

Lab Dynamics

Best Foot Forward, Part 1 Interviewing Skills for Postdocs

Slides



Carl M. Cohen, Ph.D.
Science Management Associates
www.sciencema.com
carlmcohen@gmail.com
617 965 1826

Best foot forward

Part 1: Interviewing skills for post-docs

Carl M. Cohen, Ph.D.
President, Science Management Associates

Workshops, coaching, management solutions

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Today's Schedule

10:00 AM – Noon

Noon – 12:30 PM

12:30 PM – 2:30 PM

2:30 PM

AM Session

Break

PM Session

Review

Finish

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Logistics

- Please keep your mic. muted unless you have a question.
 - Please keep your video feed "on."
 - If you have a question use the "raise hand" feature:
 - Press "More" then select "raise hand."
 - Or press alt-Y (PC) or option-Y (Mac).
 - When your raised hand is recognized temporarily **unmute** yourself:
 - Hold down the "space" bar.
 - Or press alt-A (PC) or Shift-Command – A (Mac).
 - To ask a question via the "chat" feature:
 - Click "Participants" button then select "Chat" and type the question.
- At various times during the workshop you will be assigned to Breakout Rooms. Make sure you are unmuted and your video feed is on when in breakout rooms.
- During the noon break or if you need to step away, don't sign out or close the app. Mute your mic and turn off your video feed with the Zoom toolbar. Also, since you will be assigned to Breakout Groups several times during the workshop, please remember to activate your video and audio so others can see and hear you.

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Logistics

Please make sure you have the following:

1. The "Exercise" handout you were sent, either in printed form, on a second screen or device or available in a "window."
2. A pad of paper and writing implement.

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Workshop outline

- What are they looking for?
- The rules of networking.
- “Pitching” yourself.
- Interviewing.
- The questions you need to ask and answer.
- Interview practice.



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Exercise 1

Exercise book, page 2

- Form groups of 4-5.
- In your groups answer the following questions:
 1. What are the top 5 characteristics that an academic search committee is looking for?
 2. What are the top 5 characteristics that a private sector company is looking for?
 3. What are your three biggest nightmares when you think about a job interview?
 4. You have 10 minutes: 3.33 minutes per topic.

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Networking



Is not about getting a job.

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You Need Contacts

Your most valuable contacts are people you already know or who know you.

- Scour your contacts for anyone and everyone who you can talk to.
- People who know you will give you your best leads, and your best references.
- Don't over-filter who you talk to.
- Have lunch, coffee (face to face is best) – phone calls second best, emails last.
- The more time they spend with you the more committed they will be to helping you.

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Selling yourself

- You're selling you, not your work.
- Smile while you're on the phone even though they can't see you.
- Like who you're talking to even though you don't know them.



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"Pitching" yourself

You need to tell them who you are in 60-90 seconds.



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Body Language



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Be positive

Body language and mind set



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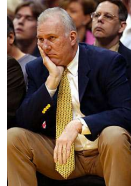
Body language

Things to do:

- Relaxed posture
- Eye Contact. For Zoom interviews: Look at the camera!
- Moving shoulders towards other person
- Relaxed gestures towards other person. (For Zoom: hand gestures that they can see.)
- Facing square towards other person
- Positive nod of head.
- Interested facial expression.

Things to avoid:

- Leaning away from other person.
- Picking lint off pants or skirt.
- Lack of "eye" contact. Looking at yourself or their video in Zoom
- Making hostile motions.



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Exercise 2: Body language role play

In pairs (one is "A" the other is "B") :

- A tell B what you did for fun last weekend; B shows positive body language. Then..
- A tell B what you will do for fun next weekend; B shows negative body language
- Then switch roles.
- Total time: 5 minutes

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Body Language

- "Any words, be they ever so flawless, can have their meaning cancelled by body language- but not vice versa. There are no words capable of canceling the meaning of transmitted body language."

Suzette Elgin, The Gentle Art of Self Defense.

- It has been estimated that 65 - 90 % of information communicated during human interaction is non-verbal.

Mark Knapp, 1972 "Non-Verbal Communication in Human Interaction."

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"Pitching" yourself in 60-90 seconds

1. Your current position "I am a...." (Message: I have a responsible position that's very interesting and I love it.)
2. Your background, education and training – highlight items relevant to this person or institution (Message: I've advanced in my field and have been recognized for my contributions.)
3. ONE SENTENCE about your scientific focus and expertise – relate it to the person you are speaking to or their institution, expertise and interests.
4. Your future – relate to where you want to be or to this position or person.
5. Why you are here or talking to them (Message: I want to meet people and explore opportunities; broaden my horizons. NOT: "I'm looking for a job," unless its an actual job interview)
6. Be animated. Use body language.
7. As the conversation is winding down..."Can I follow up with you? Can we get together for coffee? Is there anyone you know you think I should talk to as part of this process? I'd love to meet some of your connections just to educate myself."

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Exercise 2: Pitch exercise.

Exercise book, page 4

In groups of three each of you will play the role of "candidate," "interviewer," and "observer and timer" in sequence.

The person to the right of each candidate is the interviewer and the person to the left is the timer. Each candidate gets a maximum of 7 minutes: up to 2 minutes for their pitch and up to 5 minutes for feedback from all.

Scenario: You (the "candidate") have been "introduced" to the "interviewer" by a mutual friend. The "interviewer" is someone who either might have a job for you or who might know someone who does. You set up a Zoom call with them. Tell them about yourself in 60-90 seconds.

A. Interviewer: Greet the candidate and ask them to tell you about themselves.

B. Candidate: Give your pitch

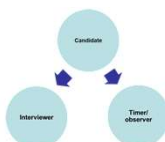
C. All: Give candidate feedback:

- What they did well
- What they could do better

D. If there's time, do it again.

E. Total time: 25 minutes.

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It's still early..

"Right now I'm just networking. Looking at options, talking to people."

You're not calling/meeting them looking for a job.

You want to hear about their experiences and ideas.

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Keep positive

Don't be negative. About anything. Not your job, your department, grants, boss. Nothing. You love what you do. But you're beginning to think it's time to move on.



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Don't limit your options ever.

You are passionate about what you do and willing to be open minded about exactly how you can contribute.

You're willing to be entrepreneurial. Willing to work hard, learn, adapt.



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Ask them questions

- What do you like about your job/ company/ department?
- What's your background?
- How did you get your job?
- What do you see as your/the company's future?

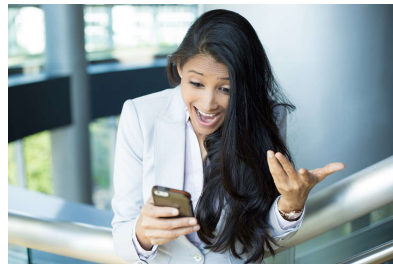
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What do you have for them?

Follow up with some piece of information relevant or interesting to them.



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Leave them with

They need to be left with the impression that you're upbeat, enthusiastic, energetic, fun to work with.



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Follow up.

- Help them keep you in mind. Keep in touch periodically. You will need them again.
- Send them an email thanking them.
- Follow up with info about something they're interested in.
- If someone gives you a name and you follow up with that name, let them know you did it and thank them.
- Keep a spreadsheet of people you have spoken or met with. Find a way to update them on your progress periodically (once every three-months).

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Networking is your new project

Treat it like one.

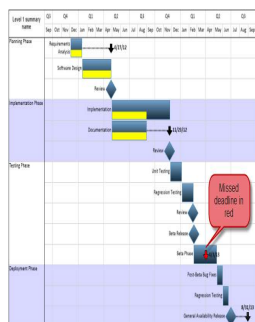
Set call/meeting targets for each week.

Make a networking plan, make lists of calls made, attempted, scheduled, etc.

Set call or contact targets for each week or two week period.

Keep notes from every contact, conversation or phone call.

Follow up.



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The conversation's not over until you ask
this question

"Can you think of one or two people who I could talk to more about their experiences, or opportunities? Perhaps people in your field whoever made similar transitions?"

If they can't think of names at that instant all the better because it gives you the opportunity to ask them if you can call or email them to follow up.

Your meeting is a **FAILURE** unless you get at least one contact to follow up with from each person you meet.

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Guide to networking, p 6 of exercise book

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Interviewing

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Be prepared

Do this in advance

- Read the job description!
- Customize your resume, and your interview answers for each position (their underlying interests)
- Spend time preparing answers to every one of the questions they may ask you (in pre-workshop exercises).
- Review your questions for them (to follow).
- Have your three-year research plan, budget, space and equipment needs ready.
- Queue up your references.

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Be prepared

The interview

- Get your interview schedule in advance.
- Research *everyone* you will meet with, know what they work on and have questions for each of them. *
- Make sure you're watching your time during interviews.
- Know exactly how much time you have for your research seminar, who will be there and what kind of a room it will be or platform they will use (ask to see the room in advance and test out the AV works 30 mins before if you can; same with online platform if you're not familiar with it.)
- If it's in person, bring extra printed cvs.
- Don't ask about other candidates or departmental politics.
- Dress professionally (shoes!) but be comfortable even if its via Zoom.
- You are being interviewed the entire time you are there or online and by everyone you spend even 30 seconds with.

*Expert tip: print a page for each person with their photo.
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Typical schedule

Day 1

- Fly in – get met at airport.
- First meeting with Chair.
- Cocktails and dinner despite the fact that you want to go to sleep.

Day 2

- Breakfast with someone
- Interviews with faculty
- Seminar
- Lunch with faculty, students or others
- More interviews
- Chalk talk to faculty
- Department tour
- Meet with students
- Meet with HR
- Meet with Dean
- Cocktails and dinner despite the fact that you want to go to sleep.

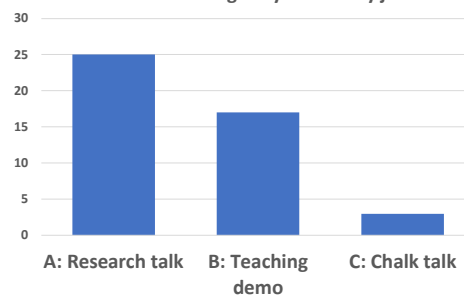
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Schedule: know what to expect

What kind of talk did you have to give when interviewing for your faculty job?



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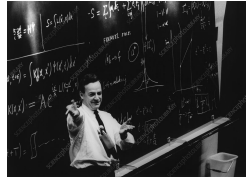
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Schedule: know what to expect

Seminar

- Find out who will be there.
- Adjust the technical details of your talk accordingly.
- In general, assume only a few will be experts.
- Assume there will be students.
- 90% of the people need to understand 90% of your talk.
- NO jargon, NO field specific acronyms.



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Chalk talk

- Find out exactly what *they* mean by a chalk talk!
- Typically an informal session – no slides, just a white board.
 - Big picture and relevance of your future research understandable to those not in your field
 - Major hypotheses of first grant – what big questions will you answer?
 - Top specific aims of your first grant and how you will address them.
 - Plans and contingencies for funding.
 - How your work will advance the field
 - Where this will go in the future.
 - (How your research differs from your adviser's)
- Expect questions designed to get at how you think on your feet.

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Practice your chalk talk

- Practice on an actual whiteboard.
- Practice filling the space.
- Plan on where you will write which elements.
- Practice writing and drawing while looking at the audience frequently.



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Your questions for them: Page 6 of exercise handout

- Do your homework.
- Research *everyone* you will meet with, know what they work on and have questions for each of them.
 - "I read your recent paper in Archives of Benthic Petrology. It's not my field but I thought it was very insightful."
 - Faculty flash cards!
- Have substantive questions about the institution, the department, the job.
- The questions need to show you know about them and have thought about their goals and mission and that it's interesting to you.
- Have *more* questions at the end of the day.
- If they ask you "Do you have any questions for me?" and you answer "No," you may as well go home right then and there.

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Prepare your questions for them: Exercises, p 8-11

- 10 questions for the Dean
- 15 questions for the Dept. Chair
- 10 questions for faculty members
- 15 questions about promotion and tenure
- 21 questions about teaching
- 15 questions about students
- 6 miscellaneous questions



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Their questions for you: Customize

- Prepare answers to questions in pre-workshop exercises
- Address the job description.
- Focus your talk and conversations on what **they** want/need not on what you want to do.



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Their questions for you: Why should they want you?

- They like you.
- How you fit into this department/group (do your homework).
- You are a specialist in an area they need.
- You bring opportunities for student research.
- You bring opportunities for collaboration.
- You bring funding opportunities (academia).



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Their questions for you: You and your passions

- **Give me a brief outline of your career.**
 - Focus on what most relevant for this job.
- **What are you passionate about?**
 - Be honest but remember their needs.
- **Tell me about your current job.**
 - Accentuate the positive.
- **What do you love/hate most about your current or previous jobs?**
 - Find something you loved about each position. Be careful about negatives.
- **What accomplishment are you proudest of in your career?**
 - Be careful of the "loner" image.
- **What's your ideal job?**
 - This one.
- **Where do you want to be in five years?**
 - Be aspirational but realistic.

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Their questions for you: Why us, why now?

- **Why are you looking now?**
 - Never say anything bad about your current position.
- **What do you think are the key skills that you bring to this position? Why are you the best fit?**
 - Know what they're looking for and stress those skills.
- **Why are you interested specifically in this job/company/position?**
 - Know a lot about the organization and how *you can help them*.
- **What questions do you have for me?**
 - Have more than you can possibly ask in 30 minutes, based on research.

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Their questions for you: Geography and salary -defer till later

"I'm really focused on finding the right fit right now. I don't want to limit myself in what I look at."

"I don't have a fixed number in mind. I'm sure if we both agree that this is the right fit these things won't be an issue."

"I expect to be paid a salary consistent with my experience and value and with what others in similar positions receive."

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Their questions for you: If you can't answer the question, answer the intent

- "Have you ever taught a full semester course on graduate cellular biology?"
- "If I offered you this job right now, would you take it?"
- "Have you ever managed an international team across four time zones and coordinated multidisciplinary research involving clinicians and basic researchers on SNPs in melanoma?"
- "Have you ever worked on a drug development project and do you know GMP guidelines?"



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Their questions for you: Personal attributes

- "Tell me about a work-related challenge you faced and how you handled it."
- "Have you ever screwed up or done something you regretted in your job? Tell me about it."
- "Have you ever had a disagreement with your boss? How did you handle it? What was the outcome?"

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Domain specific tips: Industry

They're not hiring your research project; they're hiring you to work on *their* project

- Do you enjoy working as part of a team? Tell me about an experience.
- Did you ever have to decide to drop a project? Tell me about that.
- Why *this* company?
- Why you want to move into industry?
- What would you do if your boss made a decision you strongly disagreed with?
- How would you handle an employee who was underperforming?
- Tell me about your management experience.

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Domain specific tips: Industry

Management skills

- **Tell me about your management style.**
 - Collaborative, goal oriented, good mentor.
- **Have you ever had to discipline or deal with a poorly performing employee? How did you handle that?**
 - Have a story.
- **Have you ever mentored someone? Tell me about that experience. How did it work out.**
 - Have a story.

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Domain specific tips: Academia

They're hiring you *and* your research potential.

- Can you demonstrate teaching and mentoring skills?
- Community spirit (committees, groups you belong to).
- Why are you applying here?
- What courses can you teach?
- Who will you collaborate with ?
- What will your first grant be on?
- How will you engage undergraduates and graduate students in your research program? What kinds of projects would they work on? What will your first three students work on?
- How will your research be different from your current adviser's? (More in Exercises, p 10-12.)

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Domain specific tips: Academia

"Community spirit"

- Have you ever chaired a committee? Have you ever been on a committee? Tell me about it. What did you contribute/ accomplish?"
 - Answer the intent: They're looking for evidence of teamwork and citizenship
- "Tell me about your teaching experience. Have you ever had to create a course or teaching unit on your own? Tell me about that."
 - Answer the intent: Mentoring, organizational skills.
- "Have you been involved in diversity, equity or inclusion efforts? Tell me about that."
 - Be honest.

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Questions you don't have to answer, are illegal to ask, but probably will get asked.

- Do you have children?
- Do you plan to have children?
 - Be honest and positive.
 - Make light of it. "(Laughing) Aren't you not supposed to ask that? Ha ha."
 - Lie.
- What do you do for childcare?
- What is your current (or past) salary?



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Questions you don't have to answer, are illegal to ask, but probably will get asked.

- "I hear you have two young children – how are you going to put in the hours necessary to competitive in this funding climate?"
 - Tell the truth "I'm great at juggling multiple responsibilities and have a comprehensive child care plan mapped out."
 - Make light of it. "(Laughing) Aren't you not supposed to ask that? Ha ha."
- "Aren't you a bit young to be applying for this position?"..
 - "I think my work and background shows a level of expertise well beyond my years."

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Mind games

- **What are our greatest strengths?**
- **What is your biggest weakness?**
 - Be honest but not too honest. Have one or two that are correctable. "Always looking for ways to improve myself."
- **How would your current boss/colleagues describe you?**
 - Be honest but not too. Find something they like and an area for improvement.
- **These are the two others we're considering for this position. What do you think of them?**
- **What distinguishes you from your current adviser?**
- **Now that you've spent the day here, what are your reservations about coming here?**



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Exercise 4: Mock Interview Exercise book, page 12

In groups of three each of you will play the role of "candidate," "interviewer," and "observer and timer" in sequence.

The person to the right of each candidate is the interviewer and the person to the left is the timer. Each candidate gets a total of 10 minutes: 5 for the interview and 5 for feedback from all.

Interviewer: Ask the candidate as many of the questions on page 10-12 of the exercises as you have time for – you may choose the questions and the order – don't use the order in which they're listed.

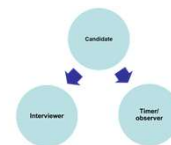
Timers: Each candidate has a total of 10 minutes: 5 for the interview and 5 for feedback. At the end of 5 minutes end the interview and start the feedback phase.

All: Give the candidate feedback on:

- What was done well
- What can be improved
- Body language
- Enthusiasm

Total time: 35 minutes

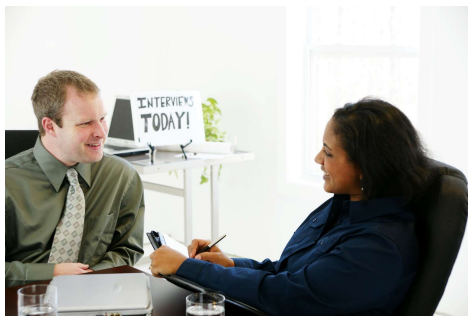
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Face to face interviewing with the "pros"



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Face to face interview scoresheet from Lab Dynamics 3rd ed. Chapter 4. (Exercises, p 16)

Candidate name	Parameter	Score 0-10
1	Background and skills verification	
	A. Technical skills and know how	
	B. Relevant background and experience	
	C. Speaking and language skills during interview	
2	Their preparation	
	A. Interest in and knowledge about lab or project	
	B. Quality of their questions	
3	Seminar	
	A. Clarity and organization	
	B. Speaking skills	
	C. Thinking on feet	
	D. Responsiveness to questions	
	E. Relevance/novelty of topics	
4	Personal attributes	
	A. Feedback	
	B. Manage emotions	
	C. Team mindset	
	D. Problem solving	
	E. Conflict management	
	F. Independent thinking/autonomy	
5	Managerial	
	"Fit" with the group	
6	Strongest characteristic	
7	Red flags	
8	Position specific questions verification	
9	Position specific questions verification	
Total		0-60

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Personal attributes revealed by situational interviewing questions (Exercises, page 16).

Candidate name	Parameter	Score 0-10
1	Background and skills verification	
	A. Technical skills and know how	
	B. Relevant background and experience	
	C. Speaking and language skills during interview	
2	Their preparation	
	A. Interest in and knowledge about lab or project	
	B. Quality of their questions	
3	Seminar	
	A. Clarity and organization	
	B. Speaking skills	
	C. Thinking on feet	
	D. Responsiveness to questions	
	E. Relevance/novelty of topic	
4	Personal attributes	
	A. Feedback	
	B. Manage emotions	
	C. Team mindset	
	D. Problem solving	
	E. Conflict management	
	F. Independent thinking/autonomy	
5	Managerial	
	"Fit" with the group	
6	Strongest characteristic	
7	Red flags	
8	Position specific questions verification	
9	Position specific questions verification	
Total		0-60

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Instead of their asking
"How do you handle conflicts in the lab?"

They ask "Give me an example of a time you had a disagreement with someone in the lab." (Or with your boss, or a postdoc etc).

Personal attributes using situational interviewing:
Exercises, page 16-20. (Candidate answers are on pages 21-25)

Candidate name	Parameter	Score 0-10
1	Background and skills verification	
	A. Technical skills and know how	
	B. Relevant background and experience	
	C. Speaking and language skills during interview	
2	Their preparation	
	A. Interest in and knowledge about lab or project	
	B. Quality of their questions	
3	Seminar	
	A. Clarity and organization	
	B. Speaking skills	
	C. Thinking on feet	
	D. Responsiveness to questions	
	E. Relevance/novelty of topic	
4	Personal attributes	
	A. Feedback	
	B. Manage emotions	
	C. Team mindset	
	D. Problem solving	
	E. Conflict management	
	F. Independent thinking/autonomy	
5	Managerial	
	"Fit" with the group	
6	Strongest characteristic	
7	Red flags	
8	Position specific questions verification	
9	Position specific questions verification	
Total		0-60

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A. Ability to hear and use feedback

Them: "Tell me about a time when you were told that what you were doing wasn't correct or needed to be done differently? What was the situation? How did you handle it?"

You: Show that you're open and responsive and seeking feedback, No defensiveness.

Watch how you respond to questions and critiques during your seminar or interview. Are you open to hearing critiques ("Yes, that's definitely an alternative explanation. Thanks for the suggestion." Or are you defensive - "No, we thought of that. It's not likely. Let me keep going...").

Goal: You seek and are open to feedback

Personal attributes using situational interviewing

B. Ability to manage emotions

Candidate name	Parameter	Score 0-10
1	Background and skills verification	
2	Team alignment	
3	Learned	
4	Personal attributes	
5	Fit with the group	
6	Strongest characteristic	
7	Red flag	
8	Position specific questions verification	
Total		0-50

Them: "Tell me about a time when you got angry or upset about something in the lab. What happened, and what did you do?" and "Have you ever felt that you were at a dead end in a project? How did you handle that?"

You: Talk about your ability to manage feelings of anger, frustration, etc without 'acting out,' losing temper, blaming. Show your ability to self-reflect ("I thought a lot about why that happened, and learned a lesson.") Show that you seek input and guidance when stuck.

Watch your reactions to interview schedule changes, delays, unexpected occurrences etc.

Goal: You have high emotional intelligence.

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Personal attributes using situational interviewing

C. Team mindset

Candidate name	Parameter	Score 0-10
1	Background and skills verification	
2	Team alignment	
3	Learned	
4	Personal attributes	
5	Fit with the group	
6	Strongest characteristic	
7	Red flag	
8	Position specific questions verification	
Total		0-50

Them: "Tell me about a time when you worked as part of a team on a project. Was any part of that challenging? Explain." And "Do you prefer to work as part of a team or on your own project? Why is that?"

You: Describe a satisfying team project and why you liked it.

Pay attention to your use of "I" vs "we" when describing group or team projects.

Goal: You're a team player.

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Personal attributes using situational interviewing

D. Problem solving – accessing help.

Candidate name	Parameter	Score 0-10
1	Background and skills verification	
2	Team alignment	
3	Learned	
4	Personal attributes	
5	Fit with the group	
6	Strongest characteristic	
7	Red flag	
8	Position specific questions verification	
Total		0-50

Them: "Tell me about a time when you were stuck on a difficult problem." "How did you resolve it?" "Tell me about a time when you made a mistake. What happened?"

You: Show that you asked for or found help rather than persisting in trying to solve it yourself. Show that you can learn from mistakes.

Them: "Do you know anything about analyzing hemi-haplotype associated retrotransposon patterning? What would you do if you needed to do that in a project?"

You: Tell them how you would seek help in answering this.

Focus on: Being open about what you don't know and having a plan on how to get the information you need.

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Personal attributes using situational interviewing

E. Conflict management

Candidate name	Parameter	Score 0-10
1	Background and skills verification	
2	Team alignment	
3	Learned	
4	Personal attributes	
5	Fit with the group	
6	Strongest characteristic	
7	Red flag	
8	Position specific questions verification	
Total		0-50

Them: "Can you think of a time when you had a serious disagreement or conflict with someone in the lab? Tell me about it. How did you handle it? Whose fault was it?" "Have you ever disagreed with a decision that your supervisor or organization made? Tell me about that time and how you managed your disagreement."

You: Focus on: Your ability to negotiate solutions, ability to see the other people's perspective, ability to be able to manage a conflict in order to get work done. Be alert to: A tendency to 'blame' others, attribute fault, bear grudges

Goal: Disagreements are natural and you try to understand the other sides' viewpoint.

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Personal attributes using situational interviewing

Candidate name	Parameter	Score 0-10
1	Background and skills verification A. Technical skills and know how B. Relevant background and experience C. Speaking and language skills during interview	
2	Their presentation A. Interest in and knowledge about lab or project B. Quality of their questions	
3	General A. Clarity and organization B. Speaking skills C. Thinking on feet D. Responsiveness to questions E. Responsiveness to topics	
4	Personal attributes A. Empathy B. Manage emotions C. Team mindset D. Problem solving E. Independent thinking/autonomy	
5	Fit with the group Strongest characteristic	
6	Red flag	
7	Position specific questions verification	
Total		0-50

F. Independent thinking/autonomy

Them: "What do you do when you get to a point in a project where you need to make a decision about direction or strategy? Can you think of an example?" "Can you think of a project where you came up with the focus, strategy or approach?"

You: Show that while you're a team player and seek input you're also capable of independent thinking.

They may ask "Now that you've had a chance to meet with the lab members and hear what we're working on, do you have any ideas for us?"

You: Have some ideas!

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Face-to-face interview: Personal attributes

Managerial skills

Candidate name	Parameter	Score 0-10
1	Background and skills verification A. Technical skills and know how B. Relevant background and experience C. Speaking and language skills during interview	
2	Their presentation A. Interest in and knowledge about lab or project B. Quality of their questions	
3	General A. Clarity and organization B. Speaking skills C. Thinking on feet D. Responsiveness to questions E. Responsiveness to topics	
4	Personal attributes A. Empathy B. Manage emotions C. Team mindset D. Problem solving E. Independent thinking/autonomy	
5	Fit with the group Strongest characteristic	
6	Red flag	
7	Position specific questions verification	
Total		0-50

Interviewer: "How would you describe your management style?" (Answer: Collaborative).
"Can you give me an example of a management challenge that you faced with an employee and how you handled it?" or
"Tell me about a time when you had to discipline someone or when you had an employee who wasn't performing to your expectations. What did you do? How did it turn out?"

You: You're goal directed and understand that different people need different management approaches. Some need more guidance and direction, some less. You hold people accountable but give them the guidance and tools they need to be productive.

Focus on: Demonstrating a comfort level with giving people feedback and not ignoring performance issues.

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Exercise 5, Face to face interviews
Exercise book, page 15

- In groups of three each of you will play the role of "candidate," "interviewer," and "observer and timer" in sequence.
- The person to the right of each candidate is the interviewer and the person to the left is the observer/timer. Each candidate gets a total of 12 minutes: 7 for the interview and 5 for feedback from all.
- Interviewer:** You are interviewing candidates for either a faculty position at a research institute or a senior scientist position in a biotech company (candidate's choice). You have already reviewed the candidate's resume and heard their seminar and have determined that they are well qualified scientifically.



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Exercise 5, cont.

- Interviewer:** Using the interview form that starts on p 17 of the exercise book, assess the candidate's "personal attributes" by asking any the questions from the form in any order you wish. Record your observations and score for each answer on the form. You have a maximum of 7 minutes to interview the candidate.
- Candidate:** Be yourself. Answer pointers are on pages 21-25.
- Interviewer and Observer/Timer:** Listen to the candidate's answers and indicate the candidate's strengths and areas for improvement as well as their scores in the space provided in the form.
- Interviewer and Observer/Timer:** At the end of the interview you have 5 minutes to review with the candidate what they did well and what they could have done better. Then move on to the next interviewer/candidate pair.
 - What was done well
 - What can be improved
 - Body language
 - Enthusiasm
- Total time:** 38 minutes.

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Summary

- It's not about you, it's about them.
- Know who you're talking to and what they want.
- If you can't answer the question answer the underlying intent.
- Know who you are and customize it.



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Networking

- Your most valuable contacts are people you already know or who know you.
- Scour your contacts for anyone and everyone who you can talk to. People who already know you will give you your best leads, and your best references.
- Those leads will create others that will come in unexpected ways that you will not be able to predict.
- Don't over-filter who you talk to.
- Treat this process like a research project. It will take time and requires many small steps whose contribution to your overall progress will be completely unforeseeable.
- Never lose a contact.

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Networking

- If you don't feel like you're spending too much time networking, then you're not spending enough time on it.
- Guide to Networking – exercise book p 6

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Summary

- Practice giving your talks and answering questions out loud, but be spontaneous.
- Your answers won't ring true unless they are true.
- Always be watching your body language and facial expression.
- You should have more questions for them than they have for you.



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Summary

- Always be thanking them.
- Never lie.
- Send thank you notes or emails to *everyone* you meet.

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You're not selling your work, you're selling you



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To learn more – Exercise Book, p 26

- "The Chicago Guide to Landing a Job in Academic Biology" Ray Chandler, Lorne M. Wolfe, and Daniel E. L. Promislow University of Chicago Press 2007
- "Lab Dynamics: Management and leadership Skills for Scientists" Carl M Cohen and Suzanne L. Cohen, Cold Spring harbor Laboratory Press, 3rd ed 2018. Chapter 4.
- "Pursuing Meaningful Work: A strategies guide for PhDs and Postdocs" A terrific and comprehensive guide to all phases of the job interview process from Stanford University: https://beam.stanford.edu/sites/g/files/sbiybj10361/f/stanfordphd_sg_17-18_singlepg.pdf (easier to get this by Googling "Pursuing Meaningful Work" – look for the pdf link)
- A short article on questions you may get asked and for you to ask them: <http://web.eecs.utk.edu/~azh/resources/facultyinterviewquestions.html>
- Great tips on phone/Skype interviewing: <http://theprofessorisin.com/2011/10/31/thephoneorskypeinterview/>
- A compendium of sample questions and tips on the academic job hunt: http://dunlap.utoronto.ca/~bgaensler/papers/gaensler_maddison_jobs_2012.pdf

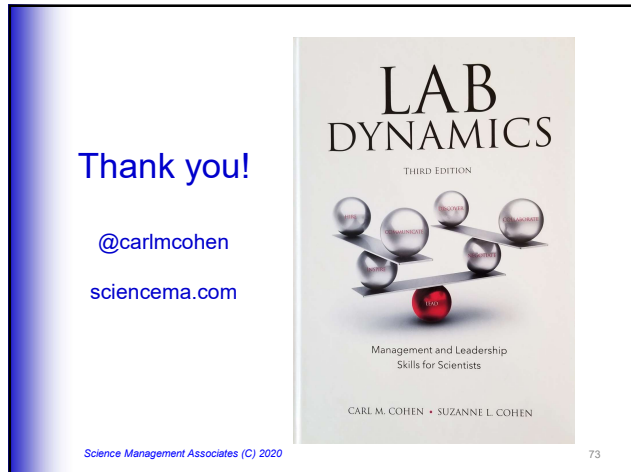
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