

HOW TO GET A JOB*

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*I don't have one yet.

Types of jobs for new PhDs:

- Teaching (usually a tenure-track position at a smaller school)
- Research (usually a post-doc at a bigger school)
- Non-Academic (NSA, actuary, Applied Mathematics Inc., etc.)
- Barista (sorry, but if this is what you looking for, then this talk won't help)

As for me, I fit in between the first two categories. I want a job that will evaluate me primarily on my ability to teach, yet has expectations and support for research.

The process is a long one! At least, it has been for me.

Here are some things you can do now, no matter how far long you are in your graduate career:

- Keep evaluations, syllabi, student emails, etc.
- Join the AMS, MAA, and other mathematics organizations. Check out their websites. They are full of helpful information, including stuff with regard to getting a job.
- Attend conferences: The next joint meetings are in San Diego. Go to this meeting! Meet people and get a feel for what it's like to be a mathematician outside of your department.
- Apply to the Graduate Student Association and the department for travel money. There is money to be had, but you must seek it out and apply for it.
- Give talks in seminars at UCR and elsewhere.
- Try to write a paper aside from your thesis before you graduate.
- Make yourself a homepage. Here's mine: math.ucr.edu/~rock
- Date/get engaged to/marry an editor so you can have him or her look over your statements, CV, cover letters, etc.

TIMELINE

(for me anyway)

June (one year before graduating): Sign up for weekly job posting emails from AMS EIMS. Look for schools that fit you and keep track of them.

Over Summer: Work on thesis, curriculum vitae (CV or resume), thesis, paper, teaching statement, research statement, thesis. Teach a summer school course to gain invaluable experience as a primary instructor. Ask some professors who like you and

know your work to write a letter of recommendation on your behalf in the near future. Have at least one of them specifically discuss your abilities as a teacher.

August/September: Pick schools that have a job description that matches your expertise and what you want: If they are asking for a topologist and you're an algebraist, they're not going to hire you. Also, think Polonius. If you know you won't accept an offer from a school for some reason, don't apply.

September/October: Cover letters. Especially with smaller schools, know stuff about the job, the department, the school and the city or town they're in. Look up names of professors you'd like to work with and mention them in the letter. Keep it short, preferably to a page or so. Also, don't be afraid to mention something your personality or something you like to do.

October/November: Send out applications. There were three ways for me –

- mathjobs.org – a double edged sword you can sign up for through the AMS. It makes the application process go much faster for you, but it also makes it easier for a lot more people to apply to these same schools.
- Online through the school's own website. Usually pretty easy.
- Snail mail.

Each school has their own list of documents that they want from you. A sample list is provided after the timeline. Don't send schools stuff they don't ask for, they may not appreciate the extra paperwork.

November/December: Set up and conduct phone interviews. Set up interviews at the joint meetings. The jobs interviewed for at the joint meetings are usually tenure-track offered by smaller schools, though there are exceptions.

January: Attend the joint meetings and go on interviews. Get dressed up, it's a job interview. There are two main types of interviews: pre-scheduled and scheduled on-site. The pre-scheduled interviews are nice because you can find out some things about the school before you speak with the interviewers, whereas the on-site interviews are like speed dating. Really. In general, know stuff about the schools you're talking to! And be honest.

February: Go on on-campus interviews. You'll likely be asked to give a talk or teach a class, so be prepared. Also, you'll have a chance to meet faculty members, the dean, staff and other people. Be yourself. Or be your alter-ego, whoever's nicer.

February/March: Get a job, then eat, drink and be merry.

Spring: Defend your thesis and graduate!

The list of documents that you are required to submit differs from school to school. Here's a list of some of these things:

- cover letter
- curriculum vita (aka CV (aka resume))
- letters of recommendation (usually at least 3, sometimes more)
- teaching statement

- research statement
- evaluations
- syllabi you've written
- a response to a mission statement
- transcripts (copies are usually fine, initially)

A few more words on the teaching and research statements: They both should be fairly short, say 2 to 4 pages. People on hiring committees have to look at a ton of these things, so don't weigh them down with long statements.

For the teaching statement, include details regarding the classes you've taught as a TA and as a primary instructor. Talk about specific experiences you've had in the classroom and try to avoid sounding generic. Don't be afraid to show some personality. Look up Project NExT and other programs for math professors to see if you'd like to participate in them. If you don't mind making more work for yourself, you may consider writing a few versions that highlight different aspects of your experience and plans for the future.

The research statement is a summary of your research (duh). I tried to write mine with a general audience in mind, but I also included some key details. Yours may be more or less technical, depending on the type of job your looking for. Also, include descriptions of future research possibilities and the potential for working with undergraduate and graduate students.

Drink lots of coffee and good luck!

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