

## **Current Position Description and Information**

**Name:** Melissa Steach

**Title:** Human Factors & Ergonomics Specialist

**Current Affiliation:** Herman Miller, Inc.

**Highest Degree Obtained:** Doctoral Candidate - slated to complete SP/FA 2019

**Field or sub-discipline:** I-O Psychology

**Please provide us a short description of your current position, and the work you do on a daily basis. This will be made available to the attendees on a handout as part of the webinar resources (no more than 250 words is needed):**

Engage with key customers to identify needs and deliver human factors insights. Launch relevant products and conduct first line product training sessions to internal team and dealer partners. Consistently and regularly apply new knowledge in customer engagements. Contribute to strategic business and forecasting discussions with regional leadership and dealer principles to facilitate successful client engagement. Cultivate strong relationship with non-traditional mobilizers and coaches. This includes commercial industries as well as architecture and design firms. Deliver human factors Continuing Education Units (CEUs) to appropriate audiences. Transfer subject matter expert knowledge to internal and external audiences via presentations, case studies, white papers, and published articles. Serve as a keynote speaker in area(s) of expertise. Focus on applying research and trends to educate clients. Creatively apply relevant knowledge to connect with clients' needs and deliver work environments with a better outcome for people. Achieve and maintain technical proficiency in human factors and keep current on research, trends, and conditions.

**In your current job, are there other titles/roles for people doing similar work at other organization, universities, or companies? If so, what are those titles/roles?**

Ergonomics as an integral part of space planning and interior design via work tools is fairly new. That said, other titles/roles that share a similar concern for the betterment of people at work facilitated by the built environment are: Workplace Strategist (more design focused); Ergonomics or Facilities Director (commercial and education); Environmental Psychologist (very few programs/job positions in U.S. but well known in Europe)



**What skills and abilities did you learn in your training (i.e., graduate school, postdoctoral experience), do you find are most useful in your job/career?**

I've had a lot of jobs and find that I regularly pull from even the most seemingly disparate work experiences to inform my career. That said, real-world work experience is the best experience. Beyond that, my fine arts training shaped my understanding of body mechanics and the impacts of color and proportion on people. Experience working as a bartender/actress made me a good listener, which is invaluable in any vocation. For someone interested in human factors and ergonomics specifically, obtaining a CEAS I or II credential is handy. Lastly, being credentialed in positive psychology interventions not only improved my personal life, it's improved my professional practice.

**Career Pathway and Past Experiences**

**How did you get the job you are currently in? Please provide a brief history of your career path/journey. Our attendees are interested in knowing more about how one achieves a current position like yours, and what opportunities or experiences help open doors or create opportunities.**

Along with my sales and business development experience, my training in art and psychology gave me a perspective on human factors and ergonomics that my employer deemed valuable. After being hired, I added CEAS I accreditation to my experience to help fill my knowledge gaps. In brief, I believe that my colorful work history informs my career as an I-O Psychologist. Our job is to unpack the psychology of people at work.

**If someone wanted to follow a similar career path to your own, how would you suggest going about it? Please offer specifics/examples whenever possible: Networking is always good.**

I suggest attending local APA, SIOP, SHRM, OD, and ATD events to get sense of what the field is like and if you identify with those professionals. A presence on LinkedIn can give you exposure to job recruiters as well as like-minded professionals. Obtain credentials that are both valuable to the job and interesting to you. Some examples are CEAS I or II, LEED AP and WELL AP. If you're interested in becoming a Workplace Strategist, you should consider taking interior design classes to learn CAD and space-planning.

**Are there specific resources for open positions in your career field, and if so what are they?**



Herman Miller posts job openings on our career page. My role is currently open in San Francisco and San Diego. Commercial real estate companies like CBRE and AECOM have a history of hiring I-O Psychologists and Workplace Strategist.