



# **Applying and Interviewing for Academic Positions:** *Tales from the Job Market*

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# Stacey Finley: *Educational training*



From **Kansas City, KS**

**Florida A & M University**, BS in Chemical Engineering, 2004

**Northwestern University**, PhD in Chemical Engineering, 2009

**Johns Hopkins University**, Postdoctoral Fellow in Biomedical Engineering, 2009 - 2013

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# Timeline of activities: *Applying*



- 1-2 years prior to going on the market (~Sept/Oct)
  - Decide **FOR SURE** that you want to apply
  - Publish and present your work
- Nine months prior
  - Start to formulate your research projects
  - Talk to your research advisor to discuss what ideas you can take (if any)

# Timeline of activities: *Applying*



- **Six months prior**
  - Solidify 2-3 independent projects and write the research statement
  - Write your teaching statement
  - Submit abstracts to society meetings in your field
- **Three months prior**
  - Create a template for your cover letter, go through several revisions and get lots of feedback
  - Identify 3-5 people to write recommendation letters

# Timeline of activities: *Applying*



- Once job postings are advertised
  - Create a ranked list of departments, based on what's important **TO YOU**
  - Tailor materials for each department
    - Research statement: “excited to pursue research at XYZ”
    - Teaching statement: “I am qualified and interested in teaching XYZ courses”
    - Cover letter: “attending XYZ meeting”
  - Submit applications **EARLY**
  - Present at society meetings and meet dept chairs

# Timeline of activities: *Applying*



- Once job postings are advertised
  - Create your job talk
  - Create your chalk talk
  - **PRACTICE!**
  - **GET FEEDBACK!**

# Interviewing: *Before*



- Tailor chalk talk to each department
- Make a cheat sheet for each school **(to take with you!)**
  - Info for each person you are meeting with:
    - Institutions attended, 1-2 sentences on their research
    - Potential collaborations, other connections
  - Centers/facilities relevant to your work
  - Courses to teach
- Ask questions to clarify anything on your schedule

# Interviewing: *During*



- Be **THE MOST POLISHED** version of yourself
- Every interaction may be evaluated
- Convey your excitement to visit the department
- Evaluate the department
  - Adequate facilities, collaborations, **STUDENTS**
  - Mentorship, collegiality
- Use the interview as an opportunity to meet new colleagues and get new ideas
- Take notes



# Interviewing: *After*



- Send a thank you note to everyone you met with
  - Try to include a detail from your meeting
  - Especially important if they are a potential collaborator
- Make notes about how the interview went and if you can imagine yourself successful and happy there

... **WAIT** ...

# General advice



- Invest a lot of time in research statement and talks
- Application materials get you in the door, you wow them during the interview
- Address the “**so what**” question about future work
- Job postings:
  - [www.academickeys.com](http://www.academickeys.com)
  - [www.sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/](http://www.sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/)
  - Professional society websites
  - Websites of specific departments in which you are interested