



## MY TWO CENTS AS YOU PREPARE FOR AN ACADEMIC JOB SEARCH

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## MY BACKGROUND AND QUALIFICATIONS

Degree	Major	Institution	Years
B.S.	Chemical Engineering	Andhra University, India	1996-2000
M.S.	Chemical Engineering	Mississippi State University	2000-2002
M.S.	Materials Science & Engineering	University of Connecticut	2002-2004
Ph.D.	Bioengineering	Clemson University	2005-2008
Postdoctoral	Biological Engineering	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	2008-2011

2 Research Interests: Stem cells, Tissue engineering, Regenerative medicine, Microfluidics, Nanomaterials, Drug delivery

## STATS ON MY SEARCH FOR FACULTY POSITION

Application Process	#
Number of Institutions I applied: • Universities in US and Europe • Federal labs (NIST, NIH) • Private labs (HHMI, etc.)	> 30
Diversity of departments: Chemical, Biomedical, Materials Science, Medical Schools, Interdisciplinary Units	
Phone interviews	11
On-site interviews	5

## TENTATIVE TIMELINES FOR AN APPLICATION CYCLE

Process	Timeline
Prepare your application packet	The earlier the better!
Typical submission deadlines	Early Fall
Attend meetings in your field	Fall semester
Interviews & Visits	Dec – March
Job offer, negotiation, acceptance	March – May
Position Starts	Aug – Sept

Plan well ahead, don't apply half-heartedly!!

## WHERE ARE ACADEMIC JOBS POSTED?

- <http://www.academickeys.com>
- [www.indeed.com](http://www.indeed.com)
- [www.higheredjobs.com](http://www.higheredjobs.com)
- <https://careers.insidehighered.com>
- Emails to Department Chair/ Advisors
- Department websites
- Conferences/Symposiums/Meetings
- Journals, newsletters and websites in your respective fields
- Network!!!

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## WHAT'S INCLUDED IN AN APPLICATION PACKAGE?

- Cover Letter (1-2 pages)
- Full CV
- Research Plans (3-5 pages)
- Teaching Statement (1-2 pages)
- Any portfolio of achievements (if requested)
- List of References (typically 3-5)
- Ask your mentor, friends, family, peers, etc. to review your package and solicit feedback

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## HOW TO STAND OUT AMONG HUNDREDS OF APPLICANTS?

- Does your research plan fit with the department needs?
- What is your Productivity?
  - Excellent, high-impact publications in your field
  - High-quality presentations at major conferences
  - Ability to raise funds for your work (previous grants, fellowships, etc.)
  - Recognition in the field (awards, honors, etc.)
  - Diversified portfolio of work
- Can you teach core curriculum?
- Can you work in multiple areas (\$\$\$)?
- Excellent recommendation letters!!!

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## INTERVIEW PROCEDURE

- 1-2 days long
- Typically involves an open-to-all seminar
- Separate interactions with students only
- Individual meetings with faculty in the department
- Chalk talk?
- Meet administration (Dean, Director, VP for Research, etc.)
- Meet with Department Chair

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## TIPS FOR INTERVIEW DAY

- Look smart and professional!
- Don't sweat!
- Ask questions to show you are prepared!
- Be positive!
- Drink lots of water, and take restroom breaks!
- Turn off your cell phone!
- Demonstrate that you have vision, breadth & depth of your field!
- Drop in names (not too many though)!
- Prepare as if it is your only ticket to glory!
- Be on guard!
- Take copies of your resume, business cards, a pen and a notepad, and copies of your work

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## HOW TO KILL AN INTERVIEW?

- Numerous ways, really!!
- Lack of enthusiasm
- Criticize your current advisor or department
- Jokes or sarcasm
- Lack of preparedness
- Interrupt people or finish off their sentences
- Stage fear or nervousness
- Self-indulgence
- Downplaying other research fields or universities
- Lack of proper communication skills
- Lack of focus or originality of thought

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## POST-INTERVIEW

- Send an email to search committee thanking them for their time
  - Follow up on any promises you made to any individual
- Search committee meets to rank their selections
  - Usually, rest of the department also discusses and votes
  - "Shortlist" enters the Chain of Command for approval
    - Search Committee → Chair → Dean → Provost
- Selections are based on many factors, not purely on merit alone!!!!
- Don't call or email search committee too many times
- Be patient!

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## IF YOU ARE SELECTED.....

- Usually Department Chair or Dean calls to make sure you are still available for this position
  - Makes verbal offer!
- Don't say YES to anything on phone (rookie mistake)
- Wait for the formal document to arrive

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## WHAT'S IN AN OFFER LETTER?

Typically:

- 9-month salary
- Start-up Package
  - Support for following (varies widely)
    - Graduate student support
    - Equipment & Supplies support
    - Lab & Office space (in sq. ft.)
    - Travel to conferences, etc.
  - Relocation package
  - Teaching load
  - Assigned Mentor
  - Etc.
- Get EVERYTHING in writing!

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## MOST THINGS ARE NEGOTIABLE

- Ok, at least some are negotiable!
- Do your homework!!!!
  - Talk to your peers, advisor, mentor & any other faculty you trust
  - Solicit advice actively!
    - Time is ticking!!
- If you lowball yourself, you are setting yourself up for failure
- Once things are set in stone, you have ZERO degrees of freedom!
- Don't have moving goal posts!
- **Bottom Line: What do I need to succeed? Am I receiving that?**

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## SOME THOUGHTS ON OFFER NEGOTIATIONS

- You won't lose the job offer if you negotiate!
- Be honest to yourself on what you need to succeed!
- Present your requests in writing
- Once you accept an offer, **DON'T RETRACT!**
  - Don't negotiate if you don't want the job
  - Negotiate before you accept the job
- Other forms of compensation?

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## ACTIVELY SEEK ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS

- What does the tenure process involve?
- What is your expected teaching load?
- Check the lab space to be allotted to you

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## WHAT IF YOU HAVE MULTIPLE OFFERS?

- Rare, but possible!
- Be honest with all parties involved!
- Ask reasonable extensions
- Don't miss deadlines!
- Accept at least one offer in writing, before declining others!
  
- What if you haven't made the final cut?

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## MY CONTACT INFO

- Room 460, Fenn Hall
- Tel: 216-687-2562
  
- Email: [c.kothapalli@csuohio.edu](mailto:c.kothapalli@csuohio.edu)
  
- Set up an appointment before your drop in!

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