

# *Demystifying the Interview Process*

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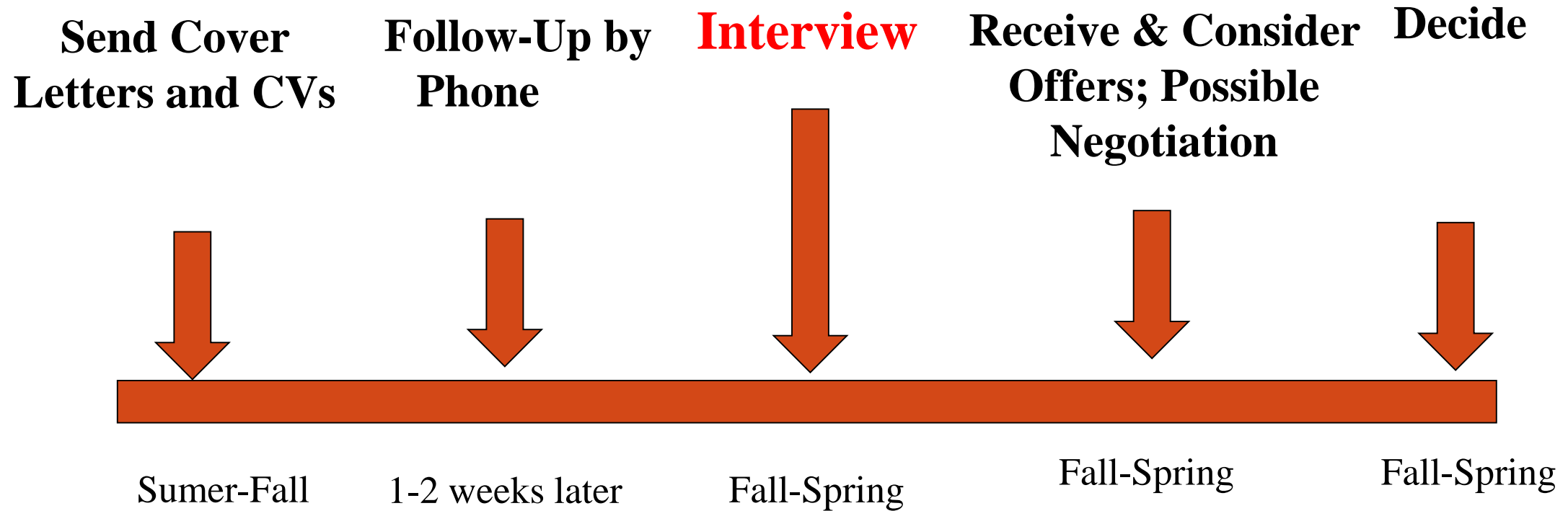
**Stanford**  
Children's Health



**STANFORD**  
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

*Stanford University Medical Center*

# Proposed Timeline For Last Year of Fellowship



# Before the interview....

- Preparation for life after fellowship should start during fellowship
  - Discuss with your PD what activities will make you stand out as an applicant for your preferred path
    - Try to network and increase your visibility outside your division (hospital committees) and outside your institution (ie PIDS committees)
  - PIDS resource: Fellow's Survival Guide: developed by Rana El Feghaly, Lori Kestenbaum, Alison Tribble
    - <https://www.pids.org/education-and-training/resources-for-fellows/fellows-survival-guide.html>
- When you are geographically restricted, how to apply for jobs
  - Blanket area with your CV/cover letter
  - Contact Division Chiefs and discuss present and future opportunities or other opportunities in the area
    - Consider satellite institutions
  - Have your PD and faculty reach out on your behalf especially if they know someone



# Scheduling Interviews

- You may be able to request
- The sooner the better
- Try to cluster interviews because the timing of interviews at some places may overlap with offers from other places

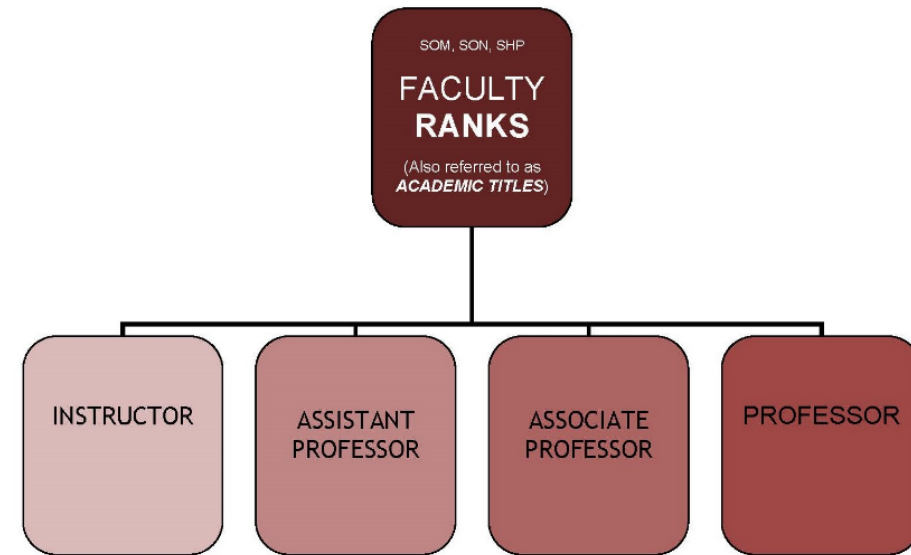


# Preparation

Success is where preparation meets opportunity.....Zig Ziglar

By failing to prepare you are preparing to fail.....Benjamin Franklin

# Academic Positions



- Know the different academic tracks at the institution (usually on the academic affairs webpage)
- Learn what is required to advance in the given track (often on the Appointments and Promotions Committee website)
  - Regional vs national reputation
  - Requirement for scholarship/publications

# An example of a Professoriate

- At most academic institutions there are faculty who engage in scholarship, clinical care, and teaching and the primary focus of their effort usually dictates their faculty line.
- The Professoriate Faculty at Stanford are composed of 4 distinct lines:
  - University Tenure Line
    - Scholarship and teaching (and in some cases, clinical care activities) are the critical components of faculty appointments in the University Tenure Line (UTL). Under normal circumstances, the proportion of time and effort dedicated to scholarship and teaching will be more than that devoted to clinical care.
  - Medical Center Line
    - The role of a Medical Center Line (MCL) faculty member is defined by engagement in clinical care, teaching, and scholarly activity that advances clinical medicine.
  - Non-Tenure Line – Research
    - The Non-Tenure Line (Research), also known as the Research Line, is used for special programmatic needs that are not fulfilled by faculty in these other lines. Appointments are made coterminous with continued salary or other support from sponsored projects.
  - Non-Tenure Line – Teaching
    - Faculty appointed in the Teaching Line generally have special expertise in teaching, broadly defined, that meets a specific departmental programmatic need. Typically, such special expertise enhances or expands the academic impact of strong clinical or research programs ongoing in the School of Medicine.

# Other faculty lines



## ■ Clinician Educator

- The Clinician Educator role is defined by engagement in clinical care and teaching that advances clinical medicine. While not required, Clinician Educators may also engage in scholarly activities and/or perform in an administrative role.

## ■ Instructors

- are primarily engaged in mentored research and scholarly activities that advance clinical medicine, and may have secondary roles in teaching and clinical care. They are generally in transition from training towards a potential career as a faculty member; however, there is no expectation of a Stanford professoriate appointment following an Instructor appointment.



# Know

- The institution
  - Part of University or stand alone medical center
  - Patient population served
  - Affiliated institutions
- The department
  - What other subspecialties are there
  - How many faculty in the department
  - Split of faculty by position within department
  - Split of faculty at different locations
- Talk with anyone who might know something about the group/practice



# High level

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graph LR; A[What type of person are they looking for] --> B[Know the job description but this is usually general]; B --> C[But then personalize it]; C --> D[What do you have to offer]; C --> E[Be prepared to show how your skills could provide additional expertise to that which they have/want];
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What type of person are they looking for

Know the job description but this is usually general

But then personalize it

What do you have to offer

Be prepared to show how your skills could provide additional expertise to that which they have/want



- Know your cover letter, this will be read by all the interviewees
  - Written to sell yourself and your skills
  - Shows how you think you fit into institution/division
- Ask to see specific people before hand
  - Be prepared to discuss common interests
  - Shows you have done your homework and a deepened level of interest
  - Allows you to personalize your interview
- If possible find out the structure of day
  - communication with HR/AA before may help you prepare
  - Number of people you will meet
  - Type of interview(s)



Practice

# Tell your story

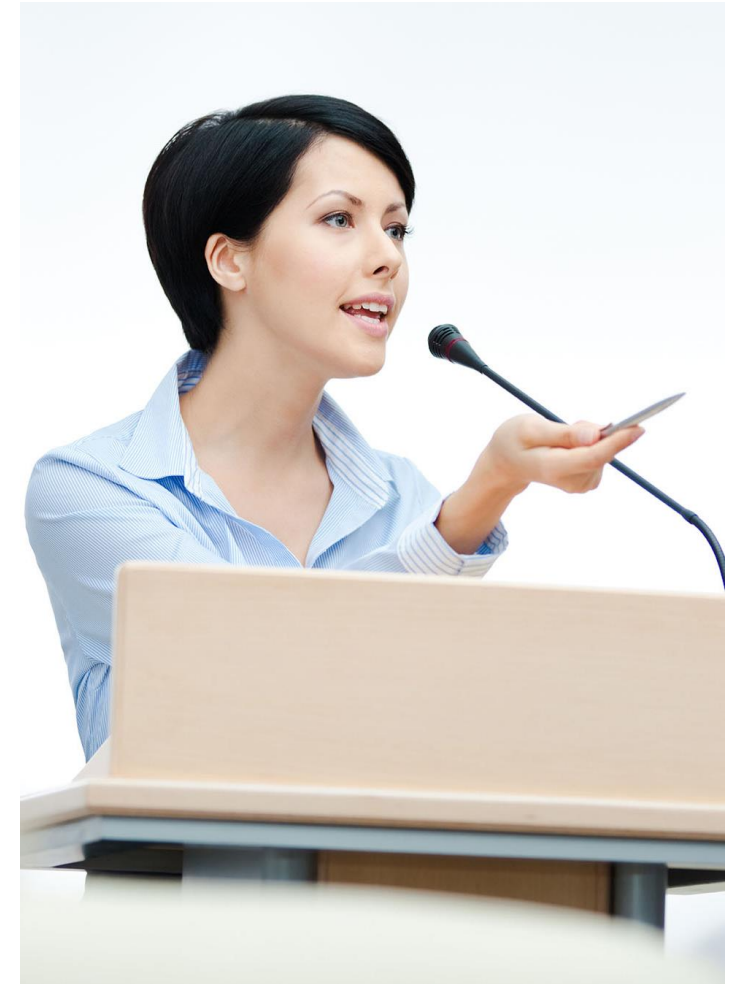
- Practice answering interview questions
  - You want to be thoughtful and articulate
  - You want to have a good story
  - Don't be too scripted
  - Be yourself
  - Flexible
- Prepare your 60 second pitch, may want a 5 minute pitch as well
  - Practice on peers and nonmedical friends and colleagues

The difference between ordinary and extraordinary is practice.

Vladimir Horowitz

# Job talk

- Some interview processes include a talk on your scholarship/concentration
- Find out how long the talk is expected to be and what the audience will be, i.e. division or department
- Practice, practice, practice: this in front of colleagues
  - If you are interviewing at your home institution then practice for your mentors outside your division
- This is extremely important and will leave an impression





# Interview Day





# Frame of mind

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- Dress and act professionally
  - *Do not* act more informal with staff and junior faculty
- Be on your game; sleep, eat, exercise
- Be confident but humble
  - Posture and body language are important
    - [https://www.ted.com/talks/amy\\_cuddy\\_your\\_body\\_language\\_shapes\\_who\\_you\\_are](https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_shapes_who_you_are)
- Be professional with everyone
- Your goals:
  - To promote yourself
  - To evaluate the job, faculty and institution and determine if it fits what you are looking for



# Different strategies for different interviewers

## ■ Junior faculty

- Inquire into what life is like in and outside the division/hospital
- What is the culture of the division/department/institution
- Are they supported: including mentorship and resources (professional development, administrative and space)
- Do you feel integral to decisions that occur in the division/department

## ■ Senior faculty

- Likely will want to know
  - About you and your motivations for choosing institution
  - Your vision of your career
- They are looking for fit
- Ask
  - About the division/department
  - What they think the strengths/weaknesses
  - Vision for growth areas in the field and faculty
  - Mentorship and professional development
  - Resources: I am interested in X, what resources are available for me to be successful?

# Interview Day Questions: Have a list

- How are young physicians mentored?
- How is evaluation and promotion handled?
- Non-academic
  - Are there partners? How does one advance to partner?
  - How long do physicians typically stay in the practice?
- Are there any significant upcoming changes? (People leaving, mergers, etc.)
- Protected time for scholarship, would ask for specifics
- Dedicated administrative time (for returning calls, finishing charting, making referrals, etc.)
- Non-clinical expectations
  - Teaching, administrative (committee work)
- Opportunities for medical direction: does this come with resources
- What else should you know about the job



# Interview Day Questions



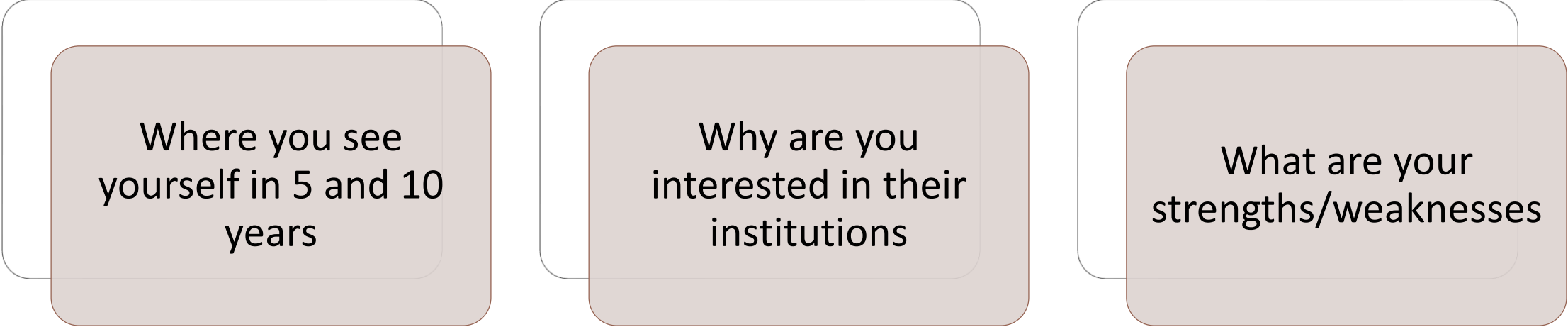
- When meeting with specific faculty you want to understand
  - Their specific roles in and outside the division
  - How long have they been there
  - What are their interests, non-clinical activities? Important for collaborations and also if there is significant overlap with your interests
- Ask to meet with or ask faculty about support staff and any trainees.
  - Ask about the availability of support and how they fit into the faculty's roles
    - RNs/PAs/MAs
    - Business manager
    - Case manager
    - Social worker
    - Subspecialists
    - Answering service
      - Is RN first-call or MD?
      - Is there an answering service during the day?
  - Ask faculty about their interaction with fellows
  - Ask fellows their perspective on the division

# More in depth questions



- May be for follow up or HR
  - What will the actual job duties involve?
    - Clinical sites and duties
      - RVU expectations: ambulatory vs inpatient
      - Number of days/week or shifts/month
      - Number of call nights and weekends (and what responsibilities you have during that time)
    - Procedural duties
- Payer mix
- What is the physician payment rate? What is the basis of this scale (e.g., salary, seniority, productivity, patient load, call load, combination)?
- Benefits

# What they may ask



Where you see  
yourself in 5 and 10  
years

Why are you  
interested in their  
institutions

What are your  
strengths/weaknesses

# Behavioral Interviewing

- Situational questions
  - Motivation/Inspiration/Mentorship
  - Dealing with Adversity
  - Reflecting on Experience/Insight
  - Managing Stress/Self Care/Time Management
  - Leadership/conflict resolution (aka “social intelligence”)
  - Flexibility/resilience (aka “grit”)
  - Passion
  - Influences in your life
- Tell about a time when..." and "Share an example of a situation where..."



# Behavioral Interviewing-answering

- Show flexibility

<b>S</b> Situation	Detail the background. Provide a context. Where? When?
<b>T</b> Task	Describe the challenge and expectations. What needed to be done? Why?
<b>A</b> Action	Elaborate your specific action. What did you do? How? What tools did you use?
<b>R</b> Results	Explain the results: accomplishments, recognition, savings, etc. Quantify.
'STAR' Technique to Answer Behavioral Interview Questions	

# Do

- Have questions
  - Important to know the faculty's work and speak about it
    - Make it personal
      - I was very interested in this paper because I am also interested...
      - Not I saw your interesting paper that described.....
- Create a list of different questions for each person
  - The faculty and staff will debrief and will discuss what you asked
  - Try to get detailed and show your understanding of the position





# Don't

- Ask how hard you will work
- Ask life style questions
- Be too informal
- Be disrespectful to anyone who you encounter
- Be too intense
  - be knowledgeable and interested but not grill them
  - Find the place between passion, commitment and being a real person



## What if

- Although not professional/legal you may be asked questions you do not feel comfortable and should not need to answer
- May be easier to have a prepared answer
- Be genuine and frank
- Turn it around
  - I hear your concern/question, but I am very excited about your position
  - My focus right now is my job
  - That is important but I am focusing on my career at the moment

# After an Interview

- Take detailed notes about what you did and did not like and what you learned
- Great to debrief and record as much as possible right after the interview
- Write a thank you note to your interviewees and do not forget staff who helped schedule and with your day.
  - Be specific and personalize each thank you, likely they will be shared amongst faculty so do not cut and paste.



# Reflect on red flags

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- Did the leadership answer your questions
- Was their support in place for your priorities
  - Worry if the response is "That will be in place before you start"
- No opportunity to meet with junior faculty
- No opportunity to meet the fellows or observe faculty/fellow interactions (if requested)



# Conclusions

- Overall likely they will be recruiting you
- Have a clear vision of what you have to offer
- Be able to clearly articulate how you fit into their institutional needs
- Succinctly describe how you envision your 5 and 10 year path
- Be real, this hopefully will be the first and last interview for a position
  - These will be your colleagues
- Be prepared and knowledgeable, but do not “suck up”
- Pay close attention to answers (read between the lines)







Questions