Now What?
Making smart choices for your career

Lori M. Conlan, PhD
Director, Office of Postdoctoral Services
Making good career choices

- Determining what is out there
- Networking
- Building credentials
- Finding a job
Job sectors of past postdocs/fellows

- Academics: 23% (70)
- Academics non-TT: 5% (15)
- Industry: 22% (66)
- Consulting: 14% (41)
- Non-profit: 7% (21)
- Government: 6% (17)
- Non-US govt: 3% (10)
- Patent law: 0% (1)
- Clinical director: 0% (1)
- Postdoc: 0% (1)

N=304
Job options are endless

And many different jobs:
Research and Development
Manufacturing
Quality Control
Project Management
Clinical Trial Management
Intellectual Property Law
Technology Transfer
Regulatory Affairs
Communications
Patient/Medical Liaison
Marketing/Sales
Business/Finance
Consumer Safety
Grants Administration
Science Policy
Education and Outreach

In all sectors:
Academic
Industry
Government
Non-Profit

In many types of science:
Basic Science
Translational Science
Clinical Science
Patient Care
Determining what is out there?

- This is the hard part, you have to understand your skills, values and interests—and how do careers fit that data
- There are options in academics/industry/gov/non-profits for PhDs
- Do the myIDP
  - http://myidp.sciencecareers.org/
- Gather info
  - OITE: www.training.nih.gov (videos on past events)
  - ScienceCareers, NatureJobs, NPA, prof society, etc
- Books
- Talk to people
Informational Interviews

- Allows insider information
- Help prepare strong application
- A good way to find a career path or get info on a current job opening

- Are not a way to ask for a job!!
Four Areas

- Present
  - Tell me about your current position
- Past
  - How did you get into the field
- Future
  - Long term opportunities in the field
- Advice
  - Contacts, feedback, professional societies, insights into possible positions
How do you find a connection?

- Pubmed or patent databases
- Professional society
- Alumni databases
  - Undergrad
  - Old labmates
- LinkedIn, Facebook, Nature Network
- Family
- Career Centers
- Career symposiums/workshops
Challenge

- Contact one speaker from these sessions to do an informational interview with.

  - Dear Dr. X,
  - I appreciated your views expressed on the XYZ panel at the WYCBWAPHD. I was hoping to get a little more information about how you translated your bench science into a Y career. Do you have 15 minutes to spare for a telephone call?
  - Thanks in advance,
Getting Credentials

- Do more than research
  - Mentor a student
  - Get involved in the student association
  - Ask to help coordinate things for your dept/univ
- Gain work-related experience
  - Volunteer in career-specific offices
Find a Job

- 18 to 24 months from end of training
  - Solidifying your career direction

- 13 to 18 months from end of training
  - Developing your network contacts
  - Development of job search materials
    - JobERA.com if you are pursuing an international job search
  - Define your search targets / search strategies

- 12 months from end of training
  - Time shifting to finishing up and the job search
  - Focusing the search

- 6 to 9 months from end of training
  - Intensifying your search
  - Prepping additional documentation
Job Search FAQs/statements

- There is no job stability
- I need to finish my project
- Do I need to have 100% of the qualifications to apply?
- Yet, apply for jobs that fit (WHO job)
- I had coffee, thus I networked---why aren’t they calling?
- Objective statements are necessary in a resume.
- No one will help me find a job!!!
Don’t forget other factors

- Location
- Family
- Financial
Finding a job is tough work, and almost a full time job
Never easy, but there are good methods
There is no secret, each job search is different
More resources

- Join our Listserv to get info while you are not at the NIH
  - Go to www.training.nih.gov to sign up.
- Connect with me on Linked-In and join the NIH Intramural Science Linked-In group
- Watch previous OITE career workshops, including many on CVs, resumes and cover letters
- Read the OITE Careers blog
- Join the OITE NIH Training Alumni database if you are/were a student or fellow here
- Email me at conlanlo@mail.nih.gov
Job hunt process

- Self-Assessment
  - Skills/Values/Interests
- Exploration
  - What, Who, Where
- Focusing
  - Good fits/new skills/connections
- Job Search
  - Resumes, interviews, networking

Adapted from To Boldly Go by Peter Fiske, who borrowed from Stanford Career Center
Job search timelines

**Academics**
- Aug-Oct: Apply
- Jan-Feb: Interview
- March-April: 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview
- April: Accept
- August: Move

Total time: ~ 1 year

**Anything else**
- Any month: Apply
- + 1 Month: Interview
- + 2 Weeks: Accept***
- + 1 month: Move

Total time: ~2 months
Skills

- Technical
- Supervision/Management
- Team
- Collaboration
- Professional
- Computer
- Service
- Leadership
- Languages
- Communication
Communication Skills

What we normally see:
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills

What you should say:
- Presented X posters and Y talks at (Inter)National meetings
- Presented talks to various audience type (examples)
- Wrote SOPs, journal articles, reviews, lay-audience articles, etc.
- Edited lab grant and manuscripts before publication
- Facilitated a group discussion as seen by…..
- Negotiated a …..
- Speak X, a valuable asset in this job