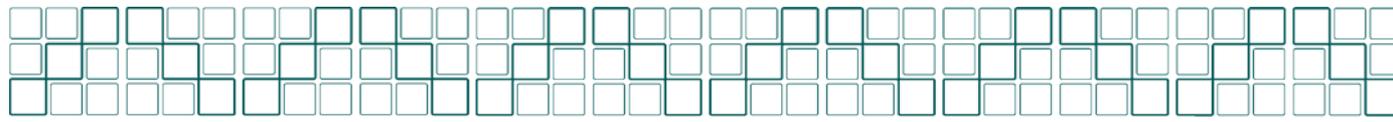


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# Job Search Strategies

**Shawn Mullen, PhD**  
**Deputy Director,**  
**OITE Office of Postdoctoral Services**



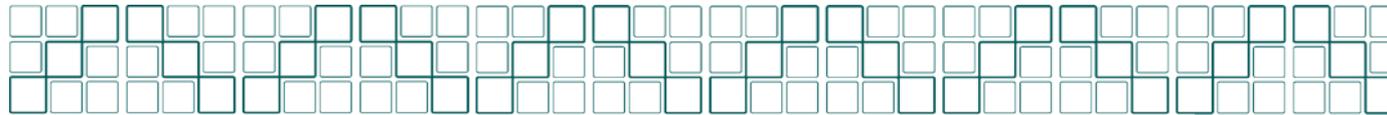


# Key elements of a job search

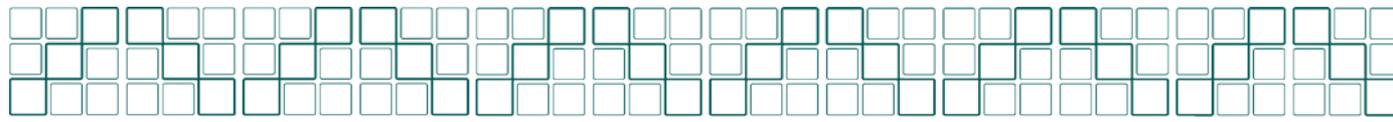
- Building a productive network
- Constructing effective job search documents
- Establishing a fruitful search scheme
- Preparing for a competitive interview

## Keys to making those elements successful

- Being organized
- Being assertive
- Being proactive



# Organizational Strategies



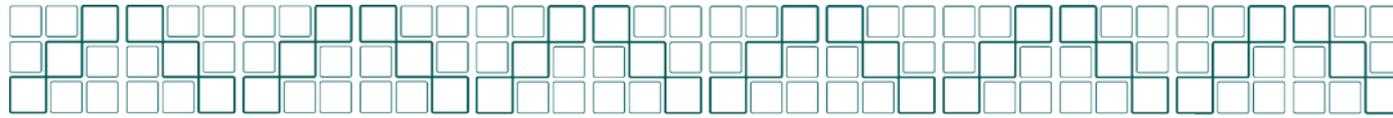
# Organization is Essential

- Finding a job is a job in itself
- Job searches are a stressful endeavor
- Knowing + planning = less stress
- Planning and organization significantly increase your odds of success
  - Managing your time
  - Maintaining good records
  - Maintaining networks that work for you
  - Creating documents that promote your qualifications and fit
  - Being prepared for all phases of the search



# Establish a job search time line

- 18 to 24 months from end of training
  - Solidifying your career direction
- 13 to 18 months from end of training
  - Developing your network contacts
  - Development of job search materials
    - JobERA.com if you are pursuing an international job search
  - Define your search targets / search strategies
- 12 months from end of training
  - Time shifting to finishing up and the job search
  - Focusing the search
- 6 to 9 months from end of training
  - Intensifying your search
  - Prepping additional documentation

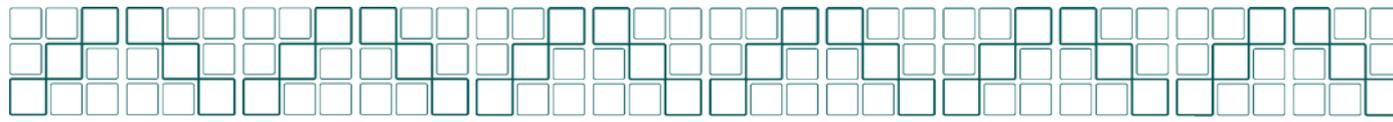


# Networking



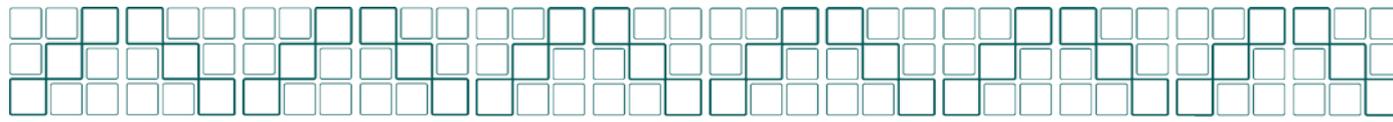
# Essential Elements of Networking

- Establishing each contact with specific intent
  - set priority levels
- Effectively planning and managing contacts
  - *Be S.M.A.R.T. – Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Realistic, Timed*
- Being flexible
- Learning to spot and seize upon opportunities
- Learning to master your anxiety
- Making it part of your daily routine
- Making networking a lifelong skill
- Utilizing every resource - ***human and technological***



# Finding connections

- Pubmed or patent databases
- Professional society
- Conferences
- Alumni databases
  - Undergrad
  - Graduate school
  - Old labmates
- LinkedIn, Facebook, Nature Network
- Family
- Career Centers
- Career symposiums/workshops



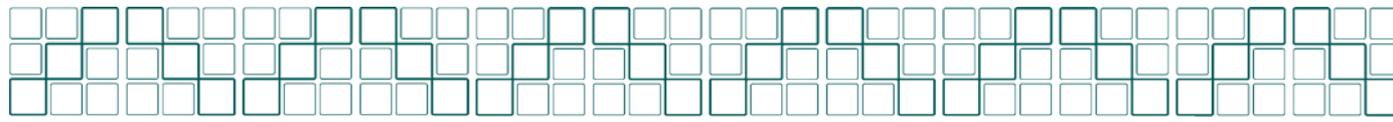
# Networking begins with a conversation

- “Elevator Speech”
  - Who you are, where you work, what you do, what you are looking for
- Open ended questions
- Have talking points ready
  - Recent events, weather, current science headlines, etc.
- Have a purpose, informational interviews



# Informational Interviews

- A good way to find a career path or get info on a current job opening
- Gaining access to insider information
- Helps prepare a stronger application
  
- ***Are not opportunities to ask for jobs!!***

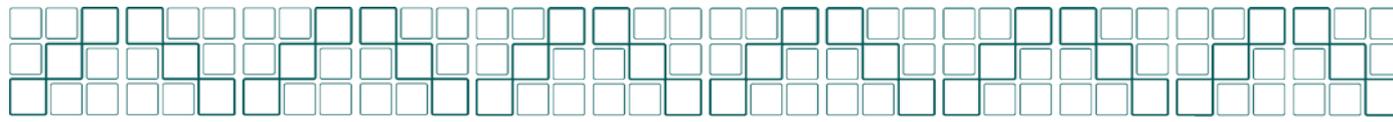


# Four goals of the informational interview

- Present
  - Tell me about your current position
- Past
  - How did you get into the field
- Future
  - Exploring long term opportunities in the field
- Advice
  - Contacts, feedback, professional societies, insights into possible positions



# Job Search Documents



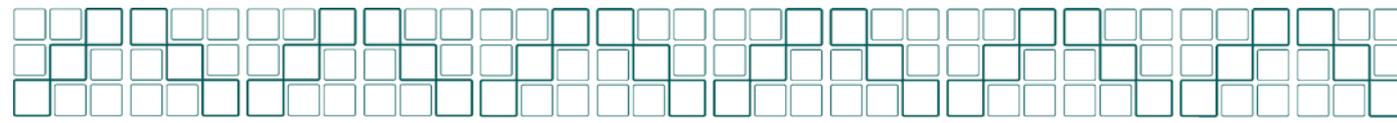
# Employers use a cover letter to...

- Determine your interest in the position
- Assess your written communication (English) skills
- Get a glimpse into who you are
- Determine if you understand the organization and the needs of the organization
- Aid in making critical decisions in the hiring process



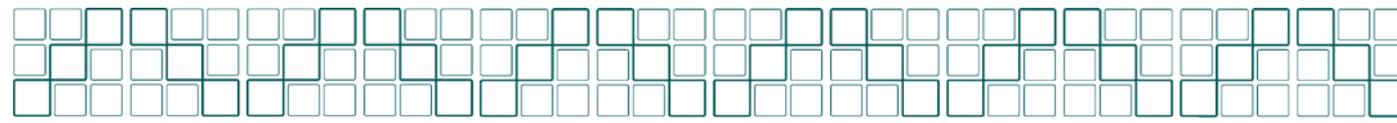
# Three major elements of a cover letter

- First Element
  - Why I am writing
- Second Element
  - Why I am qualified and why I should be hired
- Third Element
  - Closing paragraph
  - Can initiate an action by you



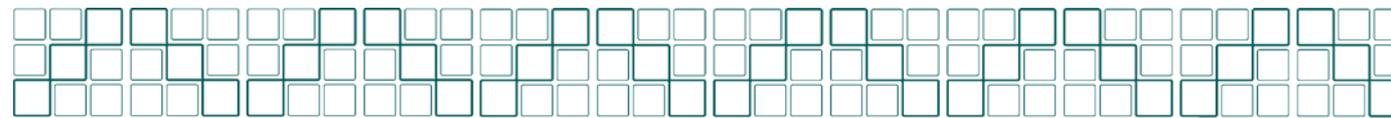
# Useful cover letter tips

- Should compliment your resume
- Write to a person
- Know when to include a cover letter
- Be brief but inclusive
- Avoid contractions and acronyms
- Have someone else read it before you hit send
- Don't wait for action



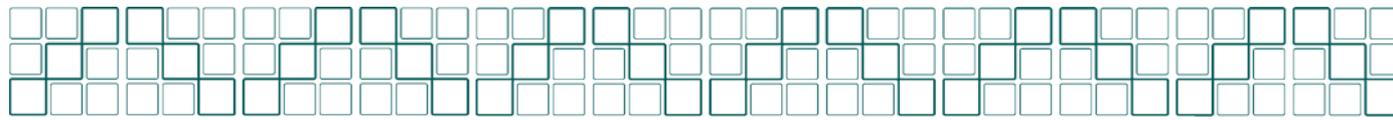
# CVs

- Comprehensive listing of your professional history
- Typically for applying to
  - Faculty positions, research intensive positions, fellowships
- Refer to the Academic Job Search Workshop for specifics
- Regardless of your career path everyone should have one as a professional history resource



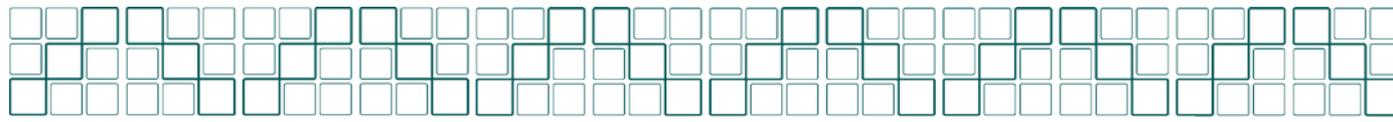
# Resumes

- Not a compressed CV
  - Resumes are true job search documents
  - Marketing document
- Used to apply to any non-faculty position
- Unique and tailored to each individual position
- No length requirement – 1<sup>st</sup> page is most important
- Typically in a reverse chronological order
- Organized to help the reader locate the necessary information



# Components of Resumes

- Permanent contact information
- Summary of qualifications
  - A short bulleted list of the skills you possess that meet the desired skills of the job position
- “Professional” experience
- Leadership
- Experiences that convey your qualifications to that specific position



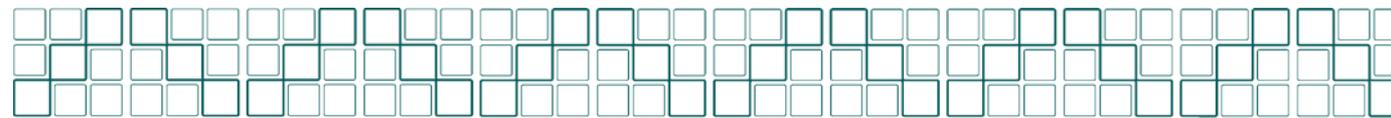
# Translating your research skills

- Organization
- Strategic planning
- Communication
- Identifying and solving problems
- Setting goals
- Leadership
- Managing projects
- Managing teams
- Delegating responsibilities
- Attention to details
- Initiating new ideas
- Critical analysis and evaluation



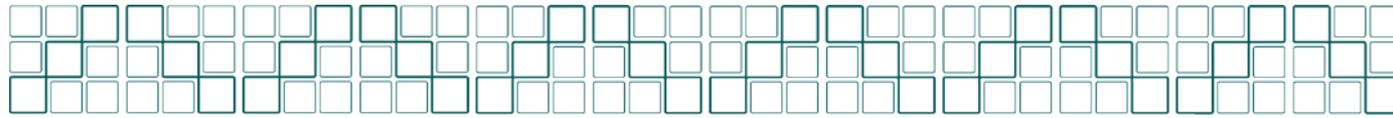
# Leadership

- What we typically see:
  - President of graduate club
  - Nothing



# Leadership

- What we typically see:
  - President of graduate club
  - Nothing
- What we should see:
  - Coordinated annual vendor shows, resulting in a \$3000 profit for the organization.
  - Organized institute sponsored seminar series, this included one seminar speaker per semester and the Annual Women in Science Seminar.
  - Developed non-traditional career forum, inviting and coordinating visits for 6 speakers.
  - Assisted in planning welcome week events for new graduate students
  - Planned departmental social activities
  - Co-Chair of fellows advisory board organizing fellows scientific retreat

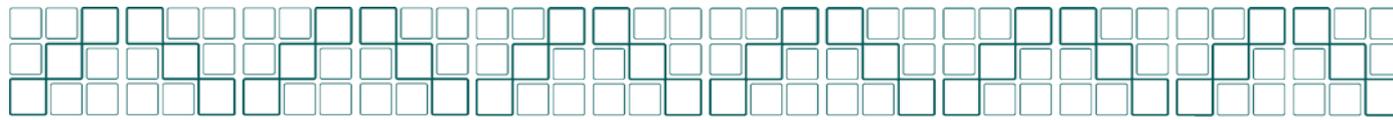


# Locating Job Positions



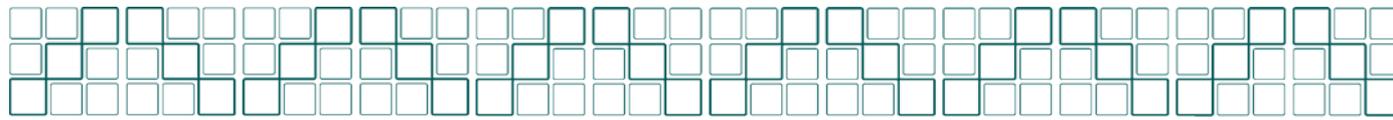
# Posted (advertised) Positions

- Company or organization websites
- Professional society career resources
- Online bulletin boards
- Career fairs and other career events
- Use your networking contacts as well



# Applying to posted positions

- Read and dissect the job posting carefully
  - Determine the specifics to help to submit the best app
- Perform a “profile analysis”
  - Listing all the skills the position is looking for
  - Make a list of all the skills you possess that match the sought skills
- Create a targeted document package



# Dissecting a Job Ad

- **Product Manager/Developer: RNA Enzymes/PURE - 6071RG**

Qualified candidates are invited to apply for the position of Product Manager for NEB's growing *In Vitro* Protein Synthesis and RNA product line. This position will report to Production, but will involve a significant amount of product development and interaction with Production and Research groups.

## **Responsibilities:**

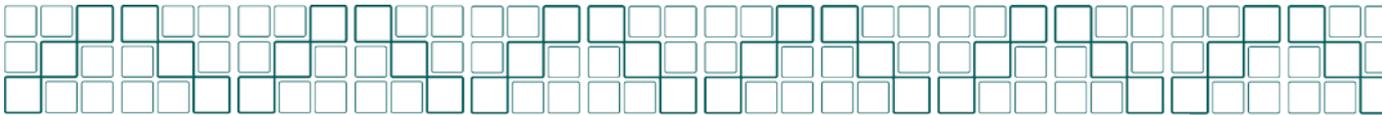
- Manufacture and qualify in vitro protein synthesis and/or RNA product line.
- Coordinate all processes from manufacturing to inventory control and customer support.
- Improve and develop related products as needed.

- **The ideal candidate will:**

- Have strong hands-on experience with protein purification and enzymatic assays.
- Demonstrate excellent analytical and organizational skills.
- Be efficient, thorough, and have attention to details.
- Have excellent verbal and written communication skills.

- **Qualifications:**

- B.S. or advanced degree in Biochemistry, Molecular Biology or related fields.
- Please forward your C.V. and statement of interest to: [xxx2xxx.com](mailto:xxx2xxx.com)
- Attn: Job Code 6071RG



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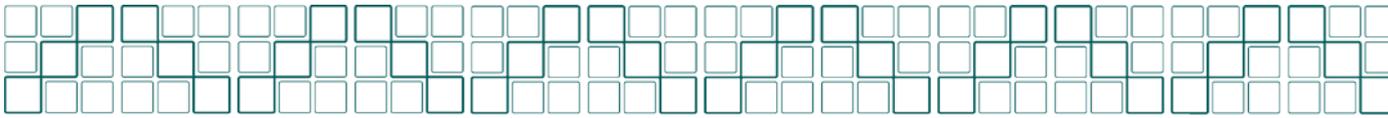
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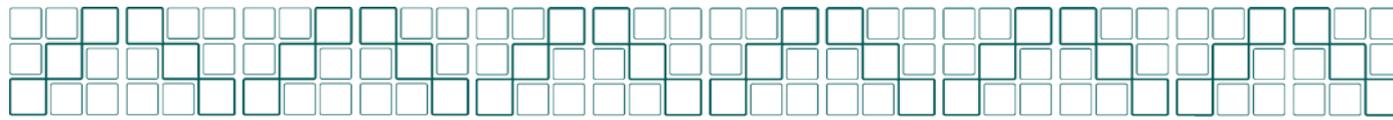
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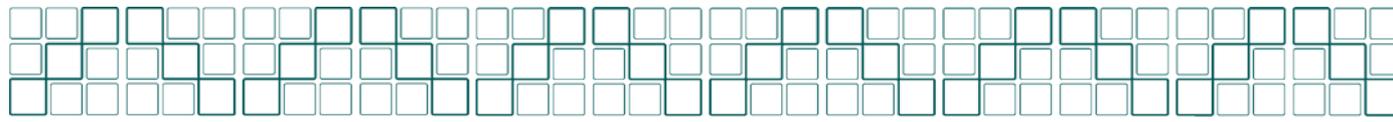


# Tapping into the hidden job market

- 60 to 70% of the jobs are not posted
- Reasons include:
  - The position only exists in the mind of the employer
  - Lack of advertising
  - Economic or hiring forecast factors
  - A position is scheduled for activation in the future
- Utilize your network to gain access to these positions



# Interview Management



# Interviews

- The “package” gets you to the interview; nailing the interview can help you get the job
- Interviewers want to learn more about your skills and experience to decide if you are a fit for the position
- A way for you to learn more about the job, colleagues, workplace to decide if the position is a fit for you



# Successful interview management

- The key to having an effective interview is *preparation*
- Research the organization thoroughly
- Determine the format of the interview and who you will be talking to
- Know how you intend to answer the expected questions
- Know how you might answer the not so typical questions
  - Being practice and significantly improve the interview experience
- Preparation can help you to feel less stressed in an actual interview situation
  - Less stress can help the interview feel more like a conversation and less like an interrogation



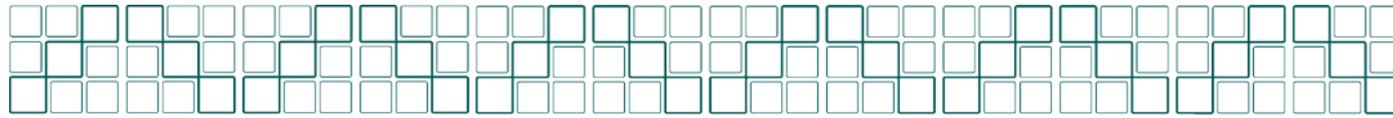
# STAR technique

- How you answer a question can influence an interviewer's impression and ultimately their decision
- STAR (Situation, Task, Action, Result) can
  - Describe the **Situation** or context
  - Describe the **Task**, challenge or problem to be solved
  - Describe the **Action** you took, what did you do
  - Describe the outcome or **Result**



# Media based interviewing

- Media or technology based interviews are becoming more commonplace
  - Geographical demands of a long distance or international job search
  - First interview solutions for organization
  - Phone, Skype, videoconference, etc
- Significant differences from in-person interviews
  - Lose somewhat of the personal dynamic (connecting with someone)
  - Lose body language indicators; must rely on tone and inflection
- Practice mock interviews using these technologies to be prepared for these types of interviews
- Have a landline alternative in case of unforeseen situations



# Resources

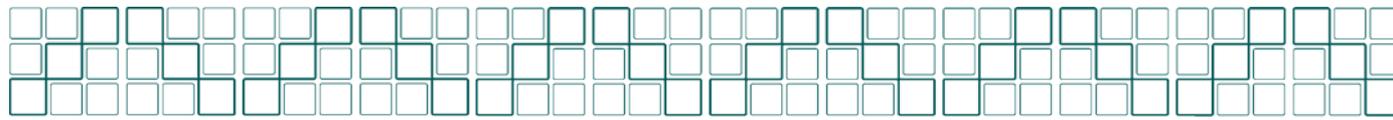


# OITE Video and other Resources

[https://www.training.nih.gov/oite\\_videocasts](https://www.training.nih.gov/oite_videocasts)

- Networking! Networking! Networking!
- Using LinkedIn Effectively: Seventh in the "How to" Series
- CVs and ResumesL Essential Job Search Documents
- Interviewing Etiquette and Skills

Informational Interviewing Handout <http://go.usa.gov/Ynb4>



# Helpful resources

- Utilize your IC training office resources
- Bookmark and navigate our website [www.training.nih.gov](http://www.training.nih.gov)
- Make an appointment one of career counselors – early and often
- Connect with us on Linked-In and join the NIH Intramural Science Linked-In group
- Read the OITE Careers blog and join the Twitter group @NIH\_OITE