

# ACHIEVING THE MINDSET TO TRANSITION FROM POSTDOC TO FACULTY

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**CAREERSPEAK SERIES | HOSTED BY  
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# From Cameroon, to Columbia, to Columbia

Future professor



Douala, Cameroon (Central-West Africa)



- One of Africa's **highest concentration of biodiversity**
  - University of Pittsburgh: BS
  - University of South Carolina, Columbia: PhD
    - Harvard Medical School/BWH: Postdoc
    - Columbia University: Faculty

# BE PERSISTENT AND INSISTENT

- **I applied to ~ 6 faculty jobs in the fall of 2020**
  - ❖ Received 2 interviews (~33%)
  - ❖ One firm offer (~16%)
  
- **I applied to ~ 36 faculty jobs in the fall of 2021**
  - ❖ Received 16 interviews (~44%)
  - ❖ 8 firm offers (~22%)

# DEFINE YOUR EXECUTION STRATEGY

- **Apply broadly**
- **Articulate a vision for decades-long research program** (Think portfolio, not mere research projects)
- **Boldly affirm the value of scientific ideas and portfolio**

# **SEQUESTER THE PROCESS IN PHASES**

- 1. Pre-submission**
- 2. Submission**
- 3. Interviews**
- 4. Negotiations**
- 5. Acceptance**

# SEQUESTER THE PROCESS IN PHASES

## 1. **Pre-submission** (6-12 months before submission)

- ❖ Promote your name and research achievements
- ❖ Create Twitter account for scientific content
- ❖ Create website that presents you as a future faculty
- ❖ Have peers and mentors review your documents

## 2. Submission

## 3. Interviews

## 4. Negotiations

## 5. Acceptance



# **SUBMIT YOUR DOCUMENTS EARLY**

1. **Pre-submission** (6-12 months before submission)

## **2. Submission**

- ❖ Cover letter, research statement, teaching statement, diversity statement, 3-5 letters, 2-4 publications.
- ❖ Present everything as if you're already a faculty (e.g: sign your cover letter, write it on institution letterhead).

4. **Interviews**

5. **Negotiations**

6. **Acceptance**

# INTERVIEW CONFIDENTLY

1. Pre-submission (12-6 months before submission)

3. Submission

## 4. Interviews

- ❖ Seminar, chalk talk, interviews with faculty and students
- ❖ It's a coin toss once you get to this stage!!!
- ❖ Practice, practice, practice

2. Negotiations

3. Acceptance



# NEGOTIATE FOR ALL OF YOUR NEEDS

1. Pre-submission

3. Submission

4. Interviews

**5. Negotiations**

- ❖ You can ask for anything within reason
- ❖ It's better to have multiple offers
- ❖ Negotiate on your own timeline

6. Acceptance

# ACCEPT WHEN YOU'RE READY

1. Pre-submission

3. Submission


4. Interviews

5. Negotiations

**6. Acceptance**

- ❖ Don't drag out the process
- ❖ Define the start date that works for you
- ❖ Send thank you emails to all places

# SOME HELPFUL RESOURCES

- Howard Hughes Medical Institute - Making the Right Moves
- @SynRegLab 
- <https://woappilab.com>
- yw4024@Columbia.edu