Getting the Faculty Position in Higher Ed That You Want

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"In a completely rational society, the best of us would be teachers and the rest of us would have to settle for something else." (Lee lacocca)

Great Web Reference

- http://www.ascb.org/newsfiles/teaching.pdf --and used as reference for this presentation.
- "How to Get a Teaching Job at a Primarily Undergraduate Institution"
 - By A. Malcom Campbell
 - Biology Department, Davidson College
 - American Society for Cell Biology

Presentation Outline

- Developing your experience
- Deciding on jobs to apply for
- Applying (cover letter; resume, teaching philosophy, references etc.)
- Interviewing (phone and campus visit)
- Questions to ask and negotiating (salary and start-up packages)
- Making a decision

Developing Your <u>Teaching</u> Experience

- TA a course and/or lab, teach a course as an instructor and/or guest lecturer
- Take a "College Teaching and Learning" course- such as Ed 504-
- Get a mentor/advocate who has observed your teaching
- Volunteer to serve on a faculty search committee!

Professional Levels

- Instructor
- Assistant Professor
- Associate Professor
- Full Professor
- Tenure/promotion timetable and expectations
 - Third year review
 - Reviewed during 6th year

Deciding What Jobs to Apply for

- Realistically, What are your skills? What are you good at without stress or straining? What is your passion?
- What type of position do you want?
 - Teaching? Research?
 - A mixture of teaching and research?
 - What size school and academic characteristics fit you in the short-term and long-term?

What Type of Teaching Job Best Fits You?

- Community College
- Small private teaching college
- Large public research university
- What type of job and life do you want?
 - teaching? research?
- Discuss your skills



Where to look for jobs?

- Ask profs
- Look in professional and technical journals
- Review "Chronicle of Higher Education," weekly newspaper type of journal (see example) paper copy or search on-line

Finding "Fit" in an Application

- Review application
 - Does teaching/research description match your skills and interests? Be honest!
 - Do you meet <u>minimum</u> and <u>desired</u> job qualifications?
 - Will you realistically be in the top tier of folks who will be strongly considered and interviewed?
- Do web background work on program

Application

- Cover letter expressing interest- spend lots of time on this!!
- Resume
- Teaching Philosophy
- Research Interests
- References

Cover letter

- 1.5 pages and very well-written! Have several people read it
 - Why you want the job
 - Qualifications including teaching/research exp.-things that would make you stand out
 - Personality/uniqueness that makes the app. stand out
- "Trolling" to appeal to dept & comm.
- Teaching statement/research statement

Resume

- Education
- Teaching/research experience
- Honors
- Professional activities
- Proposals, grants, and contracts
- Pubs, abstracts, presentations

Use Career Center for assistance

Reference Letters

- Typically 3 references (letters or phone)
- Cultivate relationships (mentor/prof)
- Ask advice about application and fit
- Choose professors carefully, contact early, ask if they can support you, and say thank you!
- Send them copy of job description
- Help professors provide best reference by providing vitae and any suggested key points that you would like them to make

Phone Interview

- Prepare, prepare, prepare!
 - Request dept literature and strategic plan and deeply review the univ. and dept web information
- Develop a set of notes and write out a list of expected questions and your answers
 - Why do you want the job? Experience?
 - Why do you want to teach? What can you teach?
 - Strengths/weaknesses
 - Additional points that you wish to make
 - What are your questions about the position?

Campus Visit/Interview

- More preparation before arriving
 - Memorize profs names/faces, courses taught, and teaching/research interests
 - Papers published from Science Citation Index
 - Aver. salaries of dept as listed in Journal "Academe"
- Typical agenda below develop a list of Qs for each group and take lots of notes!
 - Meet with dept faculty
 - Meet with undergrad and grad students
 - Meet with Dean and Department Head
 - Tour dept, campus, community (housing options)
- Remember that it's a 2-way look

Seminar(s)

- Ask about audience, seminar format and length
- Be confident and organized!
- Seminars practice and get lots of advice
 - Teaching seminar may be to a class or facultymay ask for a typical class lecture, syllabus, teaching philosophy and teaching techniques
 - Research seminar, past/current research and able to articulate a proposed 5-yr or so research plan and start-up needs, if asked

Discussions During Your Visit

- Do your homework- impress them with your knowledge from web and from their literature
- Faculty discussions round-table and/or oneon-one, eye contact, call faculty by name
 - How do faculty see the position, and its role and fit in dept? Are their collaborative research opportunities?
 - What about dept politics and their view of dept chair, dean, upper administration?
 - Are they happy? Do they plan to stay?
- Talk with staff –they know the ins and outs!

Discussions With Students

- What is the dept like from their perspective?
- Good courses, bad courses?
- Do people get along?
- Strengths and weaknesses of dept?
- Would the students come here again?



Discussions Continued

- Get a sense of dept: undergrad/grad teaching/research programs? Philosophy and values? Number and types of courses? Innovations? strategic vision/plan? is the dept on upswing, downswing, or stagnant?
- Get a sense of quality of the program and how people get along? Would you fit in professionally and personally?
- Tour office, teaching, and lab space
- Check out library, journals and support

Discussions Continued

- Dept Chair and/or Dean
 - Salary range, benefits, moving expenses etc. —do homework on salaries before you arrive
 - Teaching/research % PD, course grad/undergrad load by semester, first semester load, and other advising and service expectations
 - Tenure/promotion expectations— Teaching?
 Advising? Research (grants and contracts, pubs, grad students)? how many faculty get tenure?
 - Discuss start up package--summer salary, RAs/
 TAs, equipment or research-develop a list of your required and desired needs, travel funding etc.

After the Interview

- Be patient!
- Don't begin doubting if they don't call right away.
 - Typically takes a long time for academics to meet and then to make decisions
 - You may be their second choice but may still get picked
 - You can check in and see where they are in the process and their expected timetable
 - You can tell them you are interviewing and your timetable for making a decision

Making a Decision

- After a phone call offer, ask for a few days to consider. Get answers to all questions.
- Get salary offer, start up package etc. in writing and read offer letter carefully before signing!! This is your last chance to negotiate or clarify. Salary is base for annual % raises.
- Get advice from your major professor/mentor
- Possibly ask for another trip to bring your spouse for decision-making
- Does it "feel" right?

Ask for Help All Along the Way

- Major Prof and other Faculty
- Grad students/post docs who have been on interview trips
- Career Center
 - Writing resume and cover letter, phone and in-person interview skills, negotiating etc.
- College of Grad Studies