The Great Job Search
or
"How I Spent My Spring Semester"

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Outline

- The Season
- The Application Process
- Scheduling Interviews
- Interviewing
- Negotiating
- Making a Decision

The Application Process

- Where to Apply
- When to Apply
  Letters in the mail by January 15!
  (aim for December 31)
  Industrial labs more flexible
- How to Apply
  Cover Letters
  CV
  Letters of Recommendation
  Papers
**The Application Process: Where?**

- Development Positions
- Research Labs
- Teaching Colleges
- Research Universities

**Where to Apply?**

Start

- Do I want to teach?
  - Yes: Teaching College
  - No: Research Lab

- Do I want to do research?
  - Yes: Research University
  - No: Development Position

- Do I want to build products?
  - Yes: Development Position
  - No: Wrong Talk

**Where to Apply: Positions**

- Crystal has listings and addresses for all PhD degree granting institutions
- Job Listings: CACM, IEEE Computer
- Conferences
- Email
- Contacts
- Other candidates

**The Application Process: How?**

- **Cover letter**
  - Contact
  - Teaching, research, experience
  - 1 page

- **CV (Curriculum Vitae)**
  - Research Interests
  - Thesis topic
  - Education
  - Teaching
  - Work experience
  - Publications
  - List of references (3 or 4; 1 non-UC)
  - Honors and awards
  - Brief -- as short as possible but no shorter!
The Application Process: How?

- **Letters of recommendation**
  Ask writers if letter will be good
  Teaching references
  At least 1 outside UC
  These are crucial after first cut
  Don't send until requested

- **Papers**
  Get advisor’s advice!
  Some places will ask for all your publications
  Others won’t ask for any
  Can use anonymous ftp

The Application Process: Tips

- Spend time on your cover letter
- CV: Content over form
- Keep things organized
- Have letter templates
- Pretend you will mail letters by 12/31
- Mail letters by January 15
- Give letter writers lots of time (talk to them now)
- Carry CVs with you at all times
- Diversify applications

Scheduling Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>February</th>
<th>March</th>
<th>April</th>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of talk</td>
<td>Burnout</td>
<td>Familiarity with talk</td>
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Scheduling Interviews: Tips

- Someone has to be first. Use that as a deadline.
- Schedule most desirable jobs about 1/3 way through the season.
- Give yourself a day between interviews.
- Schedule multiple interviews in a single trip (but not too many, 3-4 max).
- Use travel agents or personnel.
- Plan on fronting a few thousand dollars.
- Use one airline (you’ll appreciate the frequent flyer miles when it’s over).
- Schedule flights for YOUR convenience.
Interviewing: Your Talk

- Most of your audience is not in your area.
- For some, this will be their only impression of you.
- You are being evaluated on your technical sophistication as well as your poise under pressure.
- 1/3 of your talk should be motivational.
  - What is the problem?
  - Why is the problem important?
  - If it’s so important, why haven’t other solved it?
- Make your summary leave a lasting impression.

Interviewing: Preparation

- Practice talk! Give yourself at least one week after your practice talk to redo all your slides. Give yourself another week after your first interview to make fixes.
- Know the names of the people in your area at the schools/labs you visit.
- Talk to people outside of your field and know about any big news that is happening.
- Read literature about the school/lab on the plane or in the hotel the evening before.
- (Schools) Know what classes you can teach.
- Talk to people who have interviewed recently.
- Know how to run interview if interviewer doesn’t.

How to run an Interview

- "What do you do?"
- Ask questions! Do not pretend to understand something you don’t.
- Draw parallels between interviewers work and your own.
- If all else fails, ask organizational questions: "How many graduate students do you have?"

Your goal is to demonstrate an ability to communicate effectively, a respect for fields other than your own, and an ability to think critically about new topics.

Interviewing: Format

- Breakfast, lunch, dinner
- A talk
- A tour of the campus/company
- Research Labs: Personnel
- Faculty/Researchers
- Department Chair/Group Manager
- Dean/Division Head
- College/University: Students
Interviewing: Favorite questions

- What will you work on next?
- What are the important research problems in your field?
- Tell me about your thesis?
- What do you think is most significant about your research?
- What kind of start-up equipment/funds will you need?
- How will you fit in this department?
- What kind of work environment do you like?

Interviewing: Things to ask

- What infrastructure is provided?
- Is work done jointly or collaboratively?
- How are projects begun/coordinated?
- How am I going to be evaluated?
- Can I work at home?

Interviewing: Things to ask (Schools)

- What is the standard teaching load?
- How is that divided?
- Can people "buy out" of courses?
- What percent of my salary is soft money (i.e. how much of my own salary do I pay)?
- What is the university overhead rate?
- How much do graduate students cost?
- What is the sabbatical policy?

Interviewing: Things to ask (Labs)

- Are there restrictions on what I can publish?
- Can I distribute software that I write?
- Can I get time off to teach?
- What is the company policy on conferences?
- How product-oriented is research?
- How likely is it that my project will disappear?
- Are there restrictions on the hardware or software that I use?
- How much interaction is there with universities?
Interviewing: Key Issues

- Not the time to get in terribly heated debates.
- Never underestimate how much influence any one person can have.
- Be enthusiastic.
- They will tell you that you can relax over dinner, but you are still being evaluated.
- Be careful not to make negative comments about other institutions/people/research, etc.
- Avoid being sucked into gossip.
- Be open minded.
- Your research advisor walks on water.

Interviewing: Tips

- Keep necessities packed.
- Avoid pleats in interview clothes.
- Carry cough drops, antihistamines, etc.
- Don’t worry too much about expenses -- rent cars if it’s more convenient.
- Use hotel laundries and dry cleaning (travel light).
- Use wakeup calls and alarms.
- Relax on planes.
- Get lots of sleep; if you suffer from jetlag, arrive a day or one-half day early.
- Plan on getting no work done in March and April.

Negotiating: How it works

- You get an offer.
- Usually (not always) it will include salary, position, title, start-up funding.
- You do not have to respond immediately.
- They will ask when you can make a decision or they will impose a deadline.
- This offer is a starting point. (However, do not begin to negotiate until you have decided that you’d like to accept the offer.)
- You may be invited back for another trip.
- You will probably get calls from many people explaining why you should accept the offer.

Negotiating: Tips

- Ask for a lot (stuff, not necessarily money).
- Decide when you want to make a decision and try not to let people force you into making a decision before you are ready.
- Know how much equipment costs.
- Ask for space, funding for students, travel money, reduced teaching.
- Don’t commit to a start date that is unrealistic.
- Find out about health benefits and relocation.
Making a Decision

- Figure out your priorities.
  - Job?
  - Location?
  - Prestige?
  - Colleagues?
  - Money?

- Avoid being sleazy.
  - Negotiating one offer to push up another

- Be prepared to explain why/how you made your decision.

- As soon as you can, turn people down so that they are free to extend other offers.

- Send thank you notes to anyone that was particularly helpful.