

# A Guide to Prepare for Your First Job in Academic Medicine



GWIMS Toolkit

# Your First Position in Academic Medicine

- Move into first professional role as educator, researcher, or clinical educator is complex
  - transition from grad student to professor
  - more power and responsibility
  - major milestone in formation of professional identity
- Reflecting on personal and professional values and goals before making important career path choices helps develop resilience which in turn may prevent dissatisfaction and burnout<sup>1</sup>
- This toolkit has been designed to help you prepare for your first position so that you may flourish in your new exciting role!

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# Preparation for First Jobs

## Physicians and Postdoctoral Associates



# Timeline from Training to Hire: Physicians

## 12 – 16 Months prior to Practice

- Plan Career Strategies
- Professional Identify Formation
  - values, mission, vision
- Career Counseling
- Understand Physician Compensation Methods and Practice Options
- Research Opportunities/ Workforce Stats/ Community Demographics

## 9 – 12 Months prior to Practice

- Identify Specific Opportunities
- Prepare CV
  - Cover Letter
- Interview
  - References
  - Follow up

## 6 – 9 Months prior to Practice

- Negotiate Contract/Benefits
- Practice Paperwork
  - State License
  - DEA, NPI
  - Payer credentialing
  - Hospital Privileges
- Relocation Planning
  - Housing
  - Partner Considerations
  - Childcare, School

## 3 Months prior to Practice

- Pre employment PE
- Insurance
  - Medical Professional Liability,
  - Personal (Disability, Life, Health)
- Certification Exam Study
- Setting up for Success
  - Set Goals
  - Work Life Balance

# Timeline from Training to Hire: Post-Docs

## 4 years prior to Independence

- Evaluate Career Opportunities
  - Academic
    - Researcher/PI
    - Educator
  - Government
    - NIH, FDA
  - Industry
    - Researcher, Consultant, Medical Science Liason, Field Specialist, Writer, etc.
- Publish
  - At least 1 first author paper
- Grant Applications
  - T32
- Develop Career Plan with your mentor

## 3 years prior to Independence

- Research Opportunities/ Workforce Stats/ Community Demographics
- Publish
  - At least 1 first author paper
- Grant Applications
  - F31
  - K99/R00
  - Private Fellowships

## 2 years prior to Independence

- Publish
  - At least 1 first author paper
- Grant Applications
  - K99/R00 Resubmission
  - K22
  - Private Fellowships
- Reevaluate Career Opportunities
  - *Are you still on track for your career plan based on publications and funding?*
  - *Should you pursue alternative options at this point?*

## 1 year prior to Independence

- Prepare CV
- Cover Letter
- Interview
  - References
  - Follow up
- Negotiate Contract/Benefits
  - AAMC Salary Survey
  - Relocation Planning

# Promoting Yourself on Paper

## CVs and Cover Letters



# Cover Letter: Tips and Tricks<sup>2</sup>

- Tailor your cover letter to the institution/ academic center/university to which you are applying (mission and values, tone).
- Know what qualities and skills they are looking for and then provide evidence that you have those qualities and skills with specific examples. Do NOT just re-list and re-state your experiences that are already in your CV.
- Clearly state what excites you about the opportunity.
- Paint a picture of how you are the ideal candidate who can fill their requirements and meet their mission. Consider how you can provide added value and state it.
- Promote yourself! Don't focus on your perceived weaknesses or components of the job that may not be a perfect fit. Show what you can do.
- Offer highlights in terms of concrete examples (e.g. a few \$, publications, etc.) where appropriate.

# CV: Represent Professionally<sup>3</sup>

- Style:
  - Ensure CV is visually consistent (font, margins, bolded sections, etc.)
    - Keep it clean and uniform with one font style throughout
  - Font: one font style throughout, sans serif recommended; 12-14 point font for headings; 10-12 for text (do not use smaller font sizes)
  - Place name and page number on all pages, dates on the right hand side
- Proofread! Spelling errors and typos are a common downfall of CVs.
- Have mentors or colleagues read and provide formative feedback.
- Maintain and update your CV continuously. You will want to send it at any moment to capitalize on unforeseen opportunities.
- Note that there is not one definitive CV format. Once hired, check to see if you are required to adapt yours (internal CV).

# CV Details

- Use brief, clear narratives to make sure your CV isn't only a list of your accomplishments
  - Example: if you conduct research, provide brief explanation of your role and key projects
  - Example: if you are a course director, describe your responsibilities, activities, curriculum development, etc.
- Use action verbs in the narrative sections of the CV<sup>4</sup>
- Do NOT overburden the CV with a combination of bullet points, italics and underlining. Pick ONE (no more than two).
- Avoid repetition

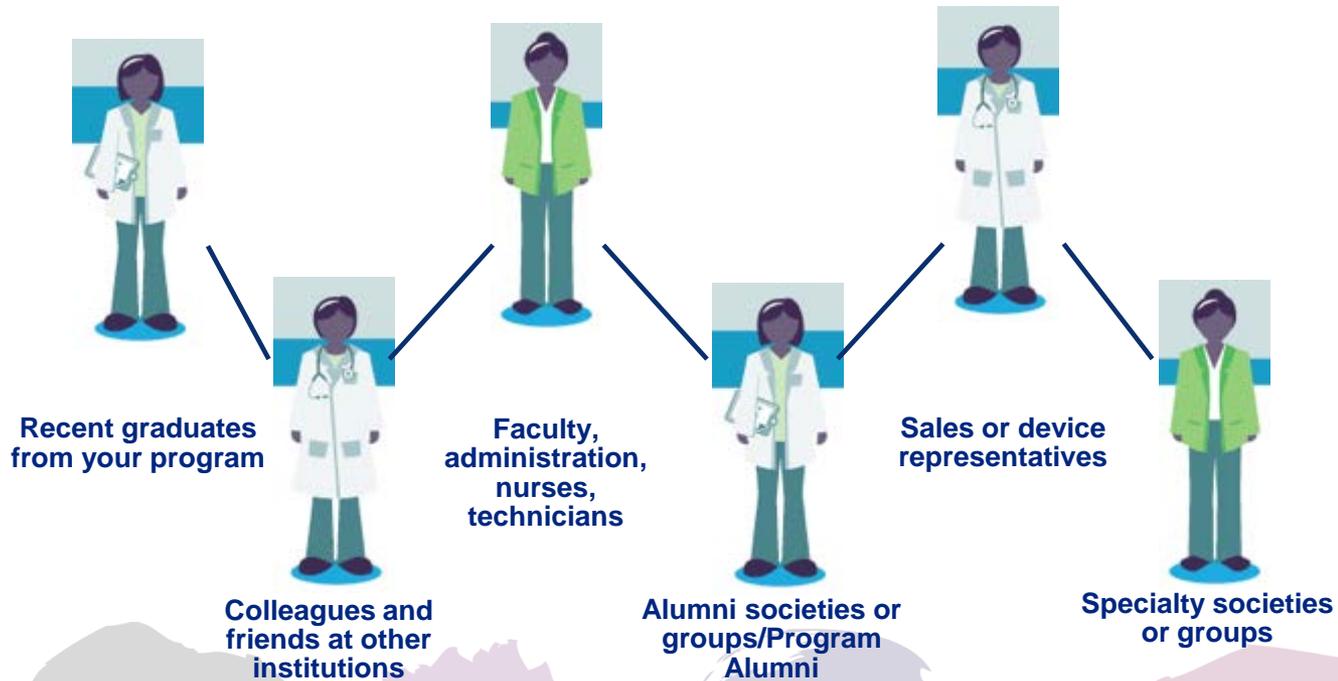
# Teaching Portfolio<sup>5,6,7</sup>

- In addition to a CV, academic positions look for evidence of teaching experience and potential
- Elements include:
  - Pedagogical Statement (Teaching Philosophy)
  - Evidence of teaching, curriculum development, assessment, student mentoring/advising, educational leadership.
  - Evidence of excellence in the above: student ratings, teaching awards, etc.
- Evidence of development as educator (webinars taken, etc.)
- Like the CV there may be institution specific criteria for documentation of teaching performance (internal teaching portfolio)

# Networking in the Digital Age



# You already have a large network<sup>8,9</sup>



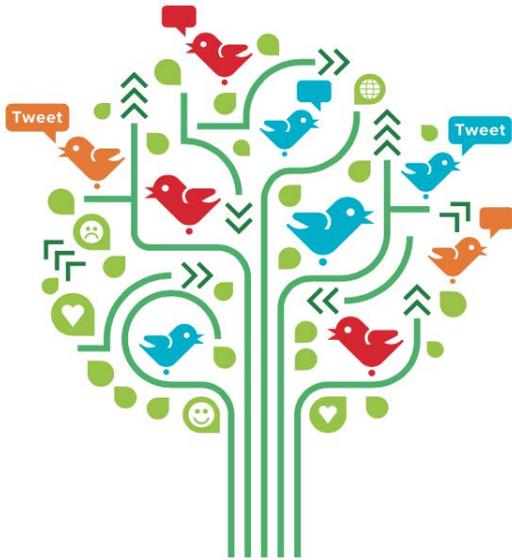
**ASK about potential jobs. ASK those in your network to connect with colleagues on your behalf. It will never hurt to ASK!**

# Utilizing Social Media for the Job Search<sup>10,11</sup>



- Follow your societies on Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn to be notified of new job postings. Allow recruiters to follow you to keep you informed of job opportunities.
- ResearchGate: connects you to researchers with similar interests and potentially a position
- Doximity: connects clinicians with colleagues to reach out for opportunities

# Tweet, Tweet: Twitter and Your Job Search<sup>12,13</sup>



- Write a 'Microblog', a brief regular update on your research, interests, and accomplishments
- Do more than 'lurk': put yourself out there!
- Follow those you find interesting: jobs may appear
- Prep for interviews: see what your interviewers tweet to prepare
- Employers are following you: be less personal, more professional, and always be respectful



# LinkedIn: The “Professional” Site?<sup>15</sup>



- Largest social network exclusively for networking and development
- Keep your link up to date: completely populate, professional picture, share work examples
- Information **MUST** be accurate
- Creates a digital version of your professional network...and allows it to grow rapidly!
- Join groups, follow organizations, reach out to others in your field

# Interview Skills and Managing the Recruitment Process



# Managing the Calls and Emails: Recruiters

- External recruiters: work for private companies to recruit physicians for practices
- Internal recruiters: work for medical organization
  - **The Good:** point person for specific jobs or connection with multiple jobs
  - **The Bad:** financial incentives for the recruiter-make sure they are working to benefit YOU
  - **The Ugly:** multiple calls/pagers/distractions. Set ground rules on appropriate times to call and how to contact

# You've earned it, now go get it!

## Interview Skills

### Preparing

#### Research the Organization

#### Research the interviewers

Know their work, and their mission, vision, and values

#### Know your CV and your work

#### Practice, practice, practice!

Expose tics/kinks  
Mirror, friends, video

### The Interview

#### Nonverbal Communication <sup>16</sup>

Firm handshake  
Stand and sit tall  
Don't nod too much  
Good eye contact

#### Dress for Success

Casual is not appropriate  
Call to ask if unsure

#### Be Polite to Everyone

On the phone  
At the front desk  
Everywhere

#### Listen Carefully, Answer Succinctly

Allows for proper answer  
Don't babble to fill up silence

#### Be Friendly & Professional

Always attend to the situation  
Don't be overly familiar  
No slang or cursing

#### Display a Positive, Confident Attitude

Balance confidence and humility  
Promote yourself

### Following Up

Commentators are divided on whether cards are now expected etiquette, but they surely don't hurt

Follow up email within 1-2 days  
Shows interest and refreshes your name

# Human Resources Offices<sup>16,17</sup>

- Institution's Hiring Processes
  - Timelines from interview to hire, etc.
- Description of Benefits
  - Whom to contact with questions
- General Interview Information
  - Typical interview questions

# Balanced Work Environments & Family Considerations



# Balanced Work Environment<sup>18</sup>

- A balanced work environment is a predictor of job satisfaction<sup>19</sup>
- Women physicians and younger physicians are more likely to suffer burn-out than men and older physicians<sup>20</sup>
  - Those who spend less than 20% of their time on the aspect of their work they find most meaningful are more likely to burn out
  - Women are twice as likely as men to want to reduce work load from full time to part time
  - Women are about 4 times more likely than men to work less than full time

# Balanced Work Environment: Summary of Starmer, et. al. Study<sup>21</sup>

- Only 43% of physicians report balanced work environment:
  - Women are more likely to have less balanced work environment and career satisfaction than men
  - Chaotic work environment and working > 50 hours per week associated with *lower* perceived work-life balance

# Family Planning for Geographic Mobility<sup>22,23</sup>

## *The Issue of Geographic Mobility*

- There is a positive correlation between a woman's geographic mobility and her advancement in administrative position at US Medical Schools.
- Geographic mobility can be particularly stressful when partners or children are involved.
- To improve your chances of success for relocating in a dual-career relationship, both must be competitive candidates in respective fields; diversify your interests and skill sets as much as possible.

## **Things to consider when planning your move:**

- Begin researching job opportunities for your partner up to one year in advance of your move.
- Inquire of your recruiter about relocation assistance for your partner. Dual careers are now the norm, and many universities offer regional job search assistance with neighboring institutions as a recruiting tool.
- Plan to stay an extra day or two during your interview (or make a return trip) to tour the area with a realtor.
- Set up tours of schools/daycare centers you may be considering if you have children. Ask about enrollment deadlines.
- Once you have a job offer negotiated, don't be afraid to contact people you met during your interview process to inquire about neighborhoods, schools, and commuting.

# Working Parent's Guide

- Expect to spend significantly more time on domestic labor if you have children.
- Planning Questions:
  - *What will you do for childcare?* Popular options include family, daycare centers, nannies, au pairs.
  - *What is the cost/availability of childcare in the area?*
  - *Are there waiting lists for childcare centers that you should get on?*
  - *Is there any flexibility in your contract to work from home or to have a 4 day week?*
  - *How much travel is expected of you in your current position and how will you coordinate 24/7 care during travel obligations?*
  - *What other household help should you budget/plan for if you so choose?* Popular options include cleaning services, laundry services, and household managers.

# What you can do early on to achieve balance

- The goal of balance is to flourish both professionally and personally
- Find a colleague or mentor at work who will support your primary career interests and aims
- Find or make a well-organized environment for yourself
- Take care of your health (eat well, manage stress, exercise, sleep)
- Set boundaries with how much you are willing to work (at the office and at home for the office)
- Don't avoid having children due only to concerns for balance – they may lead to more personal satisfaction!<sup>21</sup>

# Priming for Success



# Setting oneself up for future success

## **Know salary and academic parity with male peers<sup>24,25</sup>**

Needs to be reevaluated every few years, check AAMC salary surveys<sup>26</sup>  
Clinicians should understand call coverage (how much and how is it reimbursed comparatively).

## **Know the advancement/promotion criteria at your institution.**

How many publications are necessary? What activities count for promotion?

- Note that committee work and attending medical school activities (e.g. admissions committee, White Coat Ceremony) are networking opportunities for career advancement, even if you are in private practice.

# Setting oneself up for future success<sup>27,28,29,30</sup>

## **Prepare your Finances**

- For clinicians, seek out financial advisors well-established in the medical field.
- For all, look at federal loan payback/deferment programs

## **Mentor Others**

- Get involved with GWIMS, or start a chapter if none exists!
- Help ensure career path advancement for others

## **Always be Mindful of a Balanced Work Environment**

- Recognize the demanding workload of being a leader in research and/or clinical practice and the teaching world.
- Reflect on your life goals and values to ensure a good job fit.



# Practice Options & Contract Negotiation



# Physician Compensation & Practice Options

## COMPENSATION

- Salary
- Productivity
  - Collections, RVUs, incentives, revenue after expenses
- Ancillary Income
- Value Based Reimbursement
  - Quality Payment Program
  - Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS)
  - Advanced Alternative Payment Models (APMs)
- MGMA or AAMC Salary Benchmarks

## PRACTICE OPTIONS

- Private Practice
  - Solo
  - Large group
  - Multi-speciality Group
  - Locum tenens
- Fulltime Academic
  - Clinician Educator / Teaching
  - Research
- Government Employment
  - Military (DoD)
  - Veterans Affairs (VHA)
- Hospital/ Health Systems Based

# Contract Negotiation: How<sup>31</sup>

- Do negotiate → any negotiation can net up to \$1,000,000 over the course of a career v. no negotiation
  - Women less likely to attempt negotiation
- Use “relational language” → explain how your asks help the department
  - Implicit bias: women who use “self-centered” language pay a social cost
- A “standard contract” still has room for negotiation
  - Consider what will make your life easier
    - Time distribution
    - Support staff
    - Admin load

# Contract Negotiation: The Physician Scientist<sup>32</sup>

- Other parts of the package to negotiate for the scientist include:
- Physical lab space
- Start-up package (~\$500,000-\$1,000,000 for bench scientists over 2-5 years)
- Expectations for external support
  - Do you need a grant to be recruited? If not, how long do you have to get external \$
- Protected time – how protected & for how long
- Mentorship committee that will be provided
- Women are less likely to enter and maintain a research position

# Contract Negotiation: Caveats for the Clinician<sup>33</sup>

- Remember Compensation is only one part of the puzzle.
- Term of the contract: How long are you & the employer *committing* to employment?
- Duties & Responsibilities should be *defined* as much as possible.
  - Can your employer move your worksite location without your input? Is there an RVU expectation?
- Benefits: leave (consider specifics), malpractice (\$ limits, scope, claims-made vs occurrence, tail/nose)
  - If claims-made, you will need to arrange tail coverage, which is expensive!
- Audits & Fees: The Employer & the Employee should *share risk*.
- Find out what is Customary for your state/region (e.g., non-competes).

# Contract Negotiation: Caveats for the Clinician

- Termination language: Is it fair for both sides?
  - With Cause vs Without Cause
    - *Timing* of notification: Is it *reasonable*? Can you find another job in this time frame? Is there *reciprocity* for both sides?
  - Non-Compete Clauses
    - *Duration and locality*: Is it reasonable? Is it based only on your primary worksite? Is it *impacted by termination specifics*? Consider with or without cause, and expiration. *What* are you prevented from doing? All medical care? Just your primary field?
- *If you don't ask for something, you cannot receive it* (e.g., organization dues)
- **Never sign anything without reading first!** Consult a Medical Contract Lawyer if your contract is non-standard.

# Grant Acquisition



# Getting Your First Grant

## Big Questions

1. Where is the grant from?
  - NIH – majority of grants
  - Institutional – internal grants may be available to provide start up or bridge funds, especially if being recruited
  - Foundations in the field
2. When should I apply?
  - Women tend to wait to get more preliminary data before submitting.
  - Trust mentors & program officers to tell you when you're ready.<sup>33</sup>

# Getting Your First Grant: K awards<sup>34,35</sup>

- Most first grants are K awards
  - K08 supports translational research
  - K23 supports clinical research
  - K99/R00 and K01 are funding mechanisms for non-clinicians
- NIH is a collection of institutes
  - Each institute has its own payline, requirements, etc.
  - Talk to the program officer at your institute to make sure it's best for you

***K Scoring is dependent on strongly worded “institutional commitment,” often self-written: it requires strong self-promotion***

# Grant Acquisition Resources

- Clinical and Translational Sciences Institutes
  - NIH-funded organizations that have grant writing resources
- Faculty Development Offices/Chair and Associate Deans of Faculty Development
  - May have funding for pilot studies that can help prepare for more substantial grant applications

# In Closing

*We offer the following references and resources to help you continue your preparations.*

*We wish you the best in your first job and look forward to having you as our colleague in academic medicine!*

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# Further Resources

- The Group on Women in Medicine and Science (GWIMS) has other relevant toolkits on the topics of mentoring, negotiation, career advancement for women of color, and career development in academic medicine at <https://www.aamc.org/members/gwims/toolkit/343518/toolkithometsr.html> Accessed August 2017.
- The American Women's Medical Association www site has many resources including a networking alliance, mentoring, and financial planning. <https://www.amwa-doc.org/> Accessed August 2017.
- The Association for Women in Science (AWIS) is a global network of over 100,000 members dedicated to achieving equity and full participation of women in all science, technology, mathematics and engineering professions. The members site includes webinars on career development and has opportunities for networking and mentoring. <http://awis.associationcareernetwork.com/> Accessed August 2017.
- Building the Next Generation of Academic Physicians (BNGAP) is an organization dedicated to advancing diversity in academic medicine targeting med students, residents, and post docs. They sponsor research, regional conferences, and have vast web resources. <http://bngap.org/> Accessed August 2017.
- The Center for Biomedical Career development at U Mass Medical School www site hosts a wide range of new career and professional development resources that support the training experience of Ph.D. students and postdoctoral scholars in biomedical sciences. <http://www.umassmed.edu/gsbs/career/> Accessed August 2017.
- The Group on Graduate Research, Education, and Training (GREAT) at the AAMC provides professional development to, and fosters the exchange of information and ideas among, the faculty and administrative leaders of biomedical PhD, MD- PhD, and postdoctoral programs. It has a list of resources at: <https://www.aamc.org/members/great/resources/> Accessed August 2017.
- Resident 360 is a site hosted by the *New England Journal of Medicine* and has a number of resources for career planning after residency: <https://resident360.nejm.org/pages/career>. Accessed August 2017.
- There are a www sites and open/ closed Facebook pages dedicated to the experiences of being a mom and a physician that have thousands of members, including Physician Moms Group <https://mypmg.com/> and PMG-BLW, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1597245870305530/>. Accessed August 2017.

# First Jobs Task Force Members

**This toolkit was created to assist those about to enter a career in academic medicine by a group of volunteers representing clinician, scientist, and educator tracks in academic medicine at various career stages of career and from private and public institutions across a variety of geographic areas in the US.**

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