How to get (and keep!) a faculty job.

John Boothroyd, PhD
Professor of Microbiology and Immunology

Outline

• How can you prepare and sell yourself?
• How is a search run?
• What happens in the interview?
• How do you negotiate the job offer?
• How do you groom yourself for tenure?

Finding a Job: Prerequisites

• Know what kind of job you want.
• Do great science and think outside the box.
• Communicate it.
• Network Network Network Network Network.
• Differentiate from your P.I.
• If you can land some future funding (BWF - CDA; NIH-K22; new NIH “Pathway to Independence Award”) great!
Finding the openings

- Use the career center!
- Network
- Ask around
- Look on notice boards
- Read journals
- Check websites
- *Have an open mind!*

The application package

- Cover letter
- C.V.
- Names of references
- Research Statement
- Teaching Statement
- Reprints

The cover letter

- Intro two sentences
  - I wish to apply

- Middle paragraph
  - I am working on
  - I believe this is a great fit with [TAILOR]
  - Teaching? Clinical?

- Closing sentences
  - Why is this interesting and important?

- Keep it brief and punchy (and proofread ALL)
The c.v.

- Personal details - name, citizenship and contact info. but NOT age, SSN, marital status, kids (visa?).
- Education - give dates, institutions, subject and degree
- Honors and Awards (i.e., required competition)
- Employment
- Research Experience
- Teaching Experience
- Other professional activity (mtg org’n, committee work, reviewing, etc)
- Membership IF significant (i.e. elected, not AAAS)

The c.v. (cont’d)

- Independent funding
- Patents (careful)
- Invited presentations
- Publications (all combined - bold your name)
- In preparation ok but they really should be (no journal name unless in press)
- NOT abstracts, meeting titles, fluff and filler…

References

- Doctorate adviser
- Post-doc adviser(s)
- People who can write with substance and make comparative statements
  - [anticipate this need now - network]
- Provide c.v., research statement, reprints, etc.
The research statement - summary

- Tailor
- Summary: 1/2 page max:
  - BIOLOGY
  - QUESTION
  - Approach
  - Preliminary findings
  - Immediate future aims
  - Long term future aims
  - BIOLOGY
- Why is this interesting? Why important? How am I uniquely able to do this? Why would you want to commit to me as a colleague for life?

The research statement - full

- Same flow as summary
- Trace your career - grooming for this day! (1 page)
- Bulk is future aims - be clear (2-3 pages)
- Schematics/models good
- Some data OK but must be really key (and pretty)
- Airy, big font, nice images
- Why is this interesting? Why important? Why are you uniquely able to do this? Why would I want to commit to you for life?

Teaching statement

- Tailor!
- Interest level
- Past experience
- Future:
  - What courses
  - When (year 2 and 4 (immediate and long)
  - What level
  - Flexible
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Initiating a Search

• Decide on field and level
• Identify billet, space and start-up funds
• Seek decanal approval

Advertising

• Letters to colleagues
• Ads in journals
• Networking at meetings, etc.
First cut (by subgroup)

- Wrong field
- Wrong rank
- Wrong quality

Second cut

- Committee reviews
- Looks for 3/3:
  - impressive c.v.
  - interesting science
  - good letters (often requested up front)
- Gets more info, if needed
- Decides: interview, hold, reject

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First Interview

- 1-2 days
- 1-2 talks
- Faculty inside/outside dept.
- Trainees
- Maybe Dean
- Exit interview

Preparing for the Interview

- Prepare your “job talk”
- Read about the department/program
- Read about their resources, grad programs, funding programs, etc.
- Read latest paper by faculty, especially interviewers, dinner people, chair. Where are possible areas of collaboration?
- Dress appropriately

The Interview - Day 1

- Breakfast with search committee chair
- One-on-ones with faculty
  - Bilateral interview
  - Engage their science
  - This is for life…
- Keep aware of time
- Job talk
- Lunch with trainees (ask if not offered)
- Faculty outside dept (ask if not offered)
- Dinner with committee
The Job Talk - Substance

- Tailor to the audience and search
- **Biology and question paramount**
- Overview to start - summary before future plans
- Good intro
- Finish with future plans
- Listen to questions - repeat or ask for clarification
  “are you asking…?”

The Job Talk - Style

- Get there early and bring back-up
- Not too long!
- Cater to experts and outsiders
- Plenty of meat - but balance of data and schematic
- Question - Experiment - Axes - Result -
  Interpretation = QEARI [or Intro/M&M/Fig.
  legend/Results/Discussion]
- Aesthetics count
- Be rigorous.
- Be excited!

The Interview - Day 2

- Breakfast with faculty
- Dean?
- More of all sorts
- Chalk talk
- Exit interview
- 2nd dinner, fly out, crash
The “Chalk” Talk

• 2-3 intro slides
• OVERVIEW on one slide - 2-3 questions
• Then 2-3 slides per question
• Biology and questions paramount
• “When it’s all done in ten years, what will s/he likely do next?”
• Excite the closest and furthest
• “I’d like to listen to his/her trainees at our retreat, sit on their committees, brag about her/him at meetings, etc…”

Exit interview

• Ask if don’t already know:
  – Space (should have seen it)
  – Teaching
  – Start up (official plus other in-house)
  – Training programs (how run and how access)
  – Tenure system
• Leave for now if not offered:
  – Salary
  – Benefits
  – Spouse/partner

The Interview - Day 3+

• Thanks
• Follow-up, if necessary, on any unanswered science questions raised in discussion.
• Check back in a few weeks.
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Second visit - information gathering

- You get to drive more - ASK to meet/see:
  - Cores
  - Grad program directors
  - Chair of possible secondary appointments
  - Other chairs
- All the rules of first interview still apply:
  - Know whom you’re meeting
  - Prepare for them and ENGAGE
  - Get the dirt

Second visit - start of negotiation

- NOW, the partner, kids, housing, salary, benefits
- Ask to meet with housing office, benefits office.
- Short and long term teaching, space, tenure
- Be clear: “we are definitely interested in making you an offer”, “I am definitely interested in coming”, “I definitely want to come”, are (purposefully?) ambiguous! Mean what you say.
The Offer Letter

• Informal offer first, often
• Formal provisional next
• Formal formal can take a while
• Get it in writing and in detail:
  – Space
  – Start up
  – Salary and benefits
  – Tenure
  – Teaching

Space

• Where (room numbers)?
• Shared/exclusive?
• When ready to occupy?
• What renovations needed?
• Who pays for these?
• Common space policy and access?
• Future needs?

Start-up money

• Apples and oranges
• What can come out of it?
• When must it be spent by?
• What happens to balance?
• What comes out of it/ what not?
  – Your 9 month salary
  – Your summer salary
  – Admin assistance
  – Glassware washing
  – Phone, mail, photocopying
Other sources of funds

• What and how are students paid (years 1-6)?
• Internal funds for students, post-docs, research?
• State monies?
• Local awards for “junior” faculty?

Salary and Benefits

• Apples and oranges; e.g., 9 or 12 month
• Base salary (on which benefits are determined)
• Benefits (esp. housing, childcare, retirement, pre-tax plans, tuition, moving expenses, parental leave)
• Percent off grants expected vs. guaranteed
• Policy if cover more than this percent
• Sabbatical (how much, how often, who pays)

Tenure

• Criteria?
• “Up or out”?
• When does clock start and stop?
• Pauses for children?
• What is tenure-deciding group (especially if joint appointments - double jeopardy or twice the chances…)?
• What is history in that Department, School and Institution?
• What support (mentoring) programs exist?
Teaching [and clinical]

• How much?
• When - short and long term?
• Percent time? [or, better, percent time protected for research]
• TA support?
• Secondary appointment?

Negotiating Key Points

• You are worth it! Quality comes at a price.
• You may be negotiating with Dean, not Chair or Provost, not Dean - arm them!
• Counter-offer with reasonable argument
• Confirm all conversations by email “Thanks, I just want to confirm… please confirm that I understood correctly”

Negotiating Key Points

• Your power drops 99% the second you sign.
• A little trust and instinct ok after due diligence.
• Negotiate in good faith.
• Use other offers to negotiate where you really want to go (but don’t waste time of others)
• Say “no” to others when appropriate (early if non-starter, when have a signed offer letter from # 2 or 3 choice)
• “If you could change one thing…”
Finally!

• There may well be a better fit in theory but don’t second guess to death
• Make a commitment
• Use the Career Center!! (http://med.stanford.edu/careercenter/)

How to get tenure.

• Do great science: Focus, focus, focus
• Understand local expectations
• Establish a portfolio of funding so never “dry”
• Think strategically (1st renewal should not be reviewed just before end of tenure clock)
• Establish independence from your old PI
• Nail an award or two…
• Don’t rush to fill space but don’t wait for God’s gift to science either…
• Collaborate with locals (faster, easier and build allies)

How to get tenure (cont’d):

• Develop local mentors and use them
• Establish an identity nationally and beyond
• Use your time wisely but travel is often worth it
• Some committees are actually useful
• Thesis committees are not “committees”!
• Find the right mix of quality and quantity in your publications
• Mentor responsibly
• Keep teaching evaluations and careful track of teaching/committee work
• Use the interim (three-year) review wisely