

Academic Recruitment 101

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My Background

- * Professor of Computer Science
 - * director of doctoral program in ICT at KTH
 - * chairperson for recruitment at KTH's school of ICT
- * Information based on my experience as
 - * chair of hiring committees
 - * representative in hiring committees
 - * international expert for other universities
- * Will draw on process at KTH
 - * inspired by processes used in the US

What are we actually talking about?

Academic Positions & Recruitment

Why Are Academic Positions Special?

- * Recruitment is largely conducted by **faculty** and not HR (human resources) as in a company
 - * different objectives
 - * different processes

Talk: Scope & Objective

- * Post doctoral researcher
 - * recruited after doctoral degree obtained
- * Faculty positions
 - * assistant professor
 - * associate professor
 - * full professor
- * No definitive advice, but reflection on my experience

Who Does What?

- * Post doctoral researcher
 - * education & supervision (e & s): contributes
 - * research: participates, typically in an existing team
 - * leadership: contributes locally
- * Assistant professor
 - * e & s: **actively** contributes
 - * research: conducts, typically in a team; **must seek funding**
 - * leadership: **participates** locally

Who Does What?

- * Associate professor

- * e & s: execution and **development; principal** supervisor
- * research: active in a group; seeks funding; **leads projects**
- * leadership: support to juniors; **development; external service**

- * Full professor

- * e & s: execution, development, **leadership**; principal supervisor
- * research: **leadership**; seeks funding; **co-operation**
- * leadership: support to juniors; **leading** development; **broad external service**

Postdoc Recruitment Process (KTH)

1. Project owner writes position description
 - * topic, responsibilities, criteria, funding, ...
2. Position description publicly announced
3. Received applications reviewed by project owner
4. Interviews for selected applicants
5. Applicant selected

Faculty Recruitment Process (KTH)

1. Department writes position description
 - * topic, criteria, funding, international experts, ...
2. Position description publicly announced
3. Received applications reviewed by international experts
4. Chair decides whom to invite for interviews
5. Interviews
6. Board prepares ranking of top candidates
7. Dean hires highest ranked candidate (or closes position)
 - * if candidate does not accept, move on to next candidate

Time Horizon

- * Long term
 - * become attractive (build your CV)
- * Medium term
 - * find opportunities to apply (positions)
- * Short term
 - * write a successful application
 - * attend the interview, hopefully
 - * ... and, of course, get hired!

Long term

Become Attractive

What's in a Good CV?

- * Everything relevant to **academia**
 - * e & s, research, service, outreach, ...
 - * look for a template (check KTH's template, it also includes the kitchen sink...)
- * Not just facts
 - * research statement
 - * education statement (we use a so-called educational portfolio)
 - * in general: philosophy & ambition, who are you really?
 - * you want to stick out!

Building a Good CV

- * My favorite 1: peer recognition
 - * citations, prizes, ... high quality of venues!
 - * organizational duties, service, ... volunteer!
- * My favorite 2: networking
 - * broad and international set of co-authors
 - * no more papers with your doctoral supervisors
- * Use a mentor to develop your CV
- * Be sufficiently broad in your activities
- * Continuously collect data for CV
 - * trying to reconstruct history when you apply might fail

CV Sanity Check

- * Does your CV demonstrate the criteria for the type of position you are looking for?
 - * if not, engage in activities that demonstrate!
- * Does your CV contain more than just facts?
 - * if not, elaborate!

Medium term

Find Opportunities

Where To Look?

- * Mailing lists in your area
- * Professional bodies
 - * ACM, IEEE, AAAI, ...
- * Your favorite institutions
 - * if they do not advertise properly, do you want to apply?
 - * looking at your current institution only is very high risk and frowned upon (in particular for postdocs)!
- * Your network
 - * let it be known that you are looking and shopping around

Do You Want to Apply?

- * Is the topic suitable?
 - * do you want to re-orient yourself?
 - * do you want to continue your research avenue?
- * What are the conditions?
 - * duration; temporary versus permanent; salary; ...
 - * teaching load and other duties
 - * funding (start package; cost of a doctoral student; ...)
 - * dependent or independent?
- * Do you understand it?
 - * does it use coded language?
 - * ask the contact mentioned in the description!

Short term

Applying

Typical Application Contents

- * Cover letter
 - * explain why you are interested!
 - * explain why you are a perfect fit for the position!
 - * explain why they will profit from hiring you!
- * CV
 - * use the template that they suggest (you are interested)
 - * be complete to what they want
- * Letters of reference
 - * choose broadly from senior people you know well
- * Selected publications
 - * quality of venue; timeliness; your contribution; representative

Do What They Ask!

- * Follow the instructions
 - * template, layout, what to include, ...
- * Not following the instructions means you are...
 - * not interested, or (just a random application)
 - * headstrong, or (just does not care)
 - * an idiot. (just cannot understand)

Being Interviewed

- * Most crucial point to convey

the benefit to **them** of hiring **you**

- * be knowledgeable about the environment
- * draw connections to the environment there (do not overdo it, nobody wants to hire a clone)
- * Do not repeat facts from CV, complement!
 - * but correct omissions and errors from either side

Interview Panel Participants

- * Try to figure out who will be interviewing you!
- * Adjust your language accordingly
 - * expected to communicate so that everybody understands you
 - * depends on level of seniority of position
 - * not everybody will be in subfield X of area Y (not even CS!)

Typical Interview Questions

- * Why do you want to come here?
- * What's the benefit for us from hiring just you?
- * What's the accomplishment you are most proud of?
- * What will you do in n years?
- * What collaborators do you expect to have?
- * Suppose you get n dollars. What are you going to do?
- * Where are you are going to apply for funding?

Analyze the Interview

- * Do you still want to come?
 - * are they professional?
 - * do they value their own institution?

- * Now is the time to back out
 - * you got the experience...

The Only Important Slide

Get Lucky!

- * In order to get a position, you need to get lucky!
- * In order to get lucky, you need to apply!
- * In order to get lucky, you need to learn!
 - * ask whether you can have feedback after an interview