

# Survival Skills Workshop for Postdocs: Packaging Your PhD to Find a Job

Ka Yee C. Lee  
*Department of Chemistry*  
*University of Chicago*

Argonne National Laboratory  
Argonne, Illinois  
November 15, 2005

## What's Next?

- Academia?  
Industry?  
Others?
- Geographical constraints?
- Understanding the recruitment cycle
- Researching your future employers
- Contact?

# A Convoluted Career Path

- Sc.B. **Electrical Engineering**, Brown University, 1986  
Lorentz instability in ring-laser systems
- M.S. **Applied Physics**, Harvard University, 1987, 1992
- Ph.D. Fourier transform heterodyne spectroscopy at interfaces
- Postdoc I **Chemistry**, Stanford University, 1992-1995  
Lipid/Cholesterol mixtures: Theory and experiments
- Postdoc II **Chemical Engineering**, UC Santa Barbara, 1995-1998  
Mechanisms of lung surfactant functioning
- Faculty **Chemistry**, The University of Chicago, 1998-present  
**Biophysical Chemistry**

# Your Package

Goal                    **get on the short list**

What are they looking for?

- Cover Letter
- CV (Productivity? Promise?)
- Research Statement (Direction? Creativity?)
- Teaching Statement (Effective? Committed?)
- Startup Needs (Reasonable?)

## One Size Fits All?

- Cater to the institution you apply to  
liberal arts college vs large research university
- Scope of research
- Teaching philosophy
- Startup needs

Your package needs to demonstrate that you have given serious thoughts on the particular position to which you are applying.

# Letters of Recommendation

- People who know you well and will make the time to write a good letter for you.
- Contact early
- Provide your package and useful information
- Gentle reminders
- It's your job to make sure that all letters get in!

# Interviewing

- Research the department: be prepared and knowledgeable
- Engaged in discussions - positive interactions
- Dealing with inappropriate questions
- Research talk
- Chalk talk
- Interview continues over dinner and drinks!
- Thank you email to host

## Generating More Interviews

Follow-up with other institutions



# Negotiations

- Summer Salary
- Student/Postdoc Support
- Space renovation
- Teaching loads/keeping the same course
- Special arrangements for 1st and tenure year
- Startup
- Relocation
- Other offers?
- Spousal issues?
- Everything in writing