skills building workshop
CPDD 2015

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Things You Said You Wanted To Know

- Applying for, negotiating, and obtaining jobs, both in and out of academia
- Preparing a clear and concise elevator talk
- How to judge an academic institution’s fit
Introductions

- Current pre docs?
- Current post docs?
- Current K awardees?
- Current R01 grantees?
Top Ten Things to Know
#1 Have an Elevator Talk

- 30 seconds or less, not just for the boss but for the person you would like to be your boss!
Andy Dunn, CEO of online retailer Bonobos, recently stopped talking in the elevator after seeing most everyone else looking at their iPhones. He worried he was interrupting.

Always have ready an ‘elevator pitch,’ a big idea that wins over the boss... or be ready for 90 long seconds of stammering. ▶

Office elevators carry fewer people per car today by using dispatch service: Employees enter their floor number on a keypad and are directed to an elevator.

Workers in New York and Chicago walk faster than people in Europe or the suburbs so elevator companies program the doors to shut faster in buildings there. ▶

To distract waiting people, some buildings install lobby mirrors. ▶ After passengers swipe their IDs, new technology can reroute them to another floor if the boss wants to see them.
By the Numbers
13 seconds: The average wait time for the elevator in a typical 16-floor building, with a dispatch system.
138 seconds: The average wait time for the elevator in a typical 16-floor building, with a conventional system.
50 seconds: The average trip time in a dispatch elevator, down from 89 seconds in a standard elevator
They exist in most every building so it provides a lot of opportunity.

A Person takes an average of 4 elevator trips per day, 250 days per year. That is an average of 1000 opportunities per year just at the elevator.

In NYC, people working in office buildings spent a cumulative amount of 22.5 YEARS waiting for and riding elevators in 2010.
What is an "Elevator Pitch"?

An "Elevator Pitch" is a concise, carefully planned, and well-practiced description about your work that your mother should be able to understand in the time it would take to ride up an elevator.
#2 You Are the Most Important Person in the Mentoring Relationship

- Compacts… Anyone?

AAMC
Commitments of Postdoctoral Appointees

• I acknowledge that I have the primary responsibility for the development of my own career. I recognize that I must take a realistic look at career opportunities and follow a path that matches my individual skills, values, and interests.

• I will develop a mutually defined research project with my mentor that includes well-defined goals and timelines. Ideally, this project should be outlined and agreed upon at the time of the initial appointment.

• I will perform my research activities conscientiously, maintain good research records, and catalog and maintain all tangible research materials that result from the research project.

• I will respect all ethical standards when conducting my research including compliance with all institutional and federal regulations as they relate to responsible conduct in research, privacy and human subjects research, animal care and use, laboratory safety, and use of radioisotopes. I recognize that this commitment includes asking for guidance when presented with ethical or compliance uncertainties and reporting on breeches of ethical or compliance standards by me and/or others.

• I will show respect for and will work collegially with my coworkers, support staff, and other individuals with whom I interact.

• I will endeavor to assume progressive responsibility and management of my research project(s) as it matures. I recognize that assuming responsibility for the conduct of research projects is a critical step on the path to independence.

• I will seek regular feedback on my performance and ask for a formal evaluation at least annually.

• I will have open and timely discussions with my mentor concerning the dissemination of research findings and the distribution of research materials to third parties.

• I recognize that I have embarked on a career requiring “lifelong learning.” To meet this obligation I must stay abreast of the latest developments in my specialized field through reading the literature, regular attendance at relevant seminar series, and attendance at scientific meetings.

• I will actively seek opportunities outside the laboratory (e.g. professional development seminars and workshops in oral communication, scientific writing, and teaching) to develop the full set of professional skills necessary to be successful for my chosen career.

• At the end of my appointment, in accordance with institutional policy, I will leave behind all original notebooks, computerized files, and tangible research materials so that other individuals can carry on related research. I will also work with my mentor to submit the research results for publication in a timely manner. I can make copies of my notebooks and computerized files, and have access to tangible research materials which I helped to generate during my postdoctoral appointment according to institutional policy.
Compact for the Mentor
“The [Post Doc] relationship has to be viewed as a lifelong relationship rather than one that lasts a few years. We are linked for the rest of my life. I accept your career as being largely my responsibility. The corollary is that you have to work productively in the crew to make discoveries, write effective papers, meet people and communicate well.”

A Mentor
Dr. Seuss

Horton Hatches the Egg
#3 Finding an effective mentor

- Predictor of good mentoring
  - Giving good guidance
  - Offering emotional support
  - Work on work-life balance

- Predictor of ineffective mentoring:
  - Is not around
  - Does not meet with you
  - Is not involved in the institution
Correlates of Success

- Post Docs reporting the most structured oversight and formal training (compared to those with less oversight) were statistically significantly more likely to:
  - report overall satisfaction
  - give mentors high marks
  - experience fewer conflicts with advisors
  - be more productive (papers etc)
Survey from NIDA Workshop

- Post Docs reported wanting:
  - More time with mentor (55%)
  - More structure to get papers out
  - More feedback on work
  - Help making professional decisions
  - Mentor to stop using her to do the things no one else will do
#4 Ask for Things and Ask to Help

- You shouldn’t have to ask, but sometimes your mentor is preoccupied so….

- Ask
  - For a paper to review
  - For a paper to co-author
  - For a chance to help write a grant
  - To shadow her at meetings to meet her colleagues
  - To go to a meeting
Survival Strategies

- Know what is expected of you
  - Ask, you may not always be told
  - Keep your supervisor in the loop

- Show Productivity Early
  - Finish projects as quickly as possible
  - Become part of existing projects
  - Pilot Grants

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1496912/
virtues of the work ethic and personal initiative
#5 Don’t be Afraid to Say Yes

- Serendipity
- Change
Serendipity

- Sometimes things just happen that you don’t plan or opportunities just plop into your lap.
- Take a chance.
- Do something unplanned.
- Say “yes”.
- Don’t always look for what’s in it for you.

Those opportunities can turn into life-changing experiences.
#6 The More You Have to Do, the More You Get Done
Connections

- Volunteer for Teaching/Research opportunities
  - For example: help with a course
  - Co-author papers
  - Help write grants
  - Don’t be an ivory tower investigator—learn new things. Get to the lab if a clinician, get to the field if a lab persons.
  - Get your hands dirty and your feet wet by experimenting with all steps necessary to run a successful investigation
#7 Find Your Peer Group

- Locally, nationally, internationally
#8 Be Strategic

- Pursue efforts with high yield
- h index: the number of papers that have been cited that number of times, (e.g., h=10 means 10 of your papers have been cited at least 10 times)
  - h=12 for promotion to associate professor
  - h=18 could mean professorship,
  - h=15–20 fellowship in some societies
  - h=45+ membership in the NAS
Show your career's best

Use your profile overview page to present yourself and your research. Customizing your profile is the best way to show your peers what you've been working on, create exposure for your current projects, and start building your network.
#9 Expand Your Mentoring Mosaic

- In town
- Out of town
- In your dept.
- Out of your dept.
- Whereever
Networking

- Professional opportunities
  - Collaborations and Committees
- Formal and Informal mentoring opportunities
- Build an outside network
  - Seminars
  - Conferences
Mosaic

- Consider your research in the bigger scheme
- Foresee what level of research/practice you intend to end up doing, and do it
- Assemble a diverse mosaic of mentors
- Translate findings or help others to do so
- Useful contribution: thoughtful distillation of science
- Practice survival skills
- Get involved
Successful relationship with mentor

- Reciprocity
- Mutual respect
- Clear expectations
- Personal connection
- Shared values
#10 Landing the perfect job

- Meet with visiting speakers
- Request monthly meetings with other fellows in your institution
- Request an ombudsman/woman
- Attend grant writing, career development and other workshops as often as possible
- Find an institution that is not Toxic, but Healthy
How to Tell if you are in a DD*

- The department chair is not at the top of her/his game regarding the unit/enterprise
- There are not real meaningful collaborations
- It has been a long time since someone was recruited to the department
- They only set you up with groups of students or faculty, rather than individual

*Dead Department, Derelict Department, Dubious Department etc etc etc
Indicators of a Healthy Environment

- Senior women represent >14% of full professors (if you in the US)
- Women and minorities hold positions of leadership
- A career development office offers programs
- Clear guidelines for promotion and tenure
- Stop of the tenure clock for personal reasons
- Faculty are allowed to move to tenure track
- Some of the IDCs are returned to you in some way
Faculty Positions

How do I apply

☐ Application needs: A cover letter, a CV, A research statement, a teaching statement, and references

- Make sure each of these are geared toward the position to which you are applying

☐ Use the job sites to see what is available

☐ Use your network
Faculty Positions

What does a competitive faculty candidate look like?

- Publications in prestigious journals
- Teaching experience
- Strong research record
- Grants
- Someone who will be promotable: distinction in two or more areas: research and teaching, with satisfactory distinction in service
Skills for a non-academic setting

- Analytical Thinking
- Communication
- Teaching
- Evaluation skills
- Planning and budgeting
- Self-motivation and discipline
- Ability to deal with complex situations
Negotiating a Position

- Try to get at least 20% more salary than you have now to make a move
- Be compensated for any COL increase
- How things work during the recruitment phase with communications and reimbursements portends how things will be
- Get things in writing—don’t be fooled by “we can’t put it in writing”
Negotiating a Position

- Please: only apply for a job if you really are able to move. Don’t waste people’s time and money to get something better for yourself.
- Be upfront with your current boss.
- Realize that someone knows someone at your current institution and there is no privacy when it comes to your job market interviews.
Formula for Success

Quality Mentoring + Good Planning + Environment + Serendipity
There is no perfect way.  
No one person has all of the answers.

The goal is to make the best contribution to science that one can make.