Job Market Meeting

21 November 2014
Agenda

• the job market trends
• the process of scheduling interviews at the ASSA
• the interview process itself
• scheduling mock interviews during December
• any questions you would like to have answered
Job market trends

Job Count and Its Composition over Time

- Other nonacad
- Ft nonacad
- Int’l other acad
- Int’l ft acad
- US other acad
- US ft acad
Job market trends

Comparing the Fall listings in 2013 and 2014

Note: JOE skipped the Aug 2014 listing
Scheduling interviews

• Have a plan before recruiters start contacting you
• Consider
  • Time of day
    • Morning people vs Afternoon people
    • Exhaustion of a long day
  • Day of the conference
    • First day: interviewers are fresh (but maybe not so sharp yet)
    • Last day: interviewers are worn out
• Physical distance between interviews
  • Consult the hotel map
  • Got to walk ...
• Your preference towards the job
Scheduling interviews
Scheduling interviews

• **Interview call**
  • Calls/Emails for interviews typically start after Thanksgiving, continue until right before Christmas or even right up to the ASSA conference
  • Usually from a departmental secretary, sometimes the recruiting committee chair
  • Usually you have a choice of possible time slots
  • Interviews usually last 30 minutes – 45 minutes

• **You need to know (so, ask if information is not provided)**
  • Where is the interview (very important!)
  • Who will be doing the interviewing
  • How to find out about the room number of the interview room/suite

• **Record all information; don’t lose it; don’t make mistakes**
Scheduling interviews

• Suggestions
  • Try not to schedule your first-choice job as your first interview
    • You will find that you “warm up” over time as you get more practice
  • Try to cluster your interviews “geographically” (same hotel or else another hotel close by) if possible, if you have a lot of them
  • Leave time for moving between hotels
  • Leave time for lunch, if possible
  • Bring Power Bars, bottled water, or whatever to keep you powered up.
The interview process

• What purpose does the interview fulfill?
  • Recruiters get information from and about the job applicants.
  • Job applicants get information about the job and about the future colleagues from the recruiters.
  → A sales job on both ends.

• What information is already available?
  • JOE listing
  • Online departmental information
  • Submitted job application materials
  • Letters of recommendation
  • Reputation of CUNY GC in general and specific faculty in particular

The interview adds to this information set
The interview process

• So, what information does the interview process add?

• Primarily: information about you

• Secondarily: information about the job
  • But you want the job (any job!) anyway.
  • Yet, it is important for universities and institutions that do not have an automatic appeal.
The interview process

• So, what information does the interview process add?
• Primarily: information about you
  • First impression
  • Your way of expressing yourself
  • The way you think on your feet
  • Your knowledge of economics in general
  • Something of interest about your research, your style of teaching, etc., that needs to be highlighted from (or, was difficult to communicate with) from the application materials.
  • Your research (and research plans)
  • Some idea how you will fit in the department and whether you will succeed
  • Your willingness to accept this job, if you were offered
The interview process

• First impression
  • Already with the first email or phone contact
  • Reinforced with follow-up emails and phone calls
    • Be professional, courteous
    • Do not be overly friendly
    • Be efficient: Limit the number of such contacts to the necessary exchanges

• Invest in a professional-looking outfit: i.e., a business suit
• Break in your new shoes before going to the meetings
• Think of all aspects of your appearance

• Skip partying before (and at!) the ASSA conference: be well-rested
• The first minute at your interview
The structure of a typical interview

• “So, tell us about your research...”
  • If you are lucky, there will be a discussion with someone who has read the paper
  • Usually they will just nod head, etc.

• “What courses would you be interested in teaching?”
  • Be prepared with at least 3 courses you have taught/would like to teach. What topics? What text?

• [Usually] A bit of description of department/school/location.

• “What questions do you have for us?”
  • Have concrete questions in mind... the more specific the better.
  • Some standards:
    • How involved are undergraduates in faculty research?
  • Avoid anything to do with teaching load, pay, leave – these can all be discussed at campus interview if you get one.
The interview

- “So, tell us about your research...”
  - Do your “spiel”: /spēl/, /SHpēl/
    - Google: “a long or fast speech or story, typically one intended as a means of persuasion or as an excuse but regarded with skepticism or contempt by those who hear it.”
  - How long?
    - Anticipate 10 minutes
    - Anticipate disruptions
      - Questions
        - Out of interest or a need for explanation
        - In order to knock you off your feet
      - Phone calls
      - Door knocks
    - It is your job to respond appropriately
The interview

• “So, tell us about your research…”
  • Do your “spiel”: /spēl/, /SHpēl/
    • Google: “a long or fast speech or story, typically one intended as a means of persuasion or as an excuse but regarded with skepticism or contempt by those who hear it.”
  • How long?
    • Anticipate 10 minutes
    • Avoid the monologue where the recruiters barely nod and instead check their watch or their glass of water
    • Try to engage
      • Recruiters have heard 20 spiels already.
      • How will you stand out?
    • Get their attention within the first few sentences, and then expand.
The interview

• “So, tell us about your research...”
  • Do your “spiel”: /spēl/, /SHpēl/
    • Google: “a long or fast speech or story, typically one intended as a means of persuasion or as an excuse but regarded with skepticism or contempt by those who hear it.”
  • How long?
    • Anticipate 10 minutes
    • Get their attention within the first few sentences, and then expand.
      • Because of questions or disruptions, you may not get to the end of your well-rehearsed speech.
      • If you lose their interest early on, it is harder to get it back. You are losing your chance.
    • So, develop spiels of different lengths (and different purposes)
      • 3-sentence spiel, elevator spiel, 2-minute spiel, 5-minute spiel, 10-minute spiel.
      • And for an introvert recruiter, know how you will fill another 15 minutes.
The interview

• “So, tell us about your research...”
  • Do your “spiel”: /spēl/, /SHpēl/
    • Google: “a long or fast speech or story, typically one intended as a means of persuasion or as an excuse but regarded with skepticism or contempt by those who hear it.”
  • In doing your spiel, remember:
    • You are the expert on your work. (You spent a year or more on it!)
    • The recruiters may be experts or total outsiders.
    • You have to (without notes)
      • Make it interesting
      • Completely know all the details of your research
      • Be ready to answer all questions
      • Not be defensive. No research is perfect. Suggestions are welcome!
The interview

• “What courses would you be interested in teaching?”
  • Be prepared with at least 3 courses you have taught/would like to teach. What topics? What text?
  • Generally, stay with mainstream courses.
    • But be ready for the question: “What special topics course would you like to offer if you had a chance?”
  • Be prepared: whether and which courses at the Master’s and/or PhD level?
  • Be prepared: figure out what the needs of the university are, so you can step into that area of need – avoid suggesting courses that others (more senior!) have a lock on.
  • If recruiters ask whether you are willing to teach X, be willing unless you absolutely can’t.
The interview

• [Usually] A bit of description of department/school/location.
  • You ought to be very familiar already with the names and fields of the faculty.
    • Certainly the recruiters who are supposed to conduct the interview.
    • When unannounced recruiters (e.g., replacements) introduce themselves, you will remember their names better.
    • Write those names down, if you have a chance.
  • This is the time when recruiters do their sales job.
    • Be enthusiastic about the university.
    • Any hesitation on your part will be noticed.
    • Know something about the university, the city/town, the area.
    • Try to find out their area of need.
      • Usually, recruiters are quite forthcoming about it. Sometimes, you need to ask. But don’t ask about what you are supposed to know already: after all, you applied for this particular job.
The interview

• “What questions do you have for us?”
  • Have concrete questions in mind... the more specific the better.
  • Some standards:
    • How involved are undergraduates in faculty research?
  • Avoid anything to do with teaching load, pay, leave – these can all be discussed at campus interview if you get one.

• The end of this topic is signaling that the interview comes to a close.
  • Make sure you find out about the next stage of their process.
    • When does the recruiting committee plan to contact the candidates again?
    • When does the recruiting committee plan to start their flyouts?
The interview

• Recruiters are not supposed to ask about
  • Marital status
  • Presence of children
  • Religion
  • (Anything that is included in the usual statement that “This university does not discriminate on the basis of XXXX”)

• Yet, in particular to marital status and presence of children (and visa status), they are quite eager to know.
  • It may be asked indirectly.
  • It helps them determine the likelihood of you coming if offered.
  • It may indicate whether the spouse/partner needs a job too.
  • If you bring it up, it can be discussed.
The interview

• After the interview:
  • Within a day or two, send a thank-you note to each of the recruiters that you met.
  • This gives you another opportunity to affirm your interest in the position.
Afterwards...

• **Flyouts**
  • Will likely be contacted in early January (first round), early February (second round), March (third round)
  • Roughly 3 people per job are usually brought to “campus” – more if there are multiple positions
  • Usually last 1-2 days (including meals); non-academic jobs may be shorter
  • Your odds are much better at this stage (although still not in your favor), and they will do a bit of selling to you.
  • If there is *another position* for which you interviewed that is “local” to the school that is flying you out, it is acceptable to contact them and let them know
  • If you are on their “list,” the lower marginal cost may be enough to get them to give you a “campus” interview
Afterwards...

• **Typical flyout schedule**
  - **Day 1**
    - Arrive afternoon
    - Dinner with some members of search committee
    - Sleep
  - **Day 2**
    - Breakfast with member of department
    - Meetings with department members, deans, etc.
    - (Sometimes – driving tour of town)
    - Lunch with members of department
    - “Job Talk” Seminar presentation (Full 1.5 hour seminar)
    - Either
      - Dinner with more members of department, meet with chair following day, then depart
      - Meet with chair and depart
    - Collapse
Afterwards...

• Job talk
  • What’s at stake:
    • How good a teacher are you?
    • How good a colleague you will be? (Are you defensive? Difficult? Boring?)
    • How smart you are – how well do you think on your feet?
  • Your “Job Talk” is given to whole department – not just specialists in your field – so consider skipping some technical details and spending more time showing why your topic is interesting to economists, in general.
  • This may be the only contact that some members of the department have with you.
Afterwards...

• Job talk: structure
  • Avoid long discussions about literature review.
    • Get to your own work quickly.
    • Don’t get entangled in discussions about the work of others. (Someone in the audience might engage you with this because of his/her own beef with the researcher you mention in your literature survey.)
    • Job talks can die right in the literature review.
  • You should be talking about your model/results/data/stuff no more that 10 minutes into your talk.
  • Answer questions politely
    • Show mastery of topic
    • If someone is very persistent, tell them you’d be happy to discuss after the seminar
    • It is ok to say you don’t know something, but only if it is not central to your paper
    • DON’T MAKE THINGS UP ON THE SPOT – your audience will know, and they will pounce – and you won’t get the job
Questions to ask during a flyout:

• Junior faculty
  • departmental mood
  • degree of mentoring
  • research environment
  • students
  • tenure expectations

• Senior faculty
  • Expectations of junior faculty (tenure, service)

• Chair:
  • tenure requirements (research, teaching, service – in what proportion?)
  • research support
  • teaching load
  • pre-tenure review
  • pre-tenure leave
  • sabbatical policy
  • junior leave
  • direction of department (future hires, etc.)
  • May ask you about salary expectations – try to avoid answering directly, there is great value to being second mover in that game

• Dean/Provost
  • how is the department regarded within the University?
  • directions for department (potential future lines)
  • general University questions (sabbatical policy, retirement benefits)
Non-academic jobs

• Interviews vary greatly because the jobs themselves vary greatly.
  • Research jobs
  • Policy jobs
  • Financial jobs
  • Consulting jobs

• Focus on their area of need.

• Still, be prepared to talk about your research as well:
  • How did you generate the idea?
  • What skills do you demonstrate through this research?
  • What did you find?
  • Why is it relevant?

• For some jobs, you compete with MBAs, at least in terms of presentation skills.
Questions to ask for non-academic jobs:

• Depending on the type of job:
  • How much time for own research, if any?
  • Publishing expectations, if any?
  • What are non-research tasks?
  • Are there complementarities between non-research tasks and research?
  • Grant-writing responsibilities?
Afterwards...

• Getting an offer
  • Usually the Chair will call with details
    • Salary, teaching load, start up (computer, research funds), moving costs. Potentially summer funding for 1 or 2 years (but unlikely)
    • Deadline – up to two weeks, but usually much shorter (can be as short as 1 day)
  • If they don’t mention all of the things above – ask about them
  • Do not commit to anything on the phone
  • Probably little bargaining power without another offer, but you can ask about non-salary things like computers
  • Ask for the offer IN WRITING (usually will email a PDF file)
  • MAKE NO COMMITMENTS WITHOUT A SIGNED OFFER IN WRITING
Afterwards...

• Negotiation: What if the job is not your first choice?
  • If the offer is not from your first choice school, you can contact places with whom you interviewed at the meetings or for which you had a campus interview that you prefer.
  • This may prompt them to quickly bring you to campus.
  • But do not play games here.
    • This could really hurt your future reputation.
    • Be honest about your preferences.
  • Be realistic.
Afterwards...

→ Job offer in hand
→ You are happy.

• Is the spouse(/partner) happy? The problem of joint searches.
  • In general, it is best to wait until you have an offer to mention an academic spouse. This is the time you have the most leverage.
  • If your spouse is in economics, this may make things easier.
  • For a non-academic spouse,
    • you should have initiated a search already as soon as you scheduled your flyout.
    • sometimes, the university can prod a local employer a little. Usually, the university can offer no help.
Agenda

• the job market trends
• the process of scheduling interviews at the ASSA
• the interview process itself
• scheduling mock interviews during December
  • With your advisor,
  • and with one (or more) other faculty members of your choice.
• any questions you would like to have answered