Putting Your Science to Work

A workshop for graduate students and post-docs in all fields of science.

Presenter: Dr. Peter S. Fiske

Peter S. Fiske, Ph.D., is author of "To Boldly Go: A Practical Career Guide for Scientists" and its second edition: "Put Your Science to Work: A Take-Charge Career Guide for Scientists" both published by AGU. From 1997 to 2000 he was the co-author of the biweekly column Tooling Up on AAAS's Career website NextWave (www.nextwave.com) and is presently writing a monthly column on career development and entrepreneurship called Opportunities on the AAAS career website ScienceCareers.org. He has organized and lead panel discussions and workshops on alternative careers and career development for scientists at national and international meetings, universities, and national laboratories. He has been featured on NPR's Talk of the Nation - Science Friday.

Fiske received his Ph.D. in Geological and Environmental Sciences 1994 from Stanford University and an MBA from U.C. Berkeley in 2002. In 1996 Fiske was awarded a White House Fellowship and served one year in the Clinton Administration as Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Special Projects. Fiske is the author of 22 technical articles, a former member of the technical staff of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, and currently Chief Executive Officer of PAX Mixer Inc. in San Rafael, CA.

Description of the workshop

Young scientists in nearly every field are finding today's job market a confusing and frustrating place. More new Ph.D.s, post-docs and Master's degree holders are considering a wider range of careers in and out of science, but feel ill-prepared and uninformed about their options. Some feel their Ph.D. training has led them to a dead-end.

In this workshop I present a thorough and practical overview to the process of career planning and job hunting in today's job market, from the perspective of a young scientist. I cover specific steps that young scientists can take to broaden their horizons, strengthen their skills, and present their best face to potential employers. An important part of this is the realization that most young scientists possess a range of valuable "transferable skills" that are highly sought after by employers in and out of science. I also cover all the specifics of job hunting, including informational interviewing, building your network, developing a compelling CV and resume, cover letters,
interviewing, and more. With each topic I discuss the particular challenges and opportunities faced by those with an advanced degree in science. My workshop is up-beat in tone and positive in outlook.

I have presented versions of this workshop to over 10,000 scientists and engineers in universities (Harvard, MIT, Berkeley, Stanford, UNC-Chapel Hill, University of Michigan, Scripps, U.C.L.A., Cambridge and others...), government laboratories, and at national and international scientific meetings. Course evaluations and testimonials are available on request.

Workshop includes a 35-page handout for each participant.

The workshop works best with between 100 and 300 students and is suitable for graduate students and post-docs in all areas of science and engineering.