1 Before the Job Search

- Publish. Probably the most important factor. Although a strong letter from your advisor can emphasize publications in the pipeline.
- Publish. See above.
- Network. At least the year before the job search, start networking at meetings. Don't be shy.
- Letters. Start lining up your letters of recommendation in the summer before you start the search. Post doc advisor, graduate advisor, collaborators, etc.

2 August - October

- Finding Jobs
  - Journals (Science,Nature,Cell) for the biological sciences
  - Networking
- Application Packet. Print and mail on nice paper. Keep track of where you have applied. For electronic submissions use PDFs. A good idea is to combine all PDFs (including publications) into a single large PDF. Nobody wants an email with 6 different attachments.
  - Cover Letter
    - Short and simple.
    - Position and department you are applying to
    - Brief 3 sentence description of research interests
    - List of enclosed materials
  - CV
    - Up to date
    - List all publications
    - No fancy Word templates.
  - Research Statement. You will most likely need several versions of this (1, 2-3 and $\leq$5 pages).
    - Overview
    - Background
    - Qualifications
    - Future Research Goals
  - Teaching Statement. Not sure of the importance of this. Never once asked about my teaching statement or philosophy.
  - Publications

3 October-January

- Wait. MIT interviewed their first candidate for Biology around Thanksgiving. This is *not* typical. My first call for an interview was in December, the majority of calls were in January, but I did receive some calls even in late February.
- Schedule Interviews
  - Schedule 2nd choice schools early (practice).
  - Try not to schedule more than 1 interview per week.
- Prepare Job Talk
  - Simplify. This will probably be the most general audience you have ever given a talk to. You need to make your science understandable, interesting and approachable. Don't get bogged down in the alphabet soup of your field. Present the big picture and significance so even the first year graduate students can ask good questions. Save the nitty gritty details for the questions or one on one conversations. Reserve the last few minutes of your talk for broad future research directions.
  - Practice. You should be able to nail this talk even in a drunken stupor.

4 January-April

- Interview. The interviews are typically two *long* days. 9A to 10P of being sharp and charismatic.
  - Talk. Be prepared for a wide range of rooms. Everything from class rooms to large auditoriums with audiences of varying sizes. Relax.
  - One on Ones. You will have many mini-interviews with the faculty. Focus on their research and ask questions. At first, I really prepared and tried to read everything for everybody. This was a waste of time. Have a general idea of each faculty member's field, but don't necessarily read their last 5 papers. Usually, they will talk about something new that is not published. Also, I was much more relaxed and confident if I could ask big picture questions about their work as they explained it.
  - Lunch with students. Have fun. A good rapport with students won't help a bad candidate, but a bad interaction with graduate students could hurt a good candidate.
  - Dinner. Relax, be yourself, and have a drink or two.
  - Chalk Talk
    - Future research plans. Find out in advance how the department typically structures a chalk talk. (chalk, powerpoint, overheads, etc). I found that most state research schools were interested in knowing about the specific aims of my first grant. How was I going to get funding? At top-tier schools,

it was a given that my research would be fundable. They were more interested in the big picture of my research. How will this work impact biology, and what I expect to be doing 5-10 years from now.

* Diplomacy. You will get questions. Some tougher than others. If someone is critical of your approach, thank them for their valuable input and try to jointly work out a solution . A dialog is essential. They really are tying to help, and I found the talk chalks a very useful process for vetting my ideas.

5 March-June

- Second Interviews. You are in the driver's seat. Find out everything you can about the department (treatment of junior faculty, tenure rate, etc). Ask to meet with people outside the department. People outside the department you are interviewing in will usually be candid with their opinion of your future department and chair. Talk in generalities about space, money etc. Find out how you will get students and which programs you will have access to. Have a list of large equipment (>$5K) – everything you *think* you might need in your own laboratory.

- Offers. Don't panic if you have a deadline on the offer. If you are serious and they are serious, they will extend the offer. It is not fair though to keep a school on the line if you have a better offer and they are no longer under serious consideration.

- Negotiating. Almost everything is negotiable. However, there is a difference between negotiating and pitting two-departments in a bidding war. Finally, remember that some schools simply may not have the budget required to do science at the level you envision. Depending on other factors such as colleagues, students etc, you may have some very hard choices to make.