The job hunt

Some tips from those who walked the path

Caltech Career Summit
April 23rd, 2011
Ralph’s background
The job hunt journey
Life after Tech – the stack

- **Myself**: What do I like to do?
- **Job**: Where can I do more of it?
- **Pitch**: How to stand out from the crowd
- **Interview**: Tips and strategies
- **Negotiation**: How can I optimize my career
- **Choice**: Is this really what I want?

Two key assets: People & Information
Getting to know people is easy!

- Friends, Family, Professors, TAs
- Internships/Volunteering
- Conferences/professional societies
- You know me. I know people.
- You “know” alumni all over the world
- LinkedIn or other online sites
- Use informationals
Gathering information is easy!

- The power of informationals
  - What is it?
  - How do you do one?
  - People like to share their experience and appreciate initiative
- Web is your friend
- Company websites
- LinkedIn, Hoovers, Crunchbase, Startuply
- Employee and HR blogs
Myself: *What do I like to do?*

- What did I have fun doing:
  - Hobbies (things that are really fun for you).
  - Projects
- What am I good at:
  - Skills (things that you find easier and do better than most people).
  - Ask those that know you – friends, teachers, parents.
Job: Where can I do more of that?

• Where might this job exist
  – Search the web (blogs, interviews, news), Ask us.
  – Look at companies and competition
  – Not just companies – think tanks, universities…
  – Remember – gathering information is easy!

• Who is hiring
  – Talk to people
    • Seniors who graduated
    • Professors, Grad students
    • LinkedIn profiles
  – Specialized job sites are often the best
Pitch: *How can I stand out from the crowd*

• How can I get to this hiring manager
  – Your best bet is via your network or alumni
  – It is super easy to learn about people and teams online these days
  – It’s hard for companies!

• How can I stand out from the crowd
  – You are unique and have skills that very few people have
  – Be creative and get noticed
  – 1 page resume rule? No rules – more like guidelines
Interview: *Tips and strategies*

**Before**
- Ask to learn who you are meeting
- Learn about the interview style & culture
- Alumni who work in the field are a great resource
- Research the job and field

**During**
- Steer the conversation towards your skills
- Ask questions – see it as a two-way interview
- It is quite possible you are smarter than the interviewer

**Practice by doing mock interviews**
Negotiation: *How can I optimize my career*

• Am I starting off on the right foot
  – Taking your time to decide is OK
  – Get help on the details of the job offer
  – Everything is on the table

• Where would I want to go next
  – What is the logical next step if you took this job? (career trajectory)
  – Talk to those who went ahead of you
  – The hiring team is a great resource too!

• Again – ask for help…talk to people 😊
Choice: *Is this really what I want?*

- Out of my options – which one is best for me
  - What is your gut feel?
  - Did you enjoy interacting with the team? the manager?
  - No single “right” answer, but position where you can learn/contribute the most often pays off

- What is my “exit strategy”
  - What can I do if I don’t like this after all
  - Change is easy and common!
  - Look at those that went ahead of you
Parting thoughts

• You are different – and that’s a good thing
• You are (often) smarter than you think
• Feeling nervous or uncertain ok. Hiring managers probably are too.
• Talk to people
• Have fun!
APPENDIX
Typical job search process

• Submit cover letter and resume

You +everyone else
Typical job search process

- Submit cover letter and resume
- HR filters and sends to hiring manager
Typical job search process

• Submit cover letter and resume
• HR filters and sends to hiring manager
• Hiring manager filters and invites selected candidates for interview
Typical job search process

- Submit cover letter and resume
- HR filters and sends to hiring manager
- Hiring manager filters and invites selected candidates for interview
- Interview, ranking
- Offer

You’re Hired!
Ideal job search process

• Meet people (pre-interview)
• HR filters and sends to hiring manager
• Hiring manager filters and invites selected candidates for interview
• Submit cover letter and resume
• Interview, offer