

**“Can you describe a potential approach to the job search process?”**

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Finding the right job is truly an art and takes dedication, tenacity, and persistence. This goes beyond a carefully prepared CV and a 5-minute elevator speech. In the world of academia or health care, which many of you will be entering as residents and fellows, you have to develop a personal strategy to enhance your professional academic career and obtain the opportunity you desire. Whenever you try to get any position, you have to be confident in your personal style and communicate the impact that you can make, if hired. I have often evaluated potential hires coming on board on how well they have been aware of building their knowledge base, building their network, and knowing who their customers are. In academia or a hospital, your patients, your team, and the institution constitute the customer.

When you evaluate any job, you must think, What do I want to get out of this? What will make me happy? What will others expect of me and can I deliver? How will I be assessed? One strategy for success is using the professional development you have received to identify the best options for yourself. Always look for ways to improve and take advantage of the knowledge of others and what they have to offer as you map out a job strategy. Make a plan and seek feedback from mentors, ask for advice, and take nothing for granted. The key to any job search is never to be complacent; rather, always be forward-moving and set concrete and achievable, yet high goals. During large recruitment meetings, you must realize when you are overloaded and pace yourself in order to have a successful outcome. Your zest to impress can leave you exhausted and overworked and can bring down your morale. Stay focused on your goal.

A key message for a successful job search is never to let someone else control your plan. This can be your parents, siblings, spouses, or significant others. In the end, you are responsible for doing what you need to do for yourself. Sometimes you need to make difficult decisions. Sometimes you need to take risks. Sometimes you need to go with your gut. In the end, the only person responsible for you is yourself, and if you are not responsible for yourself and cannot lead yourself effectively, there is no way you can influence others. I am not suggesting that you turn your back on your parents, family, or friends, but sometimes, they may not fully understand what your passion is. These individuals may not understand how important things are to you. You need to understand how much of their input you need and how much you want, and many times, it is appropriate to listen to them and do what they want you to do. You need to do what you feel will feed your passion and make you successful. If you are open, honest, and doing the right thing, and you explain this to the people around you, they should understand. Hopefully, they will, especially if the decision is causing them anxiety.

Finally, keep all your options open. In today’s competitive environment, you need to showcase your personality and make people want to have you on their team. Having a personal strategy and the confidence to articulate it will make you a more attractive and successful candidate.

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