

Job Seeking Information and Career Information Sessions RCH 2008

(1) PREPARING LETTERS, CVS AND INTERVIEWS

GENERAL HINTS

1. Attend any workshops, meetings and information sessions that are intended to help you prepare for job seeking; avoid the last minute rush just before the applications are due! Watch for RCH dates March - June.
2. Allow 3-4 weeks to prepare a comprehensive application including giving referees plenty of time to write a reference for you.
3. Make appointments with one of the Directors of Physician Training at RCH (Dr Margot Nash, Dr Mike Starr or Dr Sue Piper at MMC), with your Mentor, the Chief Resident, or a representative from, for example, the RACGP, to discuss your plans for entry into a training program. Read all that's available before seeing people.

HINTS FOR WRITING A LETTER, CV & SEEKING A JOB

In all of the following three stages, look at it from the employer's / interviewer's viewpoint, be relevant and be positive:

1. Preparatory legwork
2. Letter / Application / CV
3. Interview

Cover letter

Always write to a specific individual (not Personnel Officer or Sir/Madam), and spell name correctly! Use simple, clear sentences. Present the information without trying too hard to impress. A short clear letter is better than a long fancy one. Be correct in spelling and grammar. Keep copies of everything you send, and follow up as you said you would. Follow instructions, use the right application method and meet the deadline, otherwise you will appear sloppy and, possibly, arrogant. Get someone else to read your letter.

If 'cold-calling'

Try to use networking sources to introduce yourself in the opening paragraph of your letter. Make the letter short and specific – what do you want? Get information about job from other sources before approaching decision makers. Write each cover letter separately – avoid risk of letting wrong details being included.

CURRICULUM VITAE

General Hints

- No more than 2 pages, standard A4 size, no fancy graphics or coloured paper, use quality white paper. Easy to read and navigate, with bold headings, good sized margins and adequate spacings. No fancy fonts or complexities. Correct spelling, and dates, consistent tenses!
- Make it easy to read so they don't miss anything when they skim it.
- Perhaps list special points briefly in cover letter.
- Keep out irrelevant information – this changes with time and your CV will need regular updating. Especially make it relevant to a particular post.

Specific Hints

- *First personal details:* name, contact address, telephone, fax number, and email. You must ensure you do get messages sent to these numbers. Maybe include DOB, marital status, nationality and residency status – consider this.
- *Education:* Brief details with dates and qualifications from the beginning of secondary education onwards. No details of degree if local one, otherwise some information. Include prizes, honours etc.
- *Employment:* Begin with the current or most recent (I personally don't like this but it is the standard). Detail briefly what you've done since medical school. Don't leave gaps – include long holidays as eg "personal leave." Leaving a gap invites speculation that you're hiding something. Don't give unnecessary details if you are listing standard jobs well-known to your potential employer – use your judgement on this and maybe indicate skills and knowledge gained (if non-standard work). Maybe separately list non-medical work experience, including voluntary. Maybe include procedures you are competent in, experience in teaching, management and research and audit (if non-standard).

- *Extra bits:* Courses you have done (relevant ones), papers, conferences, workshops etc; languages spoken, other bits, perhaps extra curricular activities. Positions of responsibility – official or unofficial organisational roles.
- *Referees:* Choose strategically. Include all methods of contact (Fax and email as well as phone and address). Ask permission to use referees, and keep referees informed as necessary.
- *Maybe:* Driving licence, computer skills.
- *Activities & Interests* – hobbies, athletic achievements etc. Remember you may be asked to talk about them at interview. Personally I would leave this out unless exceptional (Olympic athlete, have written novel) or showing relevant points (eg leadership, organisation, critical thinking, teamwork, self management, initiative etc).
- *Finally:* Keep records of other bits that might be relevant sometimes – workshops attended, presentations given, courses done etc.
- Look back – do your strengths stand out? Is it easy to get a clear picture of your qualifications? Is it clear, brief, accurate? Get someone else to read it.

INTERVIEW

- Don't be late / untidy / casual. Be relevant. Be enthusiastic.
- Do your homework and show you've done your homework.
- Be confident but not cocky. Avoid exaggerating.
- It is your responsibility to ensure that your strong points come up and are clear. Assume they have not read your application and CV with infinite attention. Point out the reason they should have you rather than someone else. Think what the job involves and ask yourself "What would I be looking for? What personal qualities, skills and abilities does the job require? Do I possess these qualities? How can I show that I have these?" Illustrate by example if you can.
- Know your weaknesses, but don't be negative and don't put yourself down.
- Ask sensible questions but not 'just to ask a question'.
- Have a practice interview or at least a discussion with someone who has experience of interviewing. Get experience as an interviewer if you can.

Dr Margot Nash, Director of Paediatric Physician Training

(2) RCH CAREER/JOB INFORMATION SESSIONS

Later in the first half of the year, there will be after-hours information sessions for JRMOs. These sessions will include:

- The RACP Paediatric training program
- The RCH/MMC SRMO jobs, application process for this year
- Discussion about the above advice from Margot Nash about how to apply for jobs.

Warning: if you want to train in paediatrics, consider applying at the same time for jobs in other states - the SRMO jobs here at RCH are very competitive positions.

In addition to these sessions for JRMOs, there are other career information sessions for RMOs about working part time, working overseas, coping with study and training, exams etc. Watch the RMO emails for information about these sessions.

In January each year there is usually a session about the Neonates jobs that SRMOs do at RWH and the Mercy Hospital.