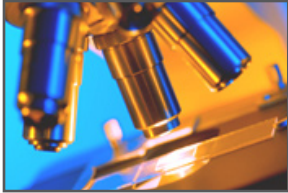




Be the Perfect Postdoc

Finding the perfect **postdoc job** [<http://www.postdoctoralfellowcrossing.com/>] depends on what you want to pursue. It can serve as a hands-on opportunity before diving into your **career** [<http://www.employmentscape.com/>]. Once you find the perfect position, you can focus on being the perfect postdoc.



Overly-crowded labs are not always the best work environment. When there are too many postdocs working in one area, it can be hard to get the right amount of attention, guidance, and advisement from the mentor or senior-level **scientist** [<http://www.scientistcrossing.com/>]. It can also be hard to have a sufficient amount of work space or equipment. Remember this when choosing a position and mentor, in addition to the area of expertise or research your mentor can provide.

You might also want to consider what kind of connections your mentor will have. Can he or she introduce you to the right people, get you published, or help get you funding?

Once you have found a postdoc position that you think is the right one for you, you will want to accumulate as much funding as possible. Do not leave all of this up to the institution. In addition to the institutional fellowship money you receive, you should also pursue other forms of funding. You can look for funding from the National Institute of Health (NIH) or the **National Science Foundation** [<http://www.sciencescrossing.com/>] (NSF). You will also notice that a doctoral advisor will appreciate the fact that you have found your own sources of funding. Work with your advisor to complete your applications. This allows communication and enables your advisor to get to know you better.



The presence of your advisor will take some getting used to. He or she will be around a lot but that isn't a bad thing. Take advantage of your advisor's expertise and experience, and see what he or she can teach you. Having the mentorship of someone who has researched and published in your area of interest is valuable, so take advantage of it as much as possible. Offer your help and ask for advice.

It is also important in a postdoc job to find a happy medium between assisting your mentor with his or her research tasks, and finding time to pursue your own research and publication. This is one of the reasons you want to find someone who has similar areas of interest as you. If your research overlaps with that of your mentor, it will make the task of juggling his or her tasks and your own all the more easy.

Remember that as a postdoc, you are not necessarily there to make money. It may be discouraging at times to make little money, be treated as less than staff, and be consumed by work all of the time, but you are getting what you need out of it. You are gaining valuable skills and experience that will arm you for your future career in **science** [<http://www.sciencescrossing.com/>].

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