



Getting a Job as a Postdoctoral Fellow

For academics, getting their doctorate is a grand achievement. It signifies the end of their long and laborious journey. For many, it also signifies the time to apply to one of many [postdoctoral fellow jobs](#) that are out there. A postdoctoral fellowship is a transitional position, one in which the scientist is not quite a principle investigator but also well past being a student. For those staying in academia, being a postdoc is one of the more important [PhD jobs](#) out there.

The task of becoming a postdoctoral research fellow is just like any other job search. It involves researching job possibilities, utilizing the network of colleagues you have built up, sending out your resume and curriculum vitae, interviewing, and so forth. [Postdoctoral jobs](#) are easy to land if you are well prepared for each step. For the research scientist, these steps may seem simple, but they should certainly not be treated lightly.

The process begins well before graduation. As a graduate student, you are part of the research process. Throughout this process, the publication of papers involves getting your name out there, as well as learning about the research of other scientists. You are also likely to attend conferences during which you will meet with scientists and professionals in your research field. During this time, many of the individuals whose papers you cite and who may cite your work will see your face. This networking is important for the interviewing and application process, as it will provide outsiders who can give you a reference or two, as well as open up potential job opportunities.

Around this time, you will also be finishing the bulk of what will go onto your resume and curriculum vitae. These similar but different documents require a bit of thought and “strategic” planning. The resume is a short one- or two-page document which will document your professional life, as well as identify key skills and achievements. The resume needs to be short, as the candidate reviewer will utilize it as a filtering agent; the reviewer will have a large stack which he will go through to pick a few key resumes. As such, your resume should be short; otherwise, the reviewer will not take the time to read it properly. It should also be tailored to the company it is sent to, identifying the skills and experience which make you a perfect fit. The full details of your research, on a project-by-project basis, will go into your curriculum vitae.

Identifying the jobs to which you will apply is a long process. What you should look for are research positions in which your

own research can be a valuable asset. Postdoctoral fellowships exist in both the academic and private research fields. For private companies, you should try to identify those with products and research which apply to your field of study. It is similar for an academic [postdoctoral position](#). It may happen that you will not find any direct matches to your research. If this should be the case, you should try to shift fields a bit. That is, try to take your field and find a similar one where you apply the same sorts of skills. For example, a scientist whose research consists of a lot of computer simulation can take those skills and apply them to the simulation of many other systems. You may need to go farther and learn new skills to land the job; it is just a matter of doing what is needed.

If you are brought into an interview, it will be a many-part process. It is usually a completely casual process, yes, but despite that, you should be on your best game and demonstrate your skills where appropriate. Interviewed individuals will usually give a presentation instead of simply sitting down for a standard interview. This presentation will discuss research that was a part of your dissertation, and the presentation is really the key part of the interview. Here you will demonstrate your capacity for research, answering questions given by the interviewers as they pertain to your research. Your presentation should be streamlined, of course, for the time frame you are given, making sure that you are able to field questions still finish on time.

If you are shifting your focus to better approach the market for postdoctoral jobs, this presentation is a chance to demonstrate a handle on topics other than your primary research area, including your skills and how they will benefit the institution to which you are applying. It is important to ensure that you present yourself professionally and as an individual who will contribute meaningful research.

The process of getting a [postdoctoral fellowship position](#) is a simple one, not unlike any other job search. It is important to have a network of colleagues from which you can obtain



Postdoctoral Fellow Feature

references and potentially job opportunities. You should create a resume and curriculum vitae, the former being short and tailored to the job for which you are applying. The curriculum vitae will contain your detailed history. You should be prepared

to shift your career interest if need be in order to find a job. Then it is simply a matter of landing the interview, and if all goes well, you will surely find yourself a postdoctoral position.

EmploymentCrossing is the largest collection of active jobs in the world.

We continuously monitor the hiring needs of more than 250,000 employers, including virtually every corporation and organization in the United States. We do not charge employers to post their jobs and we aggressively contact and investigate thousands of employers each day to learn of new positions. No one works harder than EmploymentCrossing.

Let EmploymentCrossing go to work for you.