INTERVIEWING IN INDUSTRY

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Agenda

- Job search
- Know the industry target’s business
  - Assessing a start-up, mid-size, or large company
  - The art of cover letter writing
  - Tailor your resume, list of references
- Interviewing in industry
  - Practice techniques and answers to universal questions
  - Ask about interview expectations – phone screen or F2F
  - The thank you note
  - Positive/Negative Characteristics
  - Not getting the job
- Getting the offer
  - Salary negotiation, questions you should ask
- Contrasts between academia and industry
Job Search
Search engines and networking

- Indeed.com
- LinkedIn / Groups
- Company website
- Pittsburgh Tech Council
- Professional society job boards
- Recruiters, Recruiting Agencies
- Grow your personal network
  - Business card

Hints:
- Check regularly
- Set-up alerts
- Build personal profile
- Maintain/update profile

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Your searchable profile

- LinkedIn / Groups
- University
- Have awareness re: Facebook, Twitter...
  - Posts can be detrimental to your ability to attract companies
  - HR conducts checks on candidates

Hints:
- Reduce social activity, be selective
- Less is more
- Indicates pre-occupation unbecoming of a strong candidate
Knowing the Business of the Industry Target
Assess business and size

- Start-up: highest risk, highest reward
  - Study people in organization
    - Interview style of manager/executive unique
  - Study product(s), nature of business
  - Understand state of funding
  - Assess your skills against the job description
  - Employees always wear numerous hats
  - Higher likelihood of short-term position, burn-out
Assess business and size

- Mid-size company
  - Study people in organization
    - Interview style of manager/executive may be less unique
    - HR usually more involved with screening
  - Study product(s), nature of business
  - Understand financial health of organization
  - Assess your skills against the job description
  - Generally fairly stable, but not unaffected by M&A
Assess business and size

- Large company (tiny fish syndrome)
  - Study people in organization
    - Interview style of manager/executive usually formulaic
    - HR heavily involved with screening
  - Study product(s), nature of business
  - Understand financial health of organization
  - Assess your skills against the job description
  - Generally most stable, but not unaffected by M&A or divestitures
Hallmarks of good vs bad company

- **Good company**
  - Leadership with extensive industry experience and history of success
  - If public, annual report demonstrates stable/growth financial or legal standing
  - Positive media attention and/or employee feedback

- **Bad company**
  - Turnover, routine reductions in force
  - If public, annual report demonstrates poor financial or legal standing
  - Negative media attention and/or employee feedback
Reality check

- Industry can
  - Give you experience for resume building
  - Offer growth (transitional, lateral or vertical)
  - Terminate you at will
- Industry can’t
  - Guarantee you are always needed
  - Keep promoting you and increasing your pay year after year
  - Force you to stay

YOU = driver of your career
The cover letter

- Your **first chance** at making an impression
- Debate surrounding need
- Direct to hiring manager or HR official where possible
- Keep it simple, well-written, 1 page
- Statement of interest in position you are applying for
- Explain briefly what you know about the business
- Highlight specific experience, include finance details if possible
  - *I contributed to cost savings in excess of $1M by...*
  - *I contributed to winning a $2.5M grant from the DoD...*
- Strong closure
- Spell check and no grammar mistakes
- Do not exaggerate your skills, misrepresent your background
- Sign in ink, pdf
The cover letter

[name]  

[date]  

[Company]  

Re: position title, number  

Dear Sir/Madam:

I wish to apply to the above referenced position posted on your website. As a successful quality leader with a 25+ year track record establishing quality cultures, developing quality systems, and leading teams to achieve results, I am interested in the opportunity to help define and contribute to your goals and shape a positive future.

My background and experience across the quality spectrum, including product design assurance and reliability engineering, production and operations quality management, supply chain quality, distribution channel quality, risk management, process improvement, cost of quality, quality systems, and regulatory assessment, strategy, and liaison has prepared me to immediately begin leading your quality efforts, and gives me a unique perspective on which to draw.

Career highlights related to the senior global quality leader position include:

• 20+ years experience leading and managing medical device quality assurance and regulatory affairs efforts.
• Leadership of projects resulting in over $2.8MM in cost reductions due to productivity and quality improvements.
• 15+ years experience establishing and managing quality management systems, and developing and deploying quality policy and strategy in manufacturing, engineering, and supply chain teams.
• Developed and managed a comprehensive supplier quality management system based on the APQP and PPAP models, including closed loop reporting, strategy partner certification, and process/SOP auditing.
• Led teams to remediate and integrate quality systems to achieve and maintain ISO 9001/13485 certification.
• Experience as quality management representative and regulatory liaison in notified body, regulatory agency, and third party audits.
• Developed and deployed a cost of poor quality framework in collaboration with the technologies SBU Quality and Regulatory Executive VP.

The attached resume further details my skills and background, and I welcome a face-to-face meeting to discuss my qualifications. References will be provided upon request. I look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

[address, contact information]
Resume

- Customize, have several working versions
  - machine readers
  - HR (human) screening
  - Uploading into company websites
    - As pdf or Word attachments
    - Software interprets raw text into formatted sequence causing mistakes
    - Creates your profile
- Top 1/2 of page 1 most critical
- 1-2 pages, select publications
- Style and format should match cover letter
- Last page, professional references & contact information
You are quickly judged on the top 1/2 of the first page of your resume

Hints:

✓ Use industry standard for experience level
✓ No political or religious affiliations (neutral)
✓ Organized
✓ Detail-oriented
Interviewing
When you get that call!

- Research interview techniques
  - There is no assurance company will use standard interviewing techniques
  - Become familiar with STAR, behavioral, team moc simulation, group interviews, other non-standard approaches
  - Know typical questions you will likely be asked

- Ask what to expect (e.g., length of interview, who you will speak with, etc.)

- Prepare for phone or F2F
  - Practice answers related to job description, study the company
Prepare for Standard Questions

- Describe yourself
  - Be succinct
  - Highlight critical thinking skills and soft people skills
  - Relate to job description
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- How do you handle pressure / adversity?
- How will you fulfill the aspects of the job description?
- What would others say about you?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- What do you do in your spare time?
- Identify others and practice your answers...
Phone Interview day

- Be on-time for the call
- Be in a private location
- Have copies of the job description, your cover letter, resume and references
- Take notes
- Ask a few key questions that arise from the screening
- Ask when you would hear about next steps
- Conclude the call with your high level of interest in the job
- Email a personalized thank you to the person(s) you spent time with on the phone
F2F Interview day

- Be early
- Dress for success
- Greet associate at reception desk, say hello and ask them how they are
- Have copies of the job description, your notes from your research and the phone screen, your questions to ask, your cover letter, resume and references
- Professional notebook and pen for taking notes
- Greet interviewer(s) with firm hand shake, direct eye contact
- Don’t fidget, smile, be engaged
- Address questions with succinct answers
- If you want the job...
  - In closing reiterate your strong interest in the position
  - Send a personal hand-written note in the mail within 24 hours
F2F Interview day

- Handling awkward or non-PC questions
  - Be prepared to answer the following types of unusual questions:
    - Are you married? Do you have kids? What do you like to do on the weekends? Can you travel on the weekends? What are your politics? How much time do you spend on social media? What salary are you looking for?

- Example answer: *I strive for an appropriate work-life balance so I am a successful contributor in both my personal life and professional career*
F2F Interview day - luncheon

Don’t laugh but...you will be judged on
- How you treat the wait staff
- How decisive you are in placing an order
- The choices you make
- Your table manners
- Your thanking the interviewer for his/her time and treating you to lunch
- General conversation if it departs from typical interview questions

This can make or break you!
F2F Interview day

- Remember – you are interviewing the company as much as they are interviewing you
- It is possible you may not like the idea of working for the company or manager
- You may decline in writing further consideration by the company
Characteristics that win/lose a job

- **Positive characteristics**
  - Chemistry and relatability with the interviewer(s)
  - Ability to grow and be flexible
  - Quiet enthusiasm
  - Professional appearance, demeanor, and patterns of speech

- **Negative characteristics**
  - Lack of chemistry or relatability with the interviewer(s)
  - Non-verbal cues that show you are nervous or easily distracted
  - Unprofessional appearance, demeanor, and patterns of speech
If you are not chosen

- No reason to assume this is a negative outcome
- Learn from all aspects of the interview process
- Is there a question you could have answered better?
- Even if you had a positive interview, you may not be selected for the following reasons:
  - Other candidate was a better fit for the job
  - Internal candidate was preferred
  - Simply not a match for short- or long-term goals of the company
  - Company chose not to fill the position
  - They have you in mind for another position down the road
- Keep trying, practicing, and refining your interview skills!
Personal case study from 2015

- After losing my job in Feb 2015...
  - Applied for 143 positions in 6 months (33% relevant to my experience and background)
  - Invited to 5 F2F interviews
  - Resulted in 3 written offers, 2 rejections
    - Of the 2 rejections...
      - The company hired an internal candidate
      - The interviewer didn’t like me from the start (and I didn’t like him); we mutually cut the interview short

- 3 offers/143 positions applied to = conversion rate of 2%
Getting the Offer
You get the offer

- Congratulations - Nice job!
- Negotiating compensation is not easy
  - Consider market location and position
    - glassdoor, salary.com, indeed.com
  - Ask company what range they expect to pay
  - Have a range based on above, not an arbitrary number you want
  - Ask about other benefits
    - Holidays/paid time off, 401(k), healthcare – % you pay, insurance, short-term/long-term disability, FMLA, etc. add ~20%+ to base pay
    - Bonus plan
  - Do the math
Compensation example

- **Employer pays**
  - Base $70,000
  - Healthcare: generally 70-75% of benefit
    - $1,500 - $2,000 employer paid based on your age, marital status, dependents
  - 8-10 holidays, 2-3 weeks PTO (nearly 4 weeks paid time off)
  - 401(k) + employer contributions (match) or without contributing, annual fee per employee is $200
  - Unemployment compensation (mandated by state law)
  - Payroll taxes ($800 per employee)
  - ST- and LT-disability, basic life insurance ($2,000/yr)
  - FMLA
  - Continuing education or membership dues
  - Free parking or % of parking
  - Bonus plan up to $2,000 per quarter or $10,000/year
Compensation example

- Employer pays significantly more for you than you actually see in your paycheck
  - Base $70,000 + PTO/holidays + bonus + benefits package (+$30,500)

TOTAL COMPENSATION = $105,500+
Compensation considerations

- Employer may have caps for each position and level
- Hierarchy (experience, tenure in organization)
- Some decisions are arbitrary, discretionary
Questions you should ask

- When is my start date?
- What are my working hours going to be? Is there flex time?
- When do I get paid?
- Am I expected to take work home or to look at and/or answer emails or texts from home?
- When does the company schedule performance and salary reviews?
- How does the company bonus plan work?
- What are my employee benefits, and how do they work? What share of the cost of those benefits will I bear, if any?
- Who are my teammates, and what are their jobs?
- Who are my internal and external customers, and what are they going to be expecting me to provide for them?
- Who is my boss, and what are his or her priorities?
- How will my work contribute to the organization’s success?
When to start the next job search

- Don’t job hop
- Jobs and companies don’t last forever
- Networking helps offset an abrupt loss of job
- Be clear with your boss how you’d like growth opportunities
- If none exist and you feel stuck, it’s time to start your search again discreetly
- Can take 2+ years to land your next job
Contrasts between Industry and Academia
Industry vs Academia

- Very difficult to be attractive to industry with a full academic background and career
- Corporate goals/milestones are driven by deadlines, measurable accountability, performance of individuals and teams
- Pace in industry is highly accelerated
- Corporate organizations based on profit
Thank you!
New Faculty Recruitment
MMG Hiring Process: Overview

1. Applicant Pool
2. Search Comm
3. Review
4. First Interview
5. Second Interview
6. Offer
FACULTY POSITION IN MICROBIOLOGY AND MOLECULAR GENETICS, PITTSBURGH

The Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine has faculty positions available at the Assistant, Associate or Full Professor level. Major research strengths of the Department include microbial pathogenesis, host-pathogen interactions, molecular virology, antimicrobial drug discovery, mechanisms of gene regulation, and viral oncogenesis. Individuals with active research programs in related or complementary areas are encouraged to apply. For additional information about the Department and the School of Medicine, please visit our website: http://www.mmg.pitt.edu

Requirements for tenure-stream Assistant Professors include a Ph.D. and/or M.D. degree, a strong record of scholarship in research, and a clear vision for development of an independent research program. Appointments at higher ranks will require an established, nationally recognized research program with a track record of extramural grant support. All faculty members are expected to contribute to graduate and medical school teaching activities.

The University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine is consistently among the top ten in NIH-funded medical schools in the U.S. and is located in one of America’s most livable cities.

To apply, please email your cover letter, curriculum vitae, a one-page summary of your research plans, and request that three letters of recommendation be sent to: jobsearch@mmg.pitt.edu

Preference will be given to candidates whose completed applications are received by October 1st, 2014. The University of Pittsburgh is an Affirmative Action Equal Opportunity Employer.
Anatomy of a Faculty Search Ad

FACULTY POSITIONS IN MICROBIOLOGY AND MOLECULAR GENETICS, PITTSBURGH

The Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine has faculty positions available at the Assistant, Associate or Full Professor level. Major research strengths of the Department include microbial pathogenesis, host-pathogen interactions, molecular virology, antimicrobial drug discovery, mechanisms of gene regulation, and viral oncogenesis. Individuals with active research programs in related or complementary areas are encouraged to apply. For additional information about the Department and the School of Medicine, please visit our website: http://www.mmg.pitt.edu

Multiple positions are available at all ranks – different ranks have different expectations

Targeted recruitment in research areas complementary to existing strengths – many applications aren’t pursued because they don’t fit with existing research mission

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The University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine is consistently among the top ten in NIH-funded medical schools in the U.S. and is located in one of America’s most livable cities.

Primary expectations: Develop (Assistant) or bring (Associate/Full) independent extramurally (NIH) funded research program.

Not a teaching position.

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Follow the directions! Committee has to review hundreds of applications
Submit materials ASAP. Decisions are made on a rolling basis - strong candidates applying early have an advantage
MMG Hiring Process: 2014-15 Search Data

- Applicant Pool: > 200
- Search Comm Review: 20 for further consideration
- First Interview: 12 invited
- Second Interview: 4
- Offer: 4

Faculty review at each stage.
First Interview

- Generally two-day visit
- Formal seminar of research accomplishments with some indication of future plans
- Meetings with individual faculty – often search committee members
- Group meeting: students and fellows
- **Our goal**: Make the Department and the School/University/City as attractive as possible
First Interview

Interactions with the Chair

- Informational session
- Address questions related to:
  - Research resources and infrastructure
  - Graduate programs and trainees
  - Expectations and tenure process
- Wrap-up session to gauge candidate interest
- Timing with respect to other prospects
Successful First Interview

- Outstanding seminar – clearly presented with science accessible by a wide audience
  - Faculty, students, fellows
  - Experts and non-experts
- Engaged with other faculty – these people are potentially your new colleagues
  - Decisions about second visits involve the entire faculty, not just the Chair
- **Your goal:** Make the impression that you are very interested in the job
Second Interview

- Informal chalk talk
- Summary of past accomplishments
- Focus on future directions
  - Framed in terms of specific aims for a first grant
  - Distinct from mentor’s research program
- Address ways to engage faculty in collaboration or leverage resources unique to department
- More give and take with the audience – can you think on your feet?
Second Interview

Interactions with the Chair

- Often poised to begin negotiation at this stage
- Discussion of resources, salary requirements
- **Resources:**
  - Laboratory space
  - Start-up funds
  - Major equipment/special research requirements
- Highlights of the discussion summarized in written form (becomes basis of formal offer)