

Entering the Job Market after the PhD

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Wolfgang Sofka
Copenhagen Business School

What would I know about the job market?



- ❑ Centre for European Economic Research (ZEW)
Mannheim, Germany
 - 2002
- ❑ University of Hamburg, Germany
 - 2004 – 2008
- ❑ Tilburg University, the Netherlands
 - 2009 – 2013
- ❑ Copenhagen Business School, Denmark
 - Since 2013

What I would have
liked to know then,
what I know now?

Disclaimer





What do you know about the job market?

Agenda

- ❑ What do universities want?
- ❑ Some ideas for what to do early in the PhD
- ❑ Some ideas for when you are close to the job market
- ❑ Some ideas before you sign a contract

Job Market – Waiting for Superwoman/man



What does the average university want?

- ❑ Top publications out of your PhD
 - Manage
 - Focus on the end of the pipeline
- ❑ Reliable teacher
 - Much more demanding in executive education
- ❑ Friendly colleague
 - Especially important in later rounds (fly-ins)
- ❑ No problems

What makes the average university tick on the job market?

☐ Risk

- Universities are risk-averse
- Tick all boxes

☐ Timing

- Hiring is quite synchronized in most places

☐ Resources

- Process is expensive
- Competition among departments
- Individuals

Some takeaways

Competition is not as excessive as you may think in a given year and a given specialization

It is a real market. You will experience your value.

Supermen and Superwomen are rare

Few universities can afford to wait for them



Some ideas for what to do early in the PhD

Setting yourself up – the obvious things

- ❑ Get publications!
 - First priority: Show that you can publish
 - Second priority: Show ambition
 - Highly ranked journals
 - R&Rs are worth pure gold, rejections have fewer consequences
- ❑ Get some teaching experience
 - Will make your life easier when you have to teach
 - But not too much
 - Have time for research
- ❑ Grant experience?
 - Cannot be reasonably expected from a PhD student
- ❑ Job experience?
 - Welcome to the ivory tower

The most important advice



Get personally connected with the academic community

- ❑ Meet every seminar speaker at your department personally for half an hour
 - Do not cherry pick
- ❑ Present at conferences
 - Engage with colleagues in your session
 - Be a discussant
 - Show interest in colleagues beyond their/your work
 - Cherish randomness
 - Do not become a groupie!
- ❑ If you have funds for a research visit, use them
 - Consider signaling value versus a place in which people will actually work with you
 - Present early in your visit

There is little downside

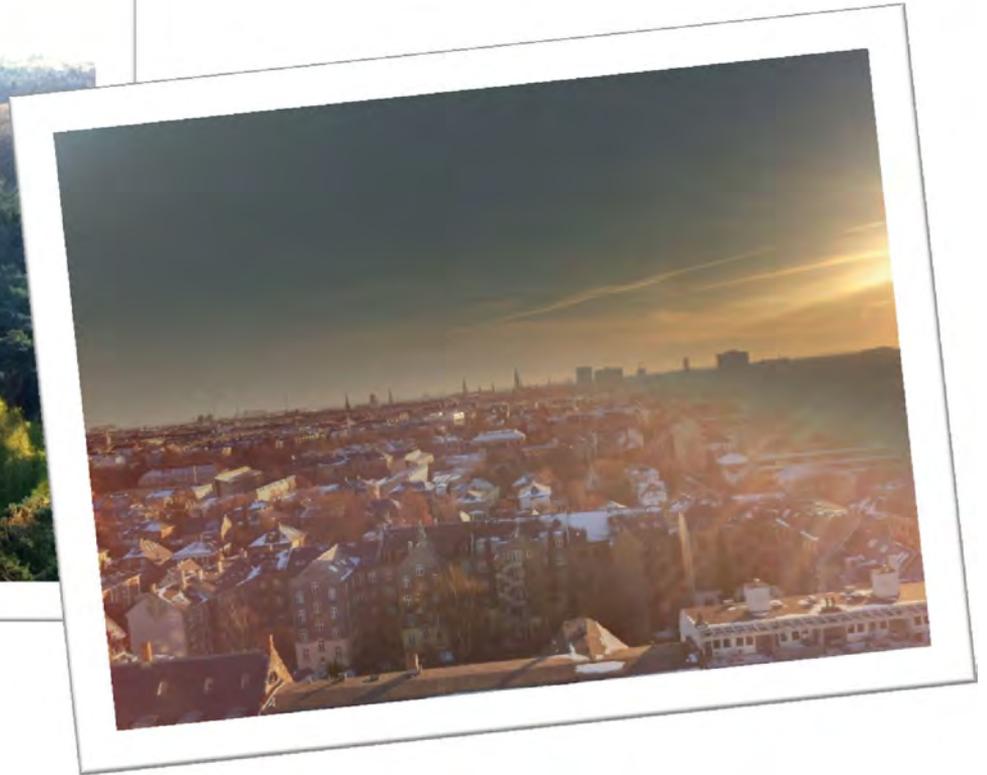
- ❑ Never underestimate how small the actual field is and that people talk
- ❑ What can you get from the personal link?
 - Job referrals
 - References
 - PhD committee members
 - Interviewers in job talks
 - Friendly reviewers
 - Seminar inviters
 - Editors
 - Introducers
 - Co-authors
 - Conference buddies
 - Buddies

The job can find you, not the other way around.

Experience what works for you



Where can you live (not just work)?

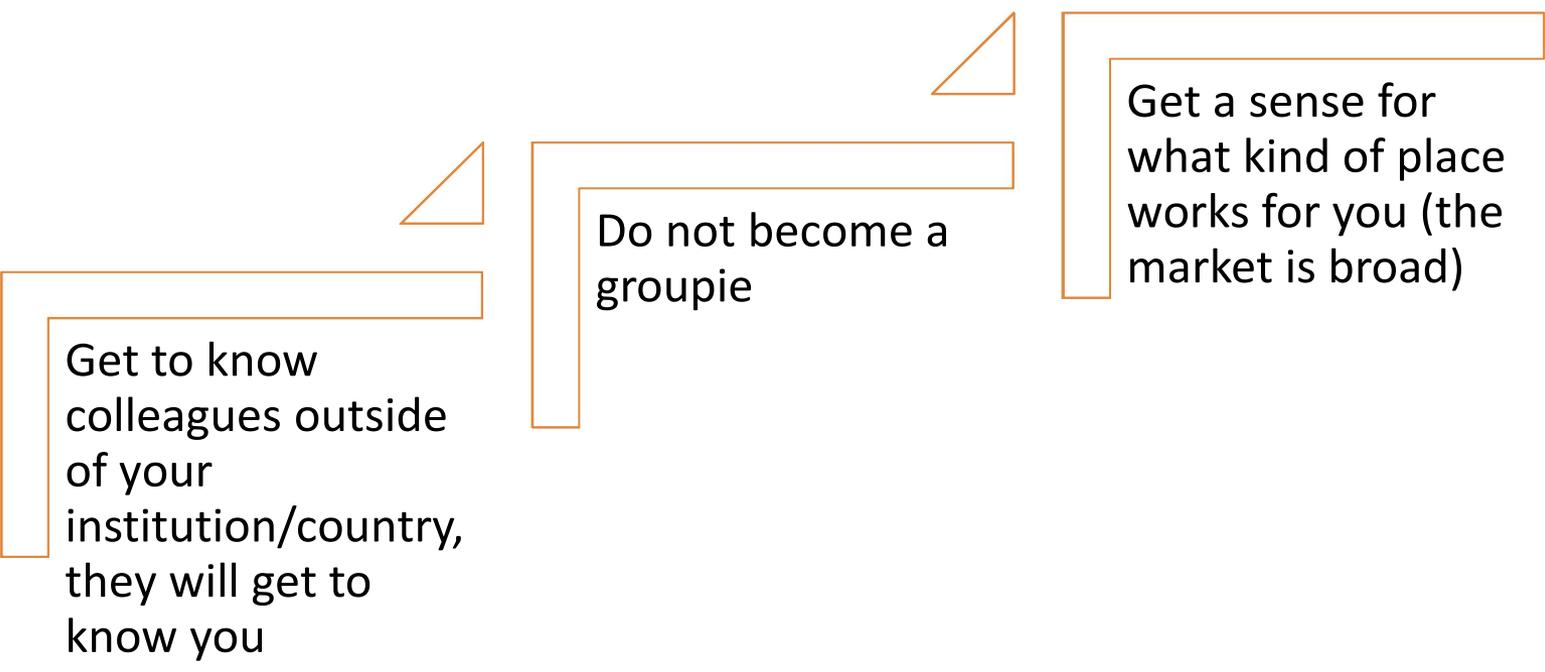


What makes you tick?

Journal of
Universal Rejection



Some takeaways for what to do during your PhD



Get to know colleagues outside of your institution/country, they will get to know you

Do not become a groupie

Get a sense for what kind of place works for you (the market is broad)

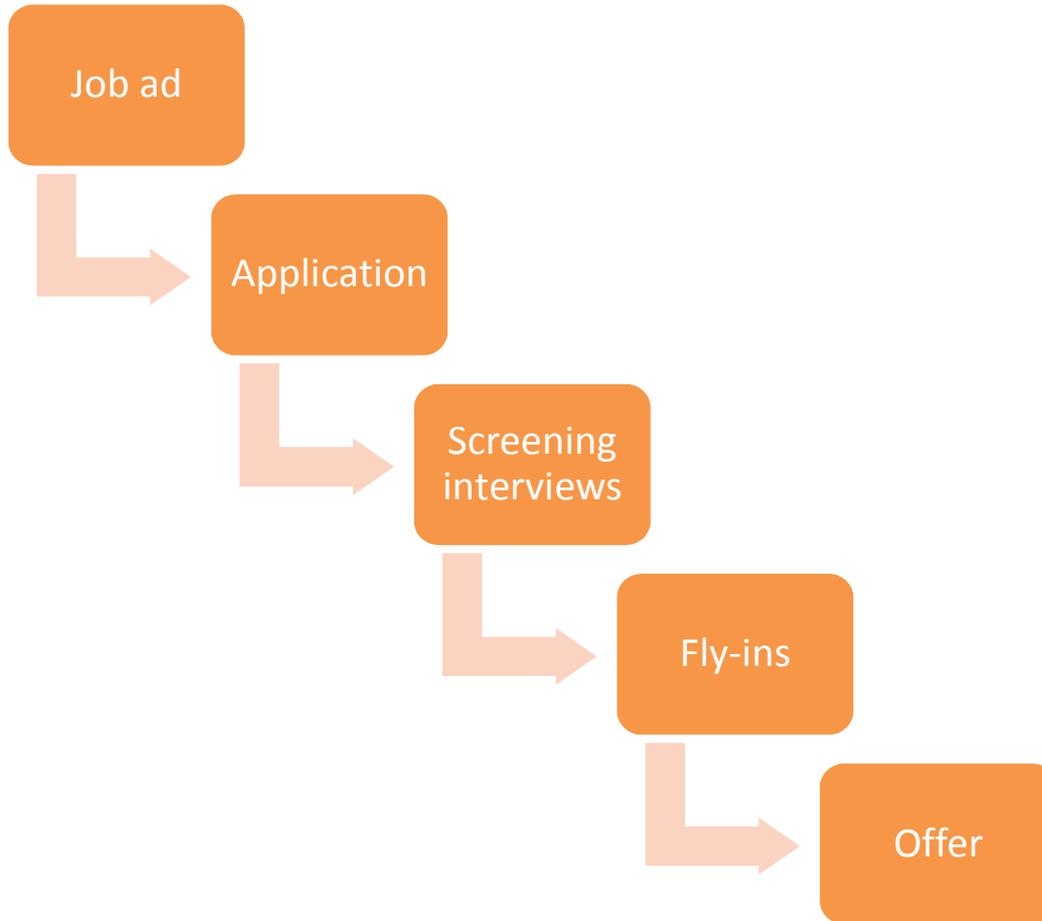


Some ideas for when you are close to the job market

Some easy pitfalls

- ❑ “Ah, it’s too late”
 - Many job offers appear at the same time
 - Largely timed by major conferences and one year ahead of start date
 - There are exceptions but fewer
- ❑ “What? You need a job market paper?”
 - Hopefully a particularly promising paper from your dissertation
 - You are the lead author
 - Focus your time and effort on this paper early
 - It will be read; your research will be judged based on it
- ❑ “I will just send something quickly. If it does not work out, it was not meant to be”
 - It’s a fairly predictable process. Why waste a chance?

An average process



Where are the jobs posted?

- ❑ Personnel contacts
- ❑ Academy of Management
 - Conference job market
 - Get on listservs
- ❑ Newsletters from domestic associations
- ❑ Academic job web sites
 - Akadeus, etc.

How many applications to send?

- ❑ Send to job offers for slightly related fields (Organizational Behavior)?
 - Waster of time
- ❑ Send to Top 30 US Business Schools?
 - Yes, if you have an A+ Journal publication
- ❑ Send to places where I would not like to live?
 - No
- ❑ Send to places where I could imagine to live?
 - Yes, have options
- ❑ Can I send even after the Academy of Management meeting is already over?
 - Yes, no problem if it is not excessively late.

Some thoughts on the application

- ❑ Think like a university
 - Mention awards (finalist), best paper proceedings, etc.
 - Mention teaching experience
 - Remind them of impact factors
 - Show ambition and planning in your research: Target journals
- ❑ Reference letters
 - Nice eye catchers, typically not more
 - A personal call carries much more weight
- ❑ Personalize the letter
 - Why do you fit with this place?

Screening interviews

- ❑ Do they have to be at the Academy meeting?
 - No, it's a conveyer belt.
 - Get organized
 - Before and after each interview
- ❑ Be prepared
 - Know how is interviewing
 - Your research in one or three minutes
 - Not too long, not too short
 - Know your strength and have a plan for your weaknesses
 - Reasons for this schools
 - With whom could you work?
 - Why would you fit?
 - Have questions
- ❑ Get what you need to know
 - Teaching, tenure, committee load, conference and research budgets
 - Do not talk salary
- ❑ Train
 - Screening interviews with schools where you do not want to go desperately can help

Fly-in

- ❑ First commitment
 - You are qualified!
 - Likability gets you the job
 - Do not do it via Skype!
- ❑ Be prepared!
 - Know the place, its people and research
 - Know your own stuff
 - Handling questions in the seminar is crucial
- ❑ Interview them (especially other Ass. Profs)
 - Do they work together (and co-author)?
 - How often do they come to the office?
 - Do they have lunch together?
 - What do they say about teaching?
 - Do they go to conferences?
 - Do they live in the place or far away?
 - Is there any support for integration (language, etc.)?

Some examples that raise eyebrows

- ❑ “How is living in Amsterdam?”
 - Not even close to the school.
- ❑ “Are there opportunities for outside teaching?”
 - Awkward at the entry level.
- ❑ “I am desperate to work with you.”
 - Really?
- ❑ Not a single question on living, language, people.
 - Will never come.
- ❑ “I want to take courses on ...”
 - The job is not another PhD training.
- ❑ “Been there, done that.”
 - Can feel arrogant at the entry level.



Some takeaways for what to do when you are close to the job market





Some ideas before you sign a contract

Should you do a post-doc? A checklist

- ❑ Do you have other opportunities?
 - No, then do it.
- ❑ Do you have a similar opportunity as Assistant Professor?
 - Take the title.
- ❑ Is the post-doc longer than one year?
 - Otherwise you are back on the job market right away.
- ❑ Is there moving involved?
 - Do not underestimate the disruption of moving and organizing.
- ❑ Will you have a better candidate profile after the post-doc?
 - Publications, references, data
- ❑ Will you have time for research during your post-doc?
 - Other responsibilities

How to evaluate a job offer?

- ❑ Have more than one offer
 - Easiest way to negotiate
- ❑ Evaluate the trade offs
 - Research time versus teaching
 - Tenure requirements
 - Contract length
 - Collegial environment
 - Place to live
- ❑ Show it to a trusted, senior colleague

Some things which are easily forgotten

- ❑ Do not compare gross salary
 - It is not uncommon to ask for a calculation of net salary
 - Insurance and pension contribution can be mandatory
 - Price levels differ vastly
- ❑ Get a clear picture on the teaching
 - Are the courses in place or will you start from scratch?
 - Can you draw from existing teaching experience?
 - Are you going to teach a whole course or parts of it?
 - Can you repeat the courses?
 - What about thesis supervision?
- ❑ Administrative work
 - Are you expected to be on administrative committees?
 - Are you expected to apply and work for grant projects?

Some questions which may come up

- ❑ Can you negotiate on salary?
 - Typically in a limited way
 - Have good reasons, e.g. cost of living
 - It is typically easier to negotiate on research budgets or one-time payments
 - Maybe offer a grant application for which you have good chances like Marie Curie and tie it to an increase
- ❑ Can you ask for more time if you want to wait for another school?
 - Yes, but not too long
 - Let the other school know
- ❑ Can I negotiate the teaching load?
 - Typically hard, but temporary solutions (first semester/year) are not uncommon
- ❑ What if I make the wrong choice?
 - You are not chained to the job/place. There is always another job market

Things that you may want to think about when you are negotiating

- ❑ Consider the move
 - Costs for house search, transport, flights, etc.
 - Expat agency for bureaucracy, school search, health system, utilities, etc., especially if you do not speak the language.
- ❑ Consider who is moving with you
 - This shows your commitment to the new job
 - Professional integration services for your significant other (do not rely on unspecific generalities)
 - PhD or MBA position
 - Language classes

Some takeaways for what to do when you are close to signing a contract



More Questions and Comments