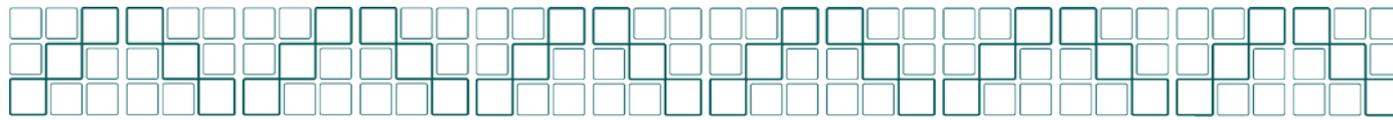

Interviewing

Lori M. Conlan, PhD

**Director, Office of Postdoctoral Services and Career
Services Center**

conlanlo@mail.nih.gov





First a bit on resumes

- In Jan we had a talk on resumes and an overview of industry positions (archived at www.training.nih.gov)
- We asked 3 postdocs for their resumes (along with a job ad).



- **Professional Profile:**
- **Biochemist with nearly 7 years of experience and training in assay development, drug discovery, and high-throughput screening (HTS):**
 - Designed, optimized, and successfully executed multiple cell-based HTS campaigns against emerging mitochondrial and neurodegenerative disease targets.
 - Currently leading a large-scale drug discovery and target identification initiative for mitochondrial quality control models related to Parkinson's disease and neurodegeneration.
 - Record of submitted/published novel insights gained from effective validation of chemical tools and promising genetic regulators of mitophagy.
- **A focus on innovative approaches/technologies to study mitochondrial physiology and human disease:**
- Developed new technologies in drug discovery including the Wells2Cell paradigm for improving physiological relevance of assays and efficiency in high-content analysis.
- Effectively applied high-content strategies to dissect complex cellular phenotypes induced by RNAi.
- **Strong communication skills and a commitment to collaboration:**
 - Appointed as a mentor to graduate students in the laboratory.
 - Leadership experience in team-centric research incorporating biology, automation, and data analysis.
 - Collaborated with colleagues on multiple occasions to produce peer-reviewed publications, conference presentations, and successfully funded grant proposals.



PROFILE

- Postdoctoral research scientist with extensive experience in cancer and immune cell biology, as well as pre-clinical development. With my wide background in the design and optimization of flow cytometry and cell imaging assays as well as my broad knowledge in target identification and assessment I intend to make a significant contribution to Pfizer's efforts to understand novel aspects of inflammatory and genetic diseases providing a basis for future therapies.

■ CORE COMPETENCES

- Extensive knowledge in molecular biological as well as biochemical methods
- Six years of multi-parameter flow cytometry experience
- Over six years of implementing cell based assays
- Broad expertise in various imaging techniques
- Over eight years of experience applying cell culture techniques
- Strong team and leadership skills

■ PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Postdoctoral Fellow September 2010 - present

Surgery Branch, Center for Cancer Research/NCI, NIH, Bethesda, MD

- Screened over 70 pancreatic cancer cell lines *in vitro* as well as pancreatic cancer cell line xenografts and patient tumor xenografts *in vivo* with small molecule inhibitor
- Designed and optimized cell death assays leading to a classification of the cell line panel according to drug sensitivity
- Performed and analysed gene and protein expression as well as siRNA-mediated gene knockdown experiments that resulted in the discovery of potential biomarkers for drug sensitivity
- Established and maintained collaborations with partners in industry and academia
- Supervised and managed project progress of one summer student



Research Experience:

2011-Current Pharmacology Research Fellow, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Maryland

Principal Investigators: #1(NINDS) and #2(NCATS)

Project: Functional-genomic analysis and drug discovery in mitochondrial quality control: new therapeutic targets for neurodegenerative disease

2010-2011 Postdoctoral Research Fellow, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Maryland

Principal Investigators: #1(NINDS) and #2(NCATS)

Project: Parkinson's disease therapeutic targets: genome-wide analysis of mitochondrial quality control with high-content imaging

Funded Grants/Fellowships:

- 2011 National Institutes of Health Pharmacology Research Associate Fellowship (PRAT)
- 2011 National Institutes of Health Intramural RNAi Screening Grant
- ~~2010 National Institutes of Health Intramural Research Training Award~~
- ~~2010 Co-authored grant: R03 MH095599-01, High-content screening for~~

■ Leadership:

- 2011 –Current Founder and Director, NIH High-Content Analysis Users Group



PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

- Extensive background in writing, reviewing, editing and presenting of scientific literature
 - Authored 13 publications in peer reviewed journals and presented at over 12 national and international conferences and workshops.
- Strong leadership, organization and mentoring experience
 - Organized multiple colloquiums, workshops and career fairs
 - Worked with National Cancer Institute and National Institutes of Health leadership to organize events
- Excellent communication and networking skills
 - Recruited, hosted and engaged speakers for multiple workshops
- Invited and served as principal liaison for vendors and employers at an NCI career event
- Track record of preclinical and clinical research experience with broad scientific expertise in oncology, immunology, radiation biology, radiation oncology molecular targeted therapeutics, proteomics, biochemistry, mammalian cell culture, cell-based assays, animal cancer models

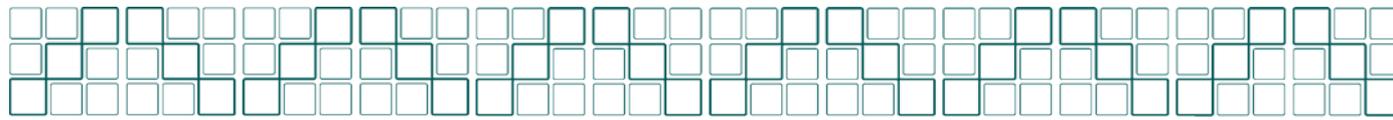
EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Radiation Oncology Branch, National Cancer Institute (NCI), National Institutes of Health (NIH) Bethesda, MD

Postdoctoral Fellow

2010-Present

- DOE-funded Scholar-In-Training Award Recipient. Radiation Research Society and International Congress of Radiation Research. Award given for high quality research.
- Co-supervised summer interns.



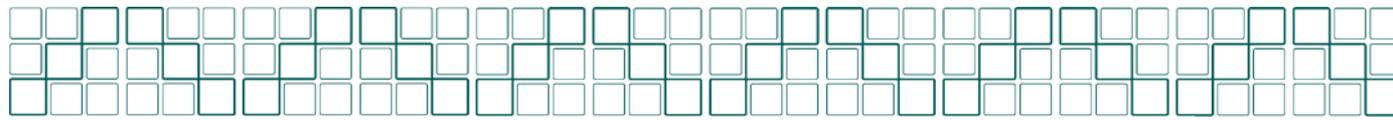
Goal

- Familiarize you to the interview process
- Give you strategies to answer questions
- Introduce to key players
 - Human Resources: Michelle Harper
 - Recruiters: Michael Curran
 - Hiring Managers: Charles Reed



The Interview is a 2 way street

- Interviewers want to learn more about your skills and experience to decide if you are a fit for the position
- You can learn more about the job, colleagues, workplace to decide if the position is a fit for you



Key to successful interviewing is effective preparation

Prepare by:

1. Researching the job and company
2. Knowing the types of questions you'll be asked
3. Preparing your answers
4. Practicing your interview responses



Researching the job and company

- Employer's homepage
- Network – use LinkedIn, professional and alumni networks
- Library resources
- Current employees
- Professionals in the field



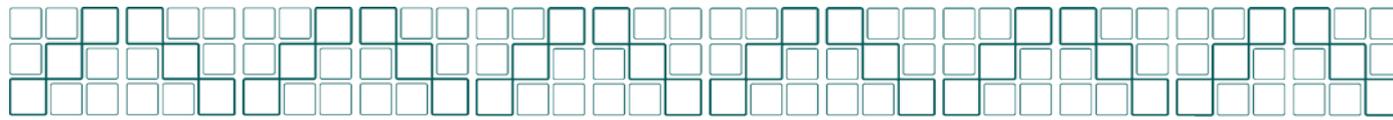
Opportunity Questions

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why are you interested in our company?
- What interests you most about this position?
- What do you know about our organization (products, services, research, departments)
- Tell me about your strengths and weaknesses.



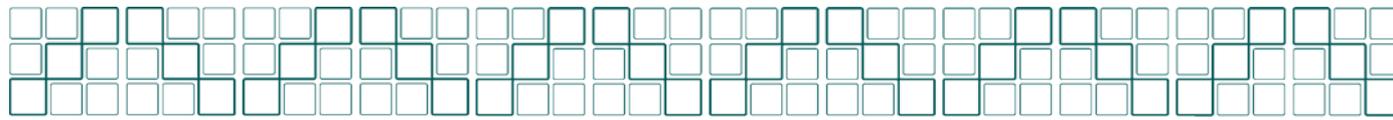
Sample Behavioral Questions

- Describe a time when you had difficulty working with a supervisor or co-worker in the past.
- Give me a specific example of a time when you sold your supervisor on an idea or concept.
- Describe the system you use for keeping track of multiple projects.
- Tell me about a time when you came up with an innovative solution to a challenge your lab was facing.



Preparing Your Answers

- Develop examples that demonstrate how your skills and experience relate to the major job responsibilities, what are your success stories?
- Create answers that will highlight your strengths, be memorable, and set you apart from the rest
- Use the Situation-Action-Result technique
- Practice so you can tell these stories in 90 seconds



Situation-Action-Result technique

- Describe a **situation** or context, the challenge or problem to be solved
- Describe the **action** you took, what did you do.
- Describe the outcome or **result**.

Our graduate student symposium has been poorly attended over the last five years. As the 2010 symposium chair, I developed a marketing strategy targeted at increasing attendance. The results of my leadership was a 30% increase in attendance. My committee agreed the new marketing plan should be used in all of our future events.



Some questions to ask the interviewer

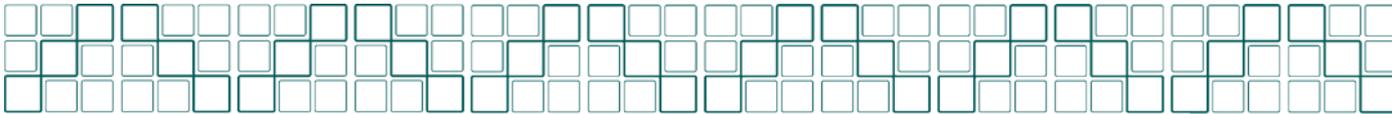
- I enjoy working on a team, will there be many opportunities to interact in a team environment?
- One of my greatest strengths is my interpersonal skills. How do you see this fitting in this position and the company?

Use your opportunity to ask questions to continue to sell yourself and seek insights that can be used in subsequent interviews. Wait until you are offered the job to ask questions about the job!



More resources

- 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
 - Academic and non-academic
 - Job talks for academics and non academics
- Read the OITE Careers blog
- Explore the OITE NIH Training Alumni database
- Internet sites like Monster and the Riley Guide
- Lori Conlan: conlanlo@mail.nih.gov
- Make an appointment with Brad Fackler





Need two jobs?

Academics

- Best discussed with dept chair or head of the search committee, but others may probe on their behalf
- Appropriate to bring this up during the first interview
 - Be positive
 - Ask about local consortia/agreements that might help
 - Be clear about types of positions your partner will accept

Industry

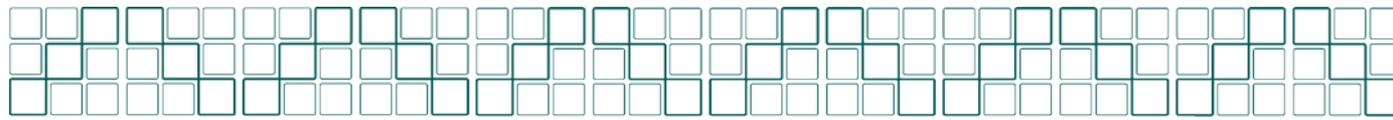
- Best not discussed in first interview
- Not as accommodating as academics
- Research local companies and consortia



Academic vs. Industry

- Many similarities:
 - Goals
 - Phone interviews
 - On-site interviews

- Many Differences:
 - Types of people you will meet
 - Job talks
 - Duration and number of interviews
 - Timeline to decision



Academic On-site Schedule

- Eat all meals with potential colleagues
- Meet with:
 - the Chair of relevant Departments and Center
 - individual faculty - in & out of your field
 - members of the search committee
 - students and/or postdocs - often over lunch
 - [Deans or other University leaders]
- Present:
 - a seminar (45 minutes)
 - [a chalk talk]
 - [a class]
- Tour:
 - facilities, potential lab space, classrooms, and cores
 - the town & surrounding areas



Industry Interviews

	Challenging Interview	Easier Interview	General Comments
Duration	2 days	½ day	Highly competitive position is more likely to have a multi-day interview; can start morning or afternoon
Research Presentation	1 hour	Not required	Know where presentation can be shortened in case of time crunch, may be placed anytime during schedule
Likely interviewers	Immediate supervisor, team personnel from other disciplines, HR representative, department colleagues, lab support staff, management	Immediate supervisor, a few department colleagues, head of department	Depends on sensitivity of position, size of company, interviewer schedules; expect changes to interviewer list
Length of interview	1.5 hours with immediate supervisor	~30 minutes with each interviewer	Depends on number of interviewers
Environment	Multiple interviewers	One-on-one	
Location	In a single conference room	Interviewers' offices	Escort between locations
Personal interviewing styles	Hostile	Enthusiastic	
Meals	Lunch: company cafeteria or local restaurant with 1-2 colleagues Dinner: local restaurant with supervisor and their management		