

“Applying To and Succeeding in a Tenure-Track Position”: selected panel questions and answers

Things to do *before* applying for permanent positions:

1. **We often hear “just do good research”. What is “good research”? How to strategize about it during the 2-5 years of postdoc experience?**
 - Be aware of impact: What qualities of your research are the most impactful? Pursue impactful directions that can garner interest from other fields (interdisciplinarity).
 - Be aware of timeliness. e.g.: What are the national priorities? How can your research align with those?
 - Have a track record in the area that you want to advertise yourself with (e.g., not one paper, but 3 or 4)
 - This is not the time for big projects; you need to have results early and often.
2. **Beyond good research, how can one increase one’s profile / improve one’s résumé?**
 - Pursue exposure and network beyond your immediate community through, e.g., DNP meetings, committee work, various initiatives.
 - Have a track record in mentoring (either on the local or the national level, e.g., mentoring the CEU students through the DNP Conference Mentorship Program)

Putting together the application packet:

3. **What is expected of a good research statement?**
 - It is similar to a good proposal, and so it should answer the following questions:
1) Once you succeed in the outlined research direction, what then? Do you have a vision for an even further future? 2) What is the longevity of your research? Will it be relevant in the landscape of 10-20 years from now?
 - Do your homework on the institution (Could they be interested in your stuff? Who could work with you?)

The interview:

4. **How to prepare for the interview?**
 - Research the institution (What do they care about?)
 - Research the people (Look for research connections and common points of interest)
 - Think through what the institution may want from you; based on that, prepare answers to questions they could ask about that.
5. **What are common mistakes during the interview?**
 - Stay within your comfort zone: trying to oversell what you’ve got is not a good idea.

6. What are some good things that one can do / strategies one can employ during an interview?

- The most successful people are *interviewing the university*. It's a power play: by doing that, you show that you are independent. Holding your own is of value.
- The interview is a two-way street: make sure the place works for you, too.
- People have different strengths (e.g., introverts vs. extroverts): learn to play to yours.

Final thoughts:

7. In 1-2 sentences, preferably shorter than 60 seconds, what is the most important piece of advice or wisdom that you would give someone about getting a tenure-track job?

- It's not personal – sometimes you don't get a job just because priorities have shifted.
- If after all that you've just heard you are not even more excited to get into this process, it is worthwhile to say that it's perfectly fine to find a job outside of academia, and there are resources to learn more about that (e.g., from the APS).
- You do you: feel free to discard any of this advice if you think it doesn't apply. We don't own the truth.