

To do:
All the things

Lessons Learned

Meghan Darling White, Ph.D., CCC-SLP
Postdoctoral Trainee
Waisman Center
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Looking for a Postdoc

- o What is your programmatic line of research?
- o What skills do you need to be successful?
- o Do your research interests complement your mentor's interests?
- o How will you be funded?
 - o T32 vs. F32 vs. mentor funding
- o What type of department will you be in?
- o Will you have a cohort of other postdocs?

Insights from the Job Market

- Everything takes longer than you think it will
 - Budget your time accordingly
- Meet with search committee members at ASHA
 - What is the department really looking for?
- Practice “selling” yourself
- Demystify the dreaded academic interview

Making the Most of It



Enter the job market

Making the Most of It

- o Develop a plan as soon as possible
 - o Research Development
 - o Professional Development
 - o Grant Development

Research Development

- o Identify the skills that you'd like to acquire and make a plan to acquire them
- o Choose postdoc projects carefully
 - o ALWAYS think about your programmatic line of research
 - o Identify projects using your mentor's existing data set
 - o Start planning your independent project immediately
 - o Think about how each project will set you up for future projects

Professional Development

- Transition out of “student” mode
- Learn about mentoring graduate students
 - What kind of mentor do you want to be?
- Attend as many job talks as possible
- Observe different teaching styles
- Network
 - If you are presented with an opportunity to meet someone new, take it!

Grant Development

- o START EARLY!
 - o Projected deadline August 2014
 - o Started the process in September 2013
- o Develop your general grant concept
 - o Outline your specific aims
- o Which grant mechanism is most appropriate?
 - o F32 vs. K99/R00 vs. R03
 - o Speak to former postdocs
 - o Speak to your program officer

Grant Development

- o How will you convince the grant reviewers that you are qualified to complete the proposed project?
 - o Publications
 - o Research experience
 - o Consultants/Mentors
- o Do you need pilot data?
 - o Create a reasonable time line
 - o Factor in time to get IRB approval

Grant Development

- Get feedback early and often
 - Ask colleagues outside your area
 - Give them plenty of time
- Meet with a university grants specialist
 - Learn about the submission system
 - How early do they need the grant?
- Be flexible
- Plan for the waiting period

Final Thoughts

- o Be open to the possibilities
- o Get a life!
- o Don't be so hard on yourself
- o Make the most of it