How To Get A Job

For CS Graduate Students

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Outline

Be organized

The interview season

The application process

Scheduling interviews

Interviewing

Negotiating a job offer

Making a decision

Be Organized

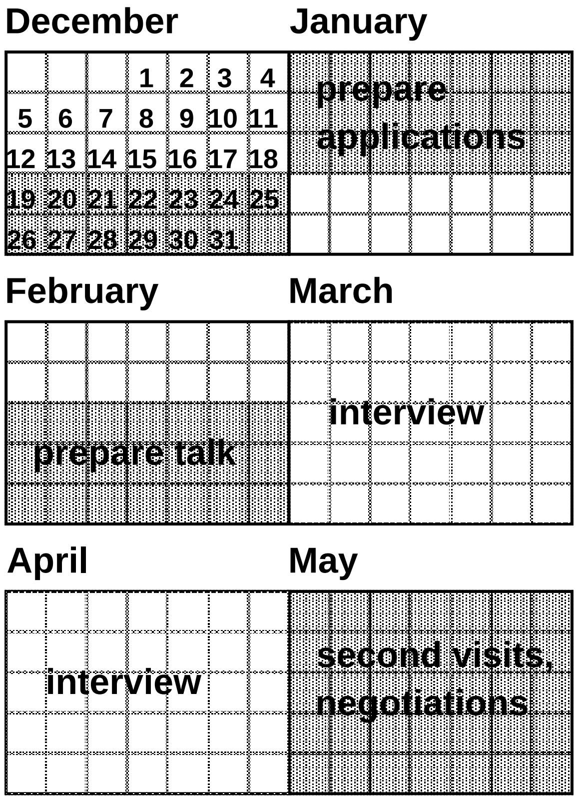
On-line file for organizing applications:

- Addresses
- Generate cover letters from this list
- Contacts, phone numbers
- Status of application
- Have recommendation letters been sent?
- Interview dates
- Special requests
- Refunds received?

Diary on the road:

- Organized by institution
- People you talked to
- Questions you want to ask
- Who you promised to send stuff to
- Write nothing bad in case you lose it!

The Interview Season



The Application Process

Where to apply - industry versus academia

- What will make you happy?
- Both are useful resources for later
- Send out many applications
- Consider postdocs too

How to find positions

- Crystal's address lists and postings
- CACM, IEEE Computer
- Email to people you know
- Call departments, labs, companies
- Conferences
- Other students

When to apply

- Letters in the mail by January 15
- Industrial labs more flexible

Applying: What You Need

Cover letter

- Field, research and teaching experience
- 1 page only
- Use a template, perhaps more than one

Curriculum Vitae

- Research interests
- Thesis topic and perhaps abstract
- Education
- Research experience
- Teaching
- Work experience
- Publications
- Honors and awards
- 3 or 4 references (1 non-UC, PhD)
- 3 or 4 pages usually, more if necessary
- Skip stuff about banjo trio and pet parrots

Applying: What You Need

Letters of recommendation

- Ask writers if letter will be good
- Teaching references
- Give letter writers time (ask now)
- Some places request these directly
- Other places ask you to request them
- These are critical to get you in the door

Papers

- Pick good ones
- Ask advisor's advice
- Some places don't ask for any
- Send them anyway (my opinion only)

Thesis abstract (easy to put in CV)

Statement of research interests (optional)

Scheduling Interviews

First interview

- Someplace not too important
- Leave 1/2 week afterwards to fix talk

All interviews

- No more than two per week
- Only 2 consecutive weeks of 2 per week
- Plan on fronting a couple thousand dollars
- Aim for one airline (frequent flier miles!)
- Schedule flights for your convenience
- Try to group out-of-town interviews
- Use a travel agent
- Ask for a 1/2 hour break before talk
- Ask how long talk will be
- Tell them if you're a vegetarian

Most important interviews

- First 1/2 of schedule (before burnout)
- After some practice interviews

Your Interview Talk

This is all that many will see of you

Most of the audience is not in your area

- One-third of talk must be motivation
- Keep them with you at beginning and end

Evaluated on:

- Technical content
- Clarity
- Poise under pressure

Finish your talk - short is okay!

- 1 to 3 minutes per slide, time the talk
- Room for questions in only 50 minutes
- Strategy for handling trouble-makers

A lively talk helps - both you and them

The talk is very important - practice it!!!

Interview Preparation

Write a talk abstract

- Schools/industry will request this
- Make it sound exciting to draw a crowd

Give a practice talk

- Invite students from other areas
- Invite your advisor
- Give yourself time to redo all the slides

Get information/research summary

- Review the names of people in your area
- Know about their big projects, etc.
- Good reading on the plane

Talk to friends in other areas before going

- Know what's hot in their fields
- Get their gossip about the different places

The Interview Format

Schools:

- Often 2 days long
- Breakfast at 4:30AM with the chairman
- Lunch, dinner with group of people
- A talk
- One-on-one interviews with faculty
- Meeting with the dean
- Meeting with students
- A fun tour

Labs/industry:

- Much the same
- No breakfast meeting
- No dean

Interviews: What They'll Ask

Oops, I missed your talk. Tell me about it.

- Have a 2-minute summary memorized
- Why is it important? What's unique?

What will you do next?

What will you need to start up here?

How will you fit into our lab/group?

What are important problems in your area?

What would you do with a million dollars?

What's going on at Berkeley?

Do you like beer?

How to Run an Interview

Ask questions - this is your chance

- "What do you do?"
- Find parallels to your own work
- Be friendly
- Don't yawn
- If you don't understand, ask about it

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.

Questions to Ask

Schools:

- Teaching load
- Amount of collaboration
- Competition for students
- Quality of students
- Percent of new hires that get tenured
- Library facilities
- Equipment sharing
- Support for grant applications

Industry:

- Publication restrictions
- Software distribution restrictions
- Time off for teaching
- Policy on conferences
- Interaction with outside organizations

Extra questions if you're a woman/minority

Interview Issues

Avoid very heated discussions

You don’t get to relax at dinner (or eat)

Think before you drink

Avoid negative comments about others

Don’t get sucked into gossip

Your advisor and colleagues walk on water

Be enthusiastic

Have fun

These people are a resource for later

Interview Tips

Bring cough drops and handkerchiefs

Take vitamins or your favorite placebo

Arrive the day/evening before

Use hotel laundries (travel light)

Test-drive your clothes

Pick clothes than can stand up to pets

Use wakeup calls and alarms

Test the hotel alarm clock before using

Bring some relaxing reading - avoid TV

Don’t plan on getting any work done

Pretend you’re a tourist

Negotiating: How it Works

You get an offer. Usually it includes

- Salary (often 9-month for schools)
- Start-up funding (for schools)
- Benefits (for industry)

You do not have to respond immediately

Say when you will be ready to decide

What's negotiable (schools):

- Funding for students/travel/equipment
- First year's summer support
- Time off tenure clock for having babies
- Office with a window

What's negotiable (industry):

- Salary
- Signing bonus
- Office with a window

Negotiating: Tips

Don't be embarrassed to ask for stuff

Be honest about what you need to succeed

Don't negotiate unless you want the job

Go for a second visit with significant other

- Ask for their help finding S. O. a job
- Find out about parks, museums, theaters
- Find out what people do for fun

Ignore the pressure they put on you

Making a Decision

Know your priorities:

- Job type?
- Location?
- Prestige?
- Money?
- Friends?

Be prepared to explain how you decided

Turn people down as soon as possible!

- So they can make an offer to others
- So that others can receive an offer

Send thank you notes to helpful people

Available Materials

Research summaries, etc., from Crystal

(Please donate these after your interviews)

Available on software warehouse:

- Sample cover letters
- Sample CVs
- Sample letter/address label generator
- These slides
- Whatever you contribute

Campus career center