

RECOMMENDED CAREER BOOKS

JOB SEARCH

The Unwritten Rules of the Highly Effective Job Search

Orville Pierson

New York, NY: McGraw-Hill 2006

A systematic, step-by-step, project management approach to the job search process that has been developed and used by professional job search consultants. It includes comprehensive help in all phases of the search beginning with preparation and planning, getting moving, tracking progress and adjusting the plan, through interviewing and starting the new job.

Resumes that Knock 'em Dead

Martin Yate

Avon, Massachusetts: Adams Media Corporation 1993

Everything you need to know to create an effective resume.

Sweaty Palms: the Neglected Art of Being Interviewed

H. Anthony Medley

Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press 1993

In addition to standard advice on preparation (page 17), table manners (page 90), and appropriate dress (page 132) Appendix A contains three lists of commonly asked interview questions. Using these in mock interviews should help you prepare and reduce the likelihood that you'll be caught off-guard in an actual interview.

The Professor Is In

Karen Kelsky

New York: Three Rivers Press 2015

This is an instructional manual that explains the intricacies of the academic job search and gives no nonsense advice on how to put together a competitive application. Written by a former professor who runs a consulting service to help academics navigate the job search, it covers everything from instruction on how to put together job documents to what to wear for the interview.

The Academic Job Search Handbook

Mary Morris Heiberger and Julia Miller Vick

Philadelphia, PA: University Of Pennsylvania Press 2001

This is a comprehensive resource which starts with information on the structure of academic careers, the hiring process, and planning your job search. It deals extensively with vitae including a discerning gem of advice to tailor your vita to each position for which you apply. There are also chapters on interviewing, accepting/rejecting job offers, and additional guidance for special situations such as dual career couples, foreign nationals, etc.

Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement

Roger Fisher, William Ury, and Bruce Patton

Boston: Houghton-Mifflin 1991

A straightforward strategy for negotiating personal and professional issues. Special attention should be paid to the concept of developing options which provide gain for both parties.

NETWORKING

Networking for people who hate networking: a field guide for introverts, the overwhelmed, and the underconnected

Devora Zack

San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers

Most books assume that you have to become an outgoing, extraverted person to succeed in networking. Use the practical ideas in this book to be true to yourself while developing a valuable professional network.

Self-promotion for introverts: the quiet guide to getting ahead

Nancy Ancowitz

New York, NY: McGraw Hill 2010

You don't have to change your personality. Filled with practical tips on how to use your natural strengths and dispositions to advance your job search and continuing professional development in genuine and effective ways. Increasing quality, not just quantity.

CAREER EXPLORATION

Next Gen PhD: A Guide to Career Paths in Science

Melanie V. Sinche

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016

Written by a bona fide expert on careers for PhDs, this book walks through the career development process step-by-step. It addresses identifying your personal strengths and characteristics, exploring the array of career options, completing the application materials, preparing for the interview, and tactics for negotiating. It's peppered with results of a national survey of PhD scientists conducted by the author.

Put Your Science to Work: The Take-Charge Career Guide for Scientists

Peter S. Fiske, Ph.D.

Washington, D.C.: American Geophysical Union 2001

Roughly the equivalent of "What Color is Your Parachute" for scientists. This is also a very practical guide on career planning starting with the process of self-assessment. The chapters on CVs and resumes are thorough and helpful.

What Color is Your Parachute?

Richard Nelson Bolles

Berkeley: Ten Speed Press, 2002

This book is billed as the bestselling job-hunting book in the world. Although not directed specifically toward scientists, it provides practical advice on analyzing your own strengths, interests, and goals. The author coined the phrase "informational interviewing" to describe a process for gathering information on career opportunities. Tips on interviewing should prove useful, as well.

Guide to Nontraditional Careers in Science

Karen Young Kreeger

Philadelphia: Taylor and Francis 1999

This book was written for the purpose of stimulating graduate students and postdoctoral fellows to consider careers outside of academia.

Alternative Careers in Science: Leaving the Ivory Tower

Cynthia Robbins-Roth

San Diego: Academic Press 1993

This is a multi-authored text, providing a perspective on 22 nonacademic career tracks. Although the term alternative careers is a misnomer, the descriptions of these career possibilities along with the attendant qualifications and expectations is very useful.

A Ph.D. Is Not Enough

Peter J. Feibelman

Cambridge, MA: Perseus Books 1993

Brief book with good, realistic advice for young scientists. One of the best gems is the idea of getting mentors besides your Ph.D. advisor.

Outside the Ivory Tower

Margaret Newhouse, Ph.D.

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University 1993

Deciding on a career path requires understanding yourself and the characteristics of a job that are most important to you. The author of this book provides some valuable and creative exercises for self-assessment. Other useful sections are guidelines for informational interviewing and how to organize your job search.

Career Renewal: Tools for Scientists and Technical Professionals

Stephen Rosen and Celia Paul

San Diego: Academic Press 1998

This book is directed toward scientists making a midcareer transition. Nevertheless, the information provides a much needed perspective for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows on actively planning one's career.

INDUSTRY CAREERS

Career Opportunities in Biotechnology and Drug Development

Toby Freedman

Cold Spring Harbor, NY: Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press 2008

This is a valuable compendium of information regarding careers for life scientists in Pharma or biotech. Explanations of job requirements, essential skills, and day to day responsibilities were distilled from interviews with hundreds of key players in industry. Although not an easy read because of its encyclopedic detail, this book is an essential reference.

The Medical Science Liaison: An A to Z Guide

Erin Albert

Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse 2007

What is a medical science liaison (MSL) and what do they do? This book is a comprehensive guide to the function of MSLs. Perhaps the most valuable information is the list of MSL meetings contained in Table 1 which provide opportunities for trainees to get in-depth information about this career path.

Careers with the Pharmaceutical Industry

Peter D. Stonier

West Sussex, England: Wiley and Sons, 2003

Although this book has a decidedly British perspective, this book is worth perusing to examine the breadth of positions available in the pharmaceutical industry.

Understanding Pharma: A Primer on How Pharmaceutical Companies Really Work

John. J. Campbell

Raleigh, NC: Pharmaceutical Institute 2008

The title tells exactly what this book is about - how pharmaceutical companies work - from definition and classification of drugs to drug discovery to business development and manufacturing. This is the view from 10,000 feet which provides some insight into the complexities of the environment in which pharmaceutical scientists function.

Career Opportunities in Clinical Drug Research

Rebecca J. Anderson

Cold Spring Harbor, NY: Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press 2010

This book sets the stage for discussing clinical research careers by providing an overview of the clinical evaluation process for drugs and medical devices. It then dedicates separate chapters to a number of jobs within that framework such as study coordinator, clinical quality assurance, etc. Each chapter outlines responsibilities of the position, describes a typical day, and provides tips for how to get your foot in the door including professional organizations that you should know about.

From Alchemy to IPO: The Business of Biotechnology

Cynthia Robbins-Roth

New York, NY: Basic Books 2000

This is an important resource for scientists interested in industry careers. It provides a historical perspective on the biotechnology industry combined with an insider's view of the business model. Appendix C highlights the websites that the savvy job searcher will want to be aware of.

ACADEMIC CAREERS

Academic Scientists at Work

Jeremy M. Boss and Susan H. Eckert

New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers 2003

This book provides advice on landing a position in academic research and how to get organized once you've started. The most valuable part of the book may be the Job Comparison Worksheets found in the appendices. These provide a great starting point to stimulate your thoughts about issues that should be the basis of comparison of different positions.

At the Bench: A Laboratory Navigator

Kathy Barker

Cold Spring Harbor, NY: Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press 1998

The first third of this book contains practical suggestions that are geared to the neophyte in the laboratory, but can also serve as valuable reminders to those who are planning their own laboratories. One chapter is devoted to oral and written presentations. The final two thirds of the book describes in detail how to carry out specific laboratory procedures.

At the Helm: A Laboratory Navigator

Kathy Barker

Cold Spring Harbor, NY: Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press 2002

Running a laboratory requires the use of skills which are not often emphasized in graduate or postdoctoral training. Time management, hiring and retaining lab personnel, development of lab policies, communication, and group dynamics are among the issues confronting new principal investigators. Although "perfect" solutions to these issues are not identified, the approaches used in a variety of laboratories are described.

How to Succeed in Academics

Linda L. McCabe and Edward R.B. McCabe

San Diego: Academic Press 2000

Blueprint for how to build an academic career. Tips are provided on successfully accomplishing common academic functions such as writing abstracts, papers, grant applications and making effective oral and poster presentations.

Academic Environment: A Handbook for Evaluating Employment Opportunities in Science

Karl W. Lanks

Washington, DC: Taylor and Francis 1996

Provides the results of a survey of faculty at U.S. medical schools and major universities which evaluated the institutions on their academic environment, personal and family life and productivity. The pooled results from the 50 top small colleges (page 51) provide an interesting comparison to the results from larger universities.

Winning the Games Scientists Play

Carl J. Sindermann

Cambridge, MA: Perseus Publishing 2001

Sindermann breaks down the scientist's work into its component tasks of writing, presenting, attending conferences, chairing sessions, participating in meetings, etc. Each of these tasks are considered games in which the rules are not always clear. The author provides suggestions for how to play the game which can be summed up in the dictum (p 154) "Whatever the game is, play it as a professional."

Tomorrow's Professor: Preparing for Academic Careers in Science and Engineering

Richard M. Reis

New York: Wiley Interscience 1997

This is a well-written book on how to prepare, compete, and succeed in an academic career. It provides some perspective with an overview of the modern academic enterprise. The author walks systematically through the stages of a scientific career including preparation, applying for positions, first years on the job, and achieving tenure.

Lab Dynamics: Management Skills for Scientists

Carl M. Cohen and Suzanne L. Cohen

Cold Spring Harbor, NY: Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press 2005

This is a useful book on a topic that needs more attention during graduate school and postdoctoral training. Its strong suit is personnel management, including advice on managing scientists, dealing with your boss, and working with peers. The book begins with the premise that effectively managing research teams requires an understanding of personality types including your own.

Getting Tenure

Marcia Lynn Whicker, Jennie Jacobs Kronenfeld, Ruth Ann Strickland

Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications 1993

For those pursuing academic careers, finding a job is the first step in a challenging process leading to tenure. This book explains the tenure process in detail and makes the case for the importance of planning ahead for gaining tenure. The chapter on the "Ten Commandments of Tenure Success" would be worthwhile reading for every new faculty member.

FUN READING

The Double Helix – A Personal Account of the Discovery of the Structure of DNA

James D. Watson

New York: Simon & Schuster, 1968

The fascinating story of the competition to identify the structure of DNA for which Watson, Crick, and Wilkins were awarded the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine in 1962. A compelling account that should be required reading for all biomedical scientists.

Billion-dollar Molecule – One Company's Quest for the Perfect Drug

Barry Werth

New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994

This book chronicles early efforts at rational drug design based on structural characterization of the drug target. An interesting subtext is the interaction between academic and pharmaceutical industry research.

Intuition

Allegra Goodman

New York: Dial Press, 2006

A New York Times bestselling novel that provides a sometimes too realistic portrayal of medical research and issues surrounding research integrity. It is also notable for having a postdoctoral fellow as the primary character.

Experimental Heart

Jennifer L. Rohn

Cold Spring Harbor, NY: Cold Spring Harbor Press, 2009

Another novel that uses the research laboratory as the setting and a postdoctoral fellow as the primary character. Although a little too much like a romance novel, it might be worth reading for the take-home message about relationships "because in the end, nothing else matters – not science, not success, not any of the modern obsessions that blind us to essentials."

The Honest Look

Jennifer L. Rohn

Cold Spring Harbor, NY: Cold Spring Harbor Press, 2010

The second lab-based novel by this author is set in the research laboratory of a small biotechnology startup. The plot is engaging and realistic - pitting potential profit against scientific integrity in the corporate world. The story has the added benefit of offering some insights into the drug discovery process in a biotech startup.

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Laks

Rebecca Skloot

New York, NY: Crown Books, 2010

This is the story of the HeLa cell line and the family of Henrietta Laks who contributed the eponymous cell line. The book is widely acclaimed, having won the Wellcome Trust

Book Prize and Heartland Prize as well as being a top pick of the year from the New York Times and Publishers Weekly,