TIBBS Career Blitz Career Profile Questionnaire

1. Please provide your name and employer:

   Rachel Corr - Little Otter

2. What is your current title and how long have you worked in your current job?

   Software Engineer - 4 months

3. Where did you get your PhD and what discipline was it in?

   UNC-CH, Neuroscience (through BBSP)

4. Did you do a postdoc?

   No

5. What are your main daily responsibilities?
   - Writing code to help organize and visualize data collected for children's therapy appointments (both for tracking patient progress and submitting claims to insurance)
   - Updating our application to reduce the number of manual/repetitive tasks being completed by patients and providers
   - Reviewing other engineers' code
   - Meetings with executives/clinicians/admin/other stakeholders to discuss my projects

6. What are the keys to success in your career field?
   - Being able to learn new techniques quickly and transfer skills from one programming language to another.
   - Communicating with executives/clinicians/admin/other stakeholders who don't have a technical background to determine what work needs to be done and how they can best utilize the tools you've built.

7. What were the most important factors in choosing your career path and current employer?

   I was looking for a software engineering position at a mental health tech company, because I am passionate about mental health and enjoy writing code. I entered graduate school planning to stay in academia and study the neurological bases of mental illness, but realized that while I loved coding and data analysis, I strongly disliked writing grants and scientific papers. The career path (and employer) I picked allows me to work on the causes I care about while doing the computational work I enjoy doing.

8. What activities (if any) did you participate in that helped you be successful in obtaining your job?

   I took 4 electives based in the undergraduate computer science department while I was a neuroscience PhD student, which is definitely not

standard for grad students, but was necessary for gaining the skills to switch fields.

        I also spent my free time developing some websites so I had completed projects to show potential employers.

9. What 1 or 2 pieces of advice do you have for people who want to land a job like yours?

        Graduate school is supposed to be a learning experience, so don't be afraid to take classes if they will provide skills you are interested in learning, even though that may slow your research progress.

        Since I was switching career fields, I did not technically meet the requirements for most of the jobs I applied for, but still applied anyway. In the end, I applied for 56 jobs in my last few months of grad school, had interviews with ~10 companies within the last 2 weeks of graduate school and received 3 job offers I needed to decide between in the span of 24 hours (which was extremely stressful). The software engineering interview process often requires completing several technical interviews for each company, making it fairly time intensive, and staying organized and prepping for coding interviews was necessary to manage all of the moving pieces.

10. How is the work/life balance in your career field and how much of a factor was that in your career choice?

        Because I work at a startup, there are definitely times when I need to work late or run a few things on the weekends when deadlines are approaching or something breaks, but overall the balance is better than academia and my company strongly encourages people to actually use their unlimited PTO. My company is also 100% remote, which does mean sometimes meetings occur at odd hours since we are spread across several time zones, but it's great not having to deal with a commute and working from home.