

▼ Job market notes by David Miller, d9miller@ucsd.edu

▼ Packets

- Put in every paper that you want them to know about
- Don't stress about the cover letter
- Send updates around January 1 if you have continued working on the papers

▼ Interviews

▼ Tips

- Know who is in your field. Read abstracts of their recent publications and working papers.
- Schedule at least 20 minutes between interviews.
- Some interviewers will be upbeat, others will not. Don't read too much into it.
- Some will try to challenge you. Meet the challenge.

▼ Memorize your speeches

Preparation is the key! Memorize all of the following. Test yourself against the clock.

Force someone to listen so you get used to making eye contact while speaking.

- 2 minute presentation for each main paper
Explain what your work is and why it is important. List the main results without technical detail. Emphasize interesting implications that will interest non-specialists.
- 5 minute presentations for each main paper
It helps to distinguish between what was easy and what was hard, what was in the literature previously and what is new. Mention 1–3 selected precedents for your work, and explain how you are extending or differentiating from them. Aim to make it interesting for a general audience, but give some detail and explain why it was difficult so specialists will appreciate your work.
- 3 minutes for each less advanced paper or significant idea
It is OK if you have not progressed very far; say what you want to accomplish and why you are interested. You should have at least three projects, including papers and interesting fleshed-out ideas, that you can talk about. This will help demonstrate future promise beyond your job market paper.
- 3 minutes on research interests
Emphasize the common themes in your existing work and future interests. Come up with some ideas related to your existing work that could potentially turn into future papers. These can simply be 1–2 sentence questions that you'd like to answer. You don't have to have an answer yet. You want to give the impression that you are embarking on a research program that could potentially keep you busy for several years.
- Top ten FAQ for each main paper
Know which parts of your work are advanced and are likely to be questioned by specialists. Be able to explain the intuition. If you're a theorist, generalists will ask about applicability. If you're an applied person, theorists may ask about the underlying meaning. Be prepared to ask and answer the questions yourself if you need to fill time.

▼ Job Talk

▼ Balancing act between generalists and specialists

▼ Generalists (i.e., specialists in other fields)

- Interest them in your topic or its implications in the first 15 minutes
- Maybe start with a worked-out example rather than your full model
- Wake them up again at the end with a pithy take-home message

▼ Specialists

- Spend the middle of your talk speaking to them.
- It's OK, and sometimes even good, to go over the heads of the generalists. If they didn't quite understand what you did, they'll probably think that means you're smart unless the specialists tell them that you're not.
- Give the specialists a taste of some of the hard work you did. Tell them specifically which parts were hard.

- But spend most of your effort trying to provide structure and intuition.
- ▼ Be prepared to skip some material if you are short of time.
 - Maybe even have a couple slides that you expect to skip
- ▼ Emphasize your contributions
 - ▼ Spend the first 5 minutes with the projector off
 - Use examples and anecdotes to motivate your work
 - Summarize your topic
 - Explain your approach
 - Tell how you extend a literature or bring different literatures together
 - ▼ First three slides (suggested)
 - Title/author
 - Motivation
 - Contributions
 - ▼ Don't spend too much time on literature
 - But acknowledge the most important precedents, plus anyone relevant that might be in the audience.
 - ▼ If you're doing applied work, explain the full extent of your research within the first 10 minutes
 - A common mistake is to present simple descriptive results first, without explaining that you also did really technical stuff that you will present in the second half of your talk— by then most of the non-specialist audience will have stopped paying close attention.
- ▼ Use a computer and LCD projector
 - Most schools have projectors, but let them know ahead of time because they may need to reserve it for you
 - Buy a remote control laser pointer
 - Carry backup slides just in case
 - If you're a theorist, use LaTeX instead of PowerPoint
 - Use large fonts, and preferably not Computer Modern.
 - I can provide the LaTeX files from my presentation.
 - Keep your design simple and mostly black on white
 - ▼ Use deep, bold colors for emphasis or to differentiate graph elements
 - Colors look lighter on the projector than on the monitor
- ▼ Be clear
 - ▼ Call things by their names, not "this," "that," or "here". Avoid pronouns.
 - Remember that people will not necessarily remember all your definitions
 - ▼ For graphs and tables, explain the axes before you explain the content
 - Use the computer's capabilities to hide the content until after you've explained the axes
 - For tables, highlight the important parts in color
- ▼ Understand the roles of your assumptions
 - If empirical, you need to defend your identification strategy.
 - If theoretical, you need to know which assumptions are necessary and which are just for convenience.
 - How does each critical assumption feed into your result?
 - You will look really smart if you can explain this well (and your assumptions are intuitively justified).