Meeting the Challenge: Cultural

Sina Safayi, DVM, PhD

Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences
Cultural Adjustment: Honeymoon Stage

• Celebration of ending one chapter and excitement of starting a new one
Cultural Adjustment: Frustration Stage

• HR form
  – emergency contact info

• Holidays
  – Far from family
  – Single entry visa

• The excitement is over and now you notice the difficulty that arises when moving out of your comfort zone – reality hits!
Cultural Adjustment: Frustration Stage

- Salary scale
- Vacation days
- Retirement
- Insurance
- Mat/Pat leave
- Family issues
- Tax
- Credit history
- SSN
- Driving License
Cultural Intelligence: Diversity

Not American?
We cannot serve you alcohol!

“Xenophobia” (read: racism!) discourages integration!
Cultural Intelligence: Diversity

#MeToo    #BlackLivesMatter

• Agree/disagree based on your knowledge/experience
• Problem: Lack of awareness
• Solution: Dialogue - Admit there is an issue

Power harassment: #MeToo

Xinophobia: #InternationalScholarsMatter
Cultural Intelligence: Diversity

At the entrance of the United Nations
- from Persian poet, Sa’adi (13th century):

"All human beings are members of one frame,
Since all, at first, from the same essence came.
When time afflicts a limb with pain
The other limbs at rest cannot remain.
If thou feel not for other’s misery
A human being is no name for thee.”
Cultural Adjustment: Location

Small college towns:

- Less diverse!
- Opportunity deserts!
- Limited “nonfarming payroll jobs”

- **Short term solution:**
  - “get out!”

- **Long term solution:**
  - improve the level of support and regulations; e.g. seed grants, travel awards, and etc
Cultural Intelligence: Language

- Potential for **misunderstandings**!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What the British say</th>
<th>What the British mean</th>
<th>What others understand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I hear what you say</td>
<td>I disagree and do not want to discuss it further</td>
<td>He accepts my point of view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With the greatest respect...</td>
<td>I think you are an idiot</td>
<td>He is listening to me</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Accent Trumps Race** in Guiding Children’s Social Preferences *(Kinzler et al, 2009)*

- Trust in accents can change over time depending on our **social circles** and daily relationships *(BBC-3/9/2018-referring to multiple scientific studies)*
Cultural Intelligence: Language

• When it matters how you pronounce it: The influence of regional accents on job interview outcome. (Rakic et al, 2011)

• The effect of speakers’ regional varieties on listeners’ decision-making. (Leemann et al 2015)
Cultural Intelligence: Diversity

• Your **Non-American name**
  “He dropped one letter in his name (Jose → Joe) while applying for jobs, and the responses rolled in”
  (Huffpost 9/2/14)

• Your **Non-American alma mater**
  I was advised to remove the word “Iran” from my CV!

• Your personality type
Cultural Intelligence: Leadership Style

Source: "Being the Boss in Brussels, Boston, and Beijing," by Erin Meyer, July-August 2017
Cultural Intelligence: Work Style

• Germans work least number of hours; yet are most efficient compared to 35 other developed and developing countries

• Danes rank high in terms of efficiency; yet have the best work-life balance

• Why? Perhaps because they’re:
  – Well-engaged → Proactive!
  – Well-Educated → Awareness!
Cultural Adjustment: Adjustment Stage

Community action:

• Challenge assumptions

• Pursue change
  – Form PDAs and ask for PDOs
  – Join the PDAs, NPA board, and committees

• Create a welcoming and inclusive platform for international scholars

• Value input, feedback, and suggestions from International Scholars

• Act as a liaison and promote international scholars’ needs to university leadership
Cultural Adjustment: Adjustment Stage

As an individual:
Victim → Survivor → Proactive

• Cherish differences!
• Avoid isolation; yet *stay away from haters on both sides*
• Utilize your diverse cultural background to your advantage
• Understand the cultural differences in networking: Nepotism vs relationship-building
• Find a network where they value your differences and what you have to offer!
Cultural Adjustment: Feeling of belonging

“I received a letter just before I left office from a man. I don’t know why he chose to write it, but I’m glad he did. He wrote that you can go to live in France, but you can’t become a Frenchman. You can go to live in Germany or Italy, but you can’t become a German, an Italian. He went through Turkey, Greece, Japan and other countries. But he said anyone, from any corner of the world, can come to live in the United States and become an American.”

- One of the US Presidents
US Immigration & Visas: Issues & Options for Post-docs
LEGAL DISCLAIMER:

The following presentation is for informational and educational purposes, and is not a substitute for individual legal advice. With regards to someone’s particular situation, an attorney should be consulted with respect to your personal case.
Who can help?

In Academia:

Still under the umbrella of the International Office

OPT (STEM)

J-1 Research Scholars

H-1B Research associates

Titles & positions.....

Your University will have an international office.

Are you aware of it?

What about the Career Office?

The Postdoc Office should be PROACTIVE
Visa Issues and Questions

Academia versus Industry:

J-1 or H-1B

Transferring a J-1??

Can I do an O-1A?

Temporary or Permanent
VISAS: Don’t be afraid to look at alternatives

Do know your employer policies?

Is institutional or company sponsorship a possibility?

As highly qualified individuals you have options

Are you aware of self-sponsored green cards?

There are now multiple career options outside of academia...
Petitioning for a Green Card ... you’re not necessarily alone.
EMPLOYER sponsored Versus SELF SPONSORED

Employer: Traditional method and (somewhat) easily navigable

Self: YOU are driving the process. Gives you additional options; can open doors; but, restrictive. Be prepared and understand the process.

Transitional/non-traditional Fields — are they allowable?

If you can process a “Self” petitioned application, you have more options regarding ongoing employment.
Extraordinary Ability

National or International acclaim and that his or her achievements have been recognized in the field of expertise. One-time achievement (that is, a major, international recognized award)

or

Meet a minimum of three out of ten listed criteria

Part Two: Consistent career of Excellence — the totality of the circumstances
National Interest Waiver
what is it?

What to look at in the NIW:

A cumulative and broad analysis of your overall body of work.

The mere act of publication/presentation etc won’t be enough!

(As in the EB1A) You drive the process — continuation in your field! NOT tied to any specific employer.
New test:

Matter of Dhanasar

1. Substantial Merit and National Importance

2. The Foreign National is well positioned to advance the proposed endeavor

3. It would be beneficial to the US to waive the requirements of a job offer and LC
HOW STRONG IS MY CASE?

WHAT DO I NEED TO BRING TO THE TABLE?
NETWORK!

Use your professional relationships
Transitional and Non-Traditional Careers

Science has changed:
This new national interest waiver standard may allow more applicants to be approved who are working away from the bench
Some Housekeeping:

If you are working in an area of security (or other “delicate” field) make sure that you set up ANY visa appointment well in advance — Administrative Processing (221g)

DUI/DWI — VISA REVOCATION (DON’T NEED A CONVICTION)

EXTREME VETTING — SOCIAL MEDIA/PHONES/COMPUTERS (PASSWORDS)
The Politics of it all...

WELL, WELL, WELL...

Looks like we might be in a “wait and see” pattern

Difficulty of H-1Bs! Questions over H-4 work authorization...

Wait for actual, real information — don’t buy into the rumors and conjecture; H-1B Bills etc

THANK YOU!
Meeting the Challenge: Funding

Philip S. Clifford, Ph.D.

University of Illinois at Chicago
Agenda

• Why?
• Sources
• Tips
Why write a grant?

- Get $ for research
- Get additional $ for you?
- Travel allowance
- Keep your job
- Develop a track record
- Measure of productivity
- Status
- Plan project progression
Why not write a grant?

- No funding opportunities
- Too busy
- Plenty of research funding already
- No ideas
- PI not supportive
- Interferes with social life
Funding Opportunities

- Private foundations
  - James S. McDonnell Foundation,
  - Burroughs-Wellcome Fund, Human Frontier Science Program
- Disease-related foundations
  - American Heart Association, Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation,
  - National Multiple Sclerosis Foundation
- K99/R00
- Total of 65 potential sources
Search Engines

• COS Pivot
  https://pivot.cos.com/

• Proposal Central
  https://proposalcentral.altum.com/GrantOpportunities.asp

• Grant Forward
  https://www.grantforward.com/index
Tips for Writing the Proposal

• Start early – at least 3 months
  *lots of documents besides the research plan: biosketch, budget, mentoring plan, reference letters*

• Work with research office, departmental staff

• Know the review criteria

• Get critiques of specific aims
  *experts, non-experts, peers*

• Pilot data are crucial to demonstrating feasibility and potentially positive results

• Must be clearly written, logical, innovative

• Marketing – get the reviewers excited