

## Tips for finding a postdoc position or employment

These tips were generated at a Career Development Seminar hosted by the NCAR Fellows Association in July 2017. NCAR postdocs and graduate student visitors shared questions, concerns and tips about finding a postdoc position or the next job.

### Where do you look for postdoc positions and when?

#### *About finding the right person to work with*

- As a graduate student, you should be looking for sources to collaborate with for the near term and for the rest of your career. These may result in references, referrals or employment.
- Take the time to understand your field and who the key players are.
- Your Ph.D. advisor should help you with introductions.

#### *About conferences and networking*

- It's okay to just email people looking for opportunities.
- It is okay to approach people at conferences and mention that you like their work. Tell them that you are looking for a position if it seems like a natural part of the conversation.
- Another approach to this would be to email ahead of a conference to find a time to meet.
- You may wish to start the conversation off with something like, "I read your paper on XX and I'm really interested in your work." Mention the job searching aspect at the end of your conversation.
- Consider some of the small, specialty conferences instead of or in addition to the larger meetings.
- Twitter might become an effective way to reach out to people if they use it.

#### *About listserves and websites*

- Jobs are posted in multiple places including the National Academy of Sciences page, the NRC, and some listserves including met-jobs (<https://www.lists.rdg.ac.uk/mailman/listinfo/met-jobs>) and the Earth Sciences Job Network ([http://mailman.ucar.edu/mailman/listinfo/es\\_jobs\\_net](http://mailman.ucar.edu/mailman/listinfo/es_jobs_net)). There are also job posting at the National Postdoctoral Association webpage and the AMS.
- The NSF AGS postdoctoral Fellowship Program is currently on hold, but will resume soon.

### How do you make yourself competitive?

- Use your NCAR connections for advice and connections.
- Publications still count for a lot, especially for faculty positions
- Invite faculty to see your poster or presentation at meetings.
- The role of community service is becoming more important.
- You need to understand and communicate your broader impacts.
- Tailor your application or fellowship proposal to the specific position.
- ASP (Rich Rotunno) is available to practice faculty presentations with you.



**Do I have to do a postdoc? What about private sector positions?**

- You need a postdoc if your plan is a career in academia. While not needed, it's often expected that you do at least one postdoc before applying for faculty positions. It's not needed if you like to go into the private sector or work at a teaching college.
- There are many jobs available in the tech industry. The growth in atmospheric sciences is projected to happen more so in industry vs. academia.
- Be flexible and open-minded.
- If you are interested in working in the private sector, contact the [AMS Board for Private Sector Meteorologists](#) and check out their [Private Sector Mentorship Program](#).
- Add to your skill set if you are interested in private sector jobs, for example project management.
- At the AGU Fall Meeting industry and research institutions host a career fair.

**Time management: doing your research while searching for a position**

- Don't underestimate the importance of self-care during this process
- When applications are due, focus most or all of your energy on those then go back to your research once they are completed.

**How to know which job is right for me**

- Some universities are now supporting dual career offices (to accommodate your spouse or partner) so be sure to look for these resources if you are in this situation.
- The interview process can clarify what you want or don't want. You always learn something at each interview.
- Workplace cultures are very different, so be sure to listen for cues and "interview" the employer as well. Look for the right fit and be selective. Ask yourself if this is someone that you can work with. It's okay to decline if it's not a good fit.
- Be kind to yourself during the process. Don't take rejection personally.

**Additional Resources**

[4 Steps to get started on LinkedIn](#) - July 20, 2017

[What's Next: Exploring Options for Your Post-post-doc Career](#) - May 7, 2017

[On Leaving the Academy: Developing Your Skillset](#) - Mar. 30, 2017

[Online Interviews](#) - Jan. 10, 2017

