

Office for Postdoctoral Fellows presents...

HMS/SHS/DM

Academic Careers and CV's

**Applying for
Assistant Professor
Positions at
Research Universities**

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TMEC Amp**

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Job Search Resources

- Website with tips: <http://bcmp.med.harvard.edu/>
Choose education and training

Where to find jobs?

- Cell, Science, Nature (sign up for free job alerts)
- Letters

A common question:

- How many places should I apply to?

The Search Committee

- 3–7 faculty
- broad interests

The Job Application

- Be brief! (100s applications)
- Avoid sloppy mistakes
 - Have several people proof-read
- Late? Apply anyway!

The Cover Letter

- One page total!
- Basic Information
 - Your name
 - What you are applying for
 - Your current position
- Past research
 - Short, Punchy
 - Add short format references
(Jones, Genes&Dev. 3, 215–225)
 - Don't be modest!
- Future plans
 - Why are they novel??

The Curriculum Vitae

- Name and Address
- All higher education
- All professional positions held
- All time accounted for!
- Awards and honors (starting with college)
- Current major funding (K award)
- Publications
 - Most recent first
 - Your name in **bold** type
 - Do not switch authors! Put asterisk next to the names
 - Manuscripts submitted or in press, include a copy
 - Point out News and Views articles on your work
 - Manuscripts in preparation (separate section, not more than two)
 - New MS accepted, send it in!
- Invited talks (meetings, other, no posters!)
- Teaching experience/interests (if the job has teaching emphasis)
- 3–5 References (name, title, address, phone, email)
 - Choose carefully!
 - Reputation vs. Support
 - Cultivating references early
 - Give them your package
 - If asked, write your own letter
- No special interests (e.g., kayaking or basketweaving)

Research Proposal

- Can be deciding factor in getting invited
- Page limit!! 2, 3 maximum
- Use cartoons
- Intro (~20%)
 - Excite general reader
 - Show broad perspective
- Past work (~30%)
 - Skip graduate work unless it's key
 - Brief, and emphasize novelty
- Future Plans (~50%)
 - ~3 Broad aims
 - 5 year plan
 - Creative, interesting, important
 - Feasible (for you)!!
 - Mention long-term visions

How NOT to start your research proposal!

As part of my longstanding interest in Kidney development, I have been studying the gene, X. This gene is expressed in Kidney precursors....

The Interview

Two objectives:

1. Your work is exciting
2. You will make a great colleague

Job Talk

- Most-important part of academic interview
- Be extremely well-prepared
 - 1 month full time preparation
 - Write out entire talk? (~5000 words)
 - Practice, practice to naïve faculty
 - Schedule low priority places 1st
- 50 minutes!
- Powerpoint is great (in 2007, a must!)
- Simple, attractive slides
 - Use available space
 - Use color only to help the viewer
 - Simple title for each slide
 - One idea per slide
 - No more than 35-40 slides
- Talk Parts
 - One-liner on topic and main conclusion
 - Introduction (get audience interest!)
 - why is work important?
 - unanswered questions?
 - Overview
 - Part I (question, data, conclusion, mini-model)
 - Part II (question, data, conclusion, mini-model)
 - Grand Model
 - Summary of Data and Conclusions
 - Future Plans (5 minutes) even if you give chalk talk
 - Acknowledgements Be generous
- Keys to a good talk:
 - Repetition
 - Simplicity/Clarity
 - Use “I” when appropriate
 - Good use of pointer

One-on-one Meetings

- Student/faculty ratio
- Ask young recruits if happy?
- Award sponsorship?
- Recruiting post-docs
- Don't ask about start-up!

Most of all:

- Be confident! You're the world expert on your data
- Be yourself!

Dress

- Be comfortable, casual, and well-groomed
- Suit and tie not necessary
- Stockings and heels not necessary
- Joan Ruderman says: women should wear something with pockets

Chalk Talk

- Verbal NIH proposal
- Well-prepared!
 - In terms of ideas, not polish
- Chalk Talk is taken literally
- Preliminary data? Use overheads if necessary
- Start with overview
- Three Aims
 - Creative, important, feasible
 - Not too ambitious
- Alternative Strategies
- Long-term aims (the vision thing)
- Prepare to be challenged/interrupted
 - Presentation should be 30 minutes
 - Don't be defensive!
 - Acknowledge good ideas
 - Unreasonable challenge: be polite, firm

Follow-up

- Answer unresolved controversies/questions

Weighing your offers

- Location (quality of life, students, post-docs)
- Colleagues
- Startup package
 - Budget
 - Space
 - Teaching load
 - Soft vs. Hard Money
- Salary
- Prospects for tenure
- Keep options open as long as possible... Don't say 'no' too early!
- Spousal issues

Negotiations

- Make a list and check it twice
- Don't overtly play one offer against another
 - > Instead, ask for reasonable resources