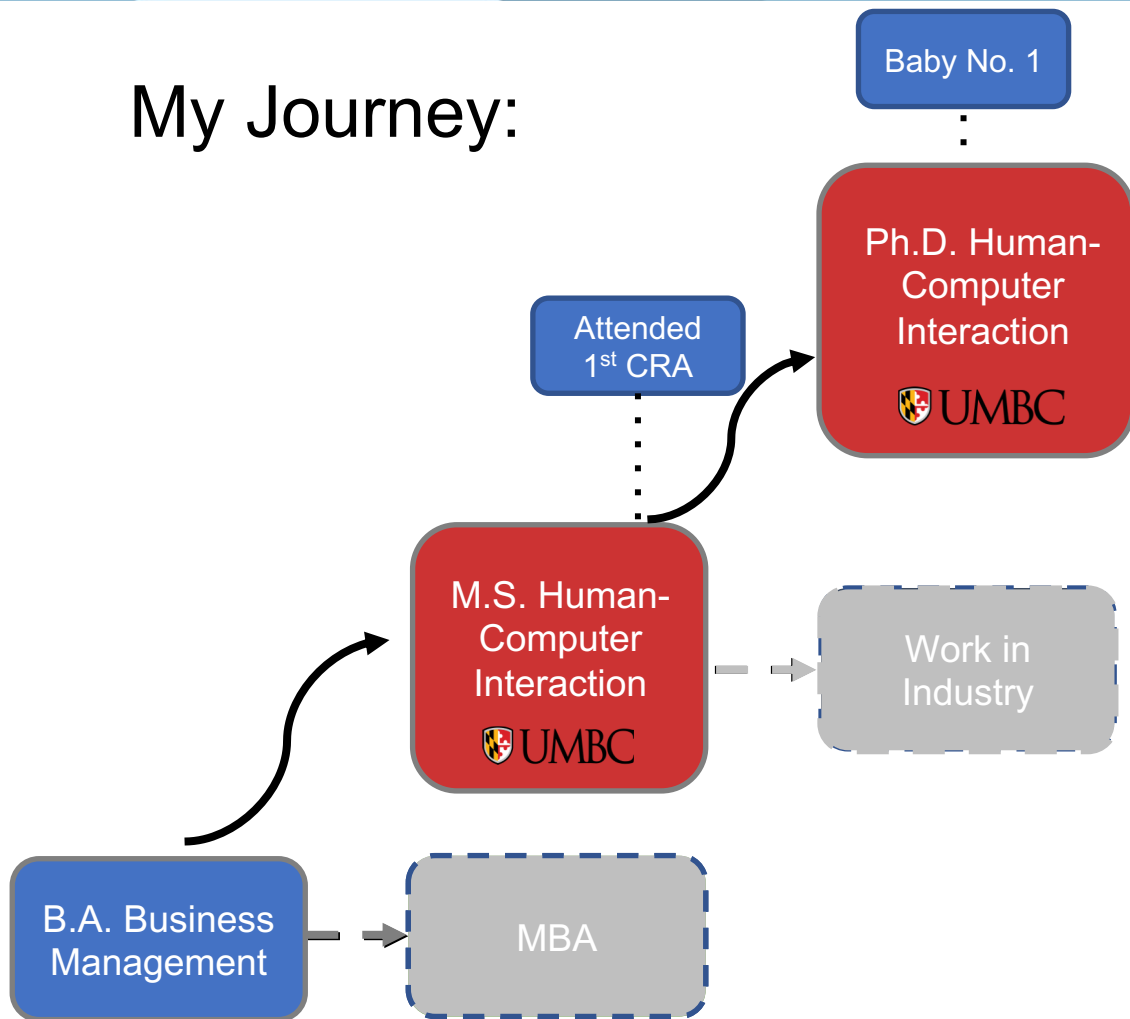
- Knowing the different paths
  - Ph.D. vs Work
  - Academia vs Industry
- Making peace with my timeline
  - I had two little girls while doing my Ph.D.
  - Starting Ph.D. all over again
- Building my support network
  - Family and friends
  - Community (field and partners)
  - Service



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## My Journey:



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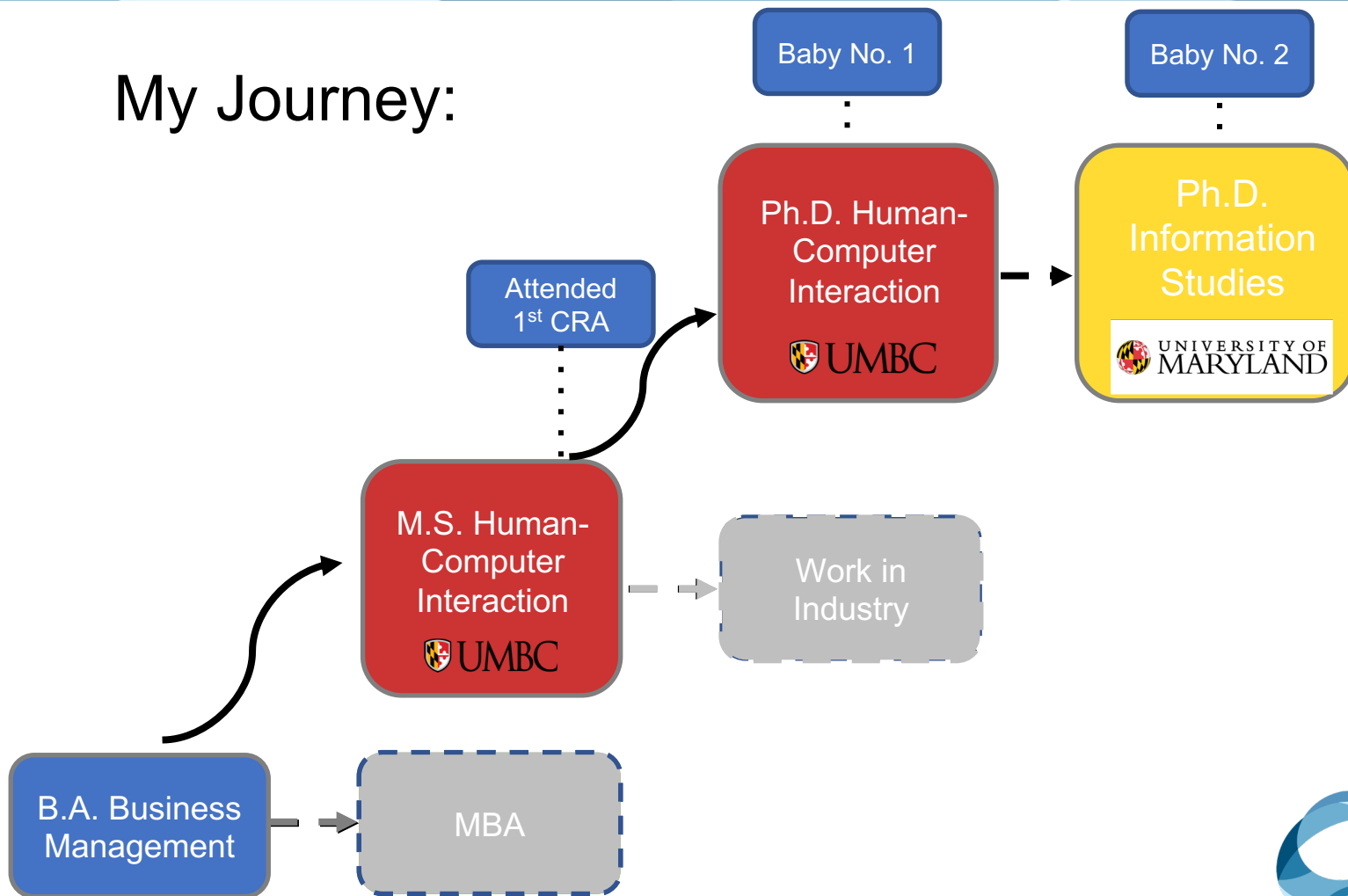


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# My Journey:



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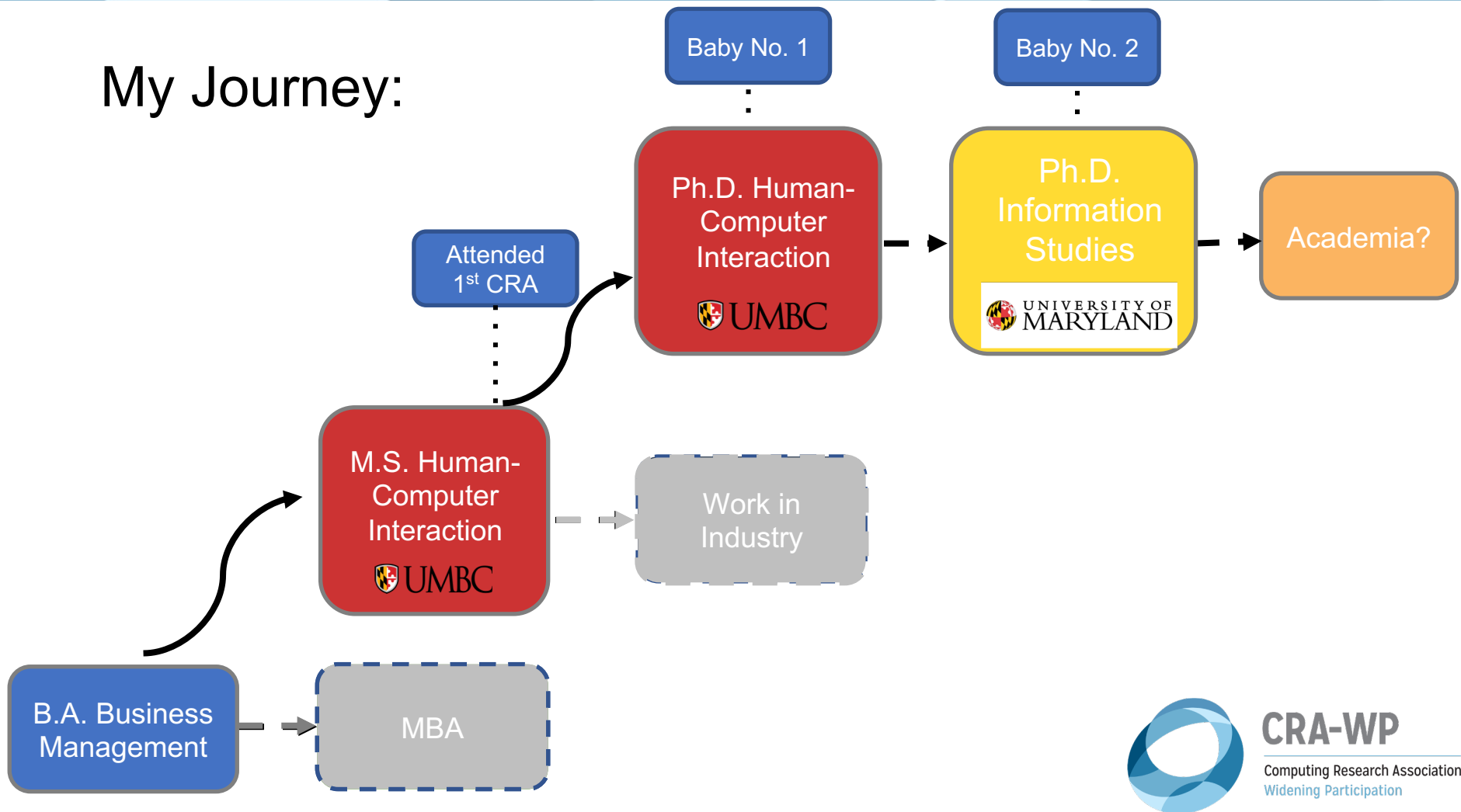


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# My Journey:



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# Building my network

- Family
- Friends especially those that I made through CRA
- Community: Other fellow Ph.D. students, professors, and partners (VineCorps & Multicultural Latino Youth Center)
- Service: So important to give back!



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# Shruthi Kubatur

PhD (Electrical Engineering) from Purdue

Advisor: Prof. Mary Comer

PhD Thesis: **Rare-event modeling and simulation using Gibbs distribution**

Can we characterize images of natural systems with Gibbs distributions?

Can we model abnormal / rare behavior? (e.g. defects)

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MS (Electrical Engg.) from U. Windsor, Canada

MS Thesis: Unconstrained handwriting recognition



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Environment + Work Culture

CRA-WP topics that helped me



Fast-paced innovation  
Uncompromising quality  
Highly collaborative

Year 1: **Networking**

Year 2:  
**Interdisciplinary research**

Year 3: **Industrial research & development**



Uncharted territory  
Close-knit community  
Wear multiple hats

Year 2: **Building self confidence**

Year 3: **Industrial research & development**



Work with HQ in Japan  
Get funds from Japan  
Research focus

Year 1: **Summer internships**

Year 3: **Industrial research & development**

Disclaimer: Shruthi Kubatur does NOT represent or speak for Apple Inc., Berkeley Lights, Nikon Research Corp., or Purdue University. These are her individual opinions formed from personal experiences. This presentation does not contain directly or indirectly any proprietary material from any of the companies or organizations listed above.



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# THE CONFERENCE MORNING SESSION



[WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM](http://WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM)

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Why does it take a grad student 5-6 years to realize it pays to be present at conferences?



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## What a typical PhD student does

Year ↓	1	Advisor hunt / <b>Qualifying Exam</b>
	2	Tries to <b>impress advisor</b> Hunts down free pizza
	3	<b>Attends conferences</b> (sorted by venue: Spain > Hawaii >> Ohio)
	4	Research setback — <b>Takes math courses</b> to see if they help
	5	Research back on track — “ <b>did someone mention CRA-WP</b> at the Zurich conference dinner gala?”
	6	Thinks of graduating <b>Last-minute networking</b> at CRA-WP

## In any case, **do this at CRA-WP**

Learn about **open problems** in industry

**Give research talks** about your ideas —  
**get feedback**; ask about **internships**

Learn about open problems in industry (2x)  
Ask about **job opportunities**

Come back and talk about your experience!



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# CRA-WP Topics

## Year 1

Networking, Finding Your Advisor, Financially Supporting Your Graduate Education, Summer Internships

## Year 2

Presentation and Other Verbal Communication Skills, Finding a Research Topic, MS Career Opportunities and Job Search, Building Self-Confidence, Interdisciplinary Research

## Year 3

Preparing Your Thesis Proposal and Becoming a PhD Candidate, Publishing Your Research, PhD Academic Career Paths, PhD Non-Academic Career Paths: Industrial Research and Development, PhD Job Search

## Legend

Grad school skill

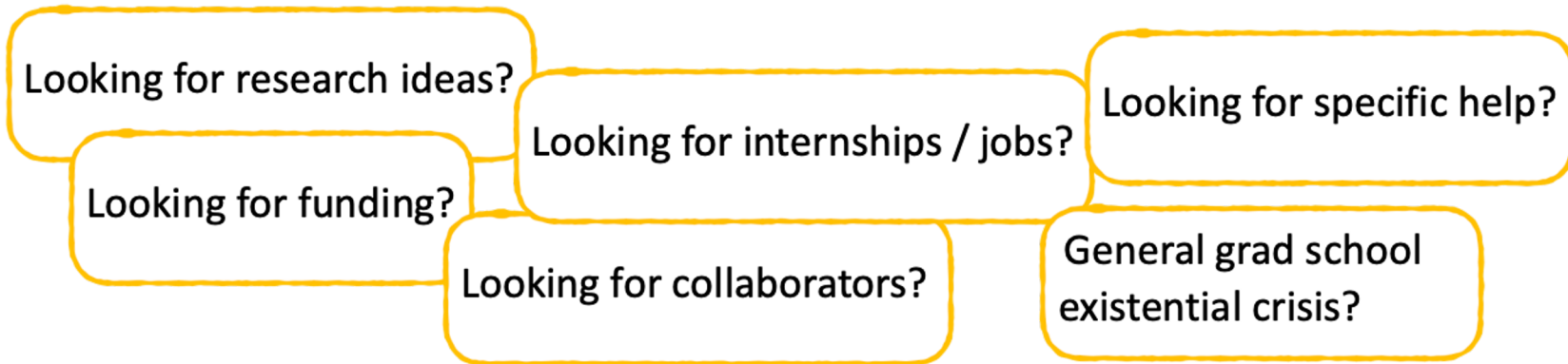
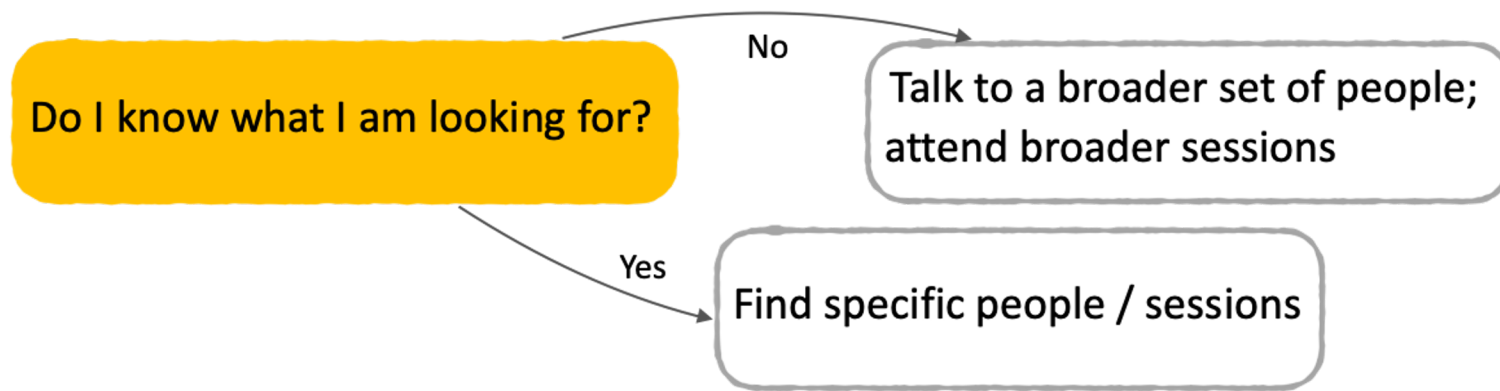
Industry skill

Universal skill



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**Come talk to us! CRA-WP is the place!**



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# THANK YOU!

**Come talk to us! CRA-WP is the place!**



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