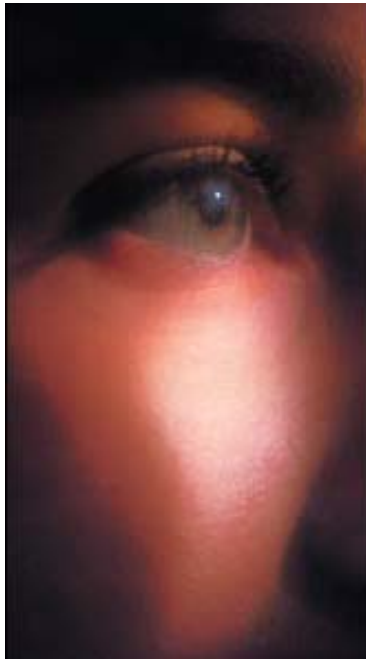


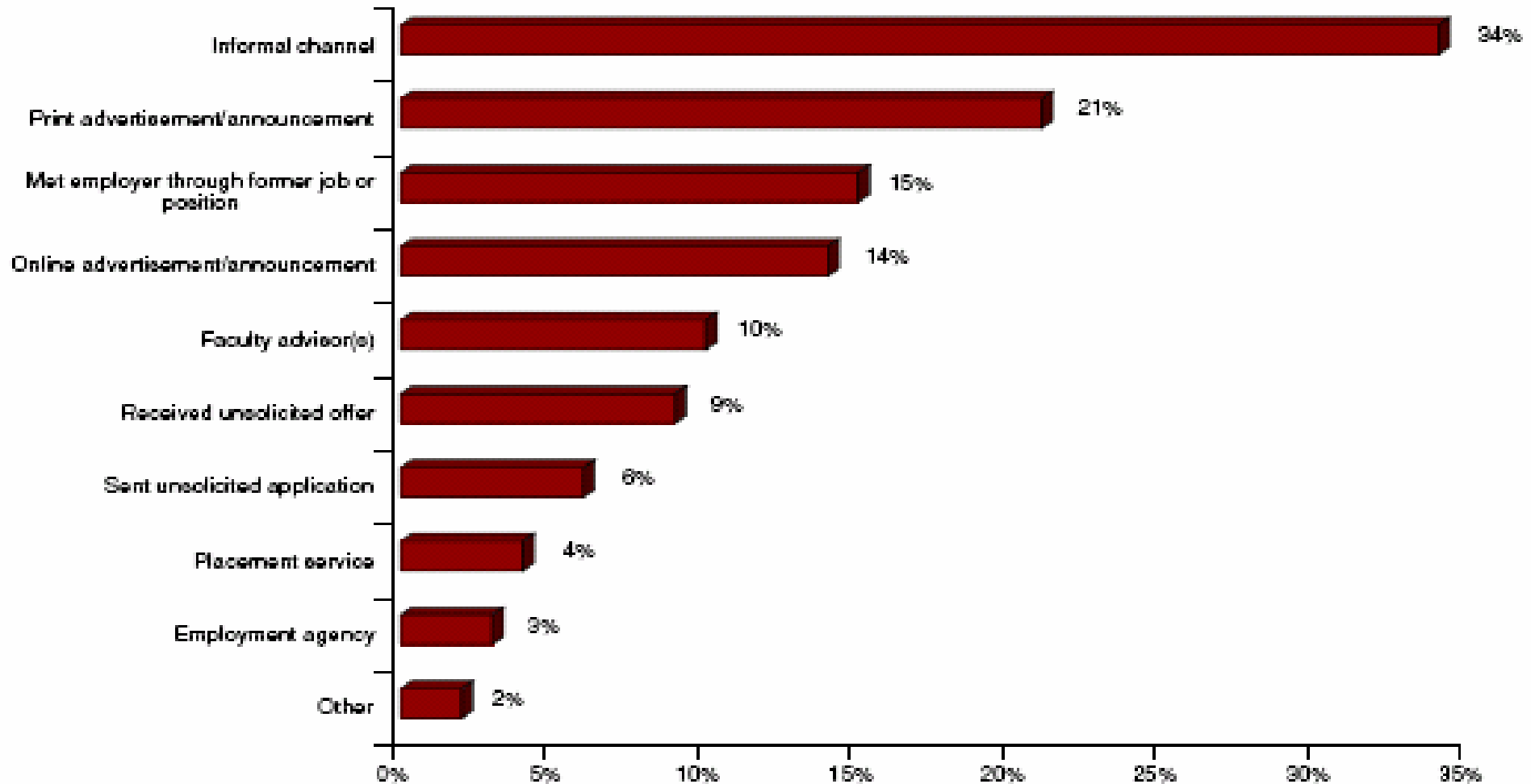
How to find and apply for the right academic job



September 26, 2005



Ways life science professionals found their current position.



What to do before you start the job search

- **attend** professional meetings
- give as many as possible **Oral** presentations
- **publish** as much as you can—
- **write** successful fellowships/small grants

- keep options open
- talk with your advisor

Types of academic jobs- types of institutions

1. community college

- more teaching (2-4 courses/term including a lab course) (15-18 contact hours/week)
- ~5 hours scheduled office hours/week
- 1 committee hour/week
- usually unionized and good benefits and pay, **IF** fulltime
- freeway fliers—part time many places with poor benefits

Types of institutions, cont.

2. **undergraduate (small) colleges**
 - very variable in expectations of research and teaching and service
 - variable teaching loads (2-6 courses/yr)
 - variable pay; benefits variable

Types of institutions, cont.

3. UG and masters only (Cal State)

- often, not always smaller campuses of state university system
- vary in expectations of research and teaching (even within the Cal State system)
- must **apply** for external grant before tenure
- usually **expect research** with masters students
- often unionized with good benefits
- research funding within university variable
- eligible for some types of external funding (NSF)

Types of institutions, cont.

4. Universities with PhD program (UC-like)

- very variable in expectations of research and teaching - usually great emphasis on **research**
- **funded** external grant (more is better) needed for tenure
- much higher number of **publications/yr** in **good** journals required for tenure
- teaching usually lower
ex. UCI teaching 2-3 courses per year
- research with masters, PhD students expected/required for tenure

Where to look?

- **The Web**
- --<http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/>
(Science)
- --Chronicle of Higher Education
(www.chronicle.com) Check weekly
(community colleges)
- --check professional societies—web
sites, listservs
- --networking - meetings, posters
- --University websites

Planning and timing the search-- When to apply

- usually Aug-Sept 1 yr before start date
- ads usually 1-2 months before deadline (ie. summer/early fall)

Community Colleges:

Mid-Winter/Early spring for Fall

(very narrow window of time; deadlines firm for all parts of application)

Planning and timing the search— How much experience is needed?

- **community college**
need actual teaching experience in community college (can be during grad school/post doc)
- **college**
immediately after PhD (depending on publication record)
better ones often want postdocs
- **university**
usually start after 3-4 year of postdoc, (depending on pub record);
Must establish enough research to have high probability of getting grants

Should you apply?

Possible Approaches:

- shotgun approach—let search committee decide or
- only apply for jobs you truly want and are qualified for (not recommended) or
- get experience
(not always good- for ex. May generate ill will if you know nothing they could offer would get you to go there)

Best Approach is somewhere in the middle!

Should you apply? Some Criteria-

- **what kind** of department do you want to be in? (Basic, technical, medical, clinical?)
- **location**—quality of life—schools, housing, cost of living, entertainment, etc.
what country, part of country?
urban, suburban, rural
- **Partners** (when to mention? After you get an offer)
check website for standard policy/possible jobs for partner
- **faculty, salary, benefits, lifestyle**, etc. (on web)

The Application

- Cover Letter
- CV
- Statement of Research Interests
- Letters of Recommendation

Ask an experienced faculty mentor to check your letter, CV, statements

Cover letter

- keep it short--no more than 2 pages
- --mention position and why YOU are interested in it—**read job ad carefully**
- match your qualifications to job mentioned in ad
- who you are and where you are going—
(balance between honesty and arrogance)
- --1 paragraph on research— **read ad**
- --1 paragraph teaching, service—emphasis depending on type of school

Obviously—needs to be neat, error-free

CV

- name and contact info
- Education*
- employment record
- awards
- Grants/fellowships**
- talks and presentations
- (service)
- Publications***

Statement of research

- (past), current, future—*indicate (current?) potential funding sources
- Usually 2-4 pages
- remember that readers are not all in your specific area
- teaching—usually less than 1 page (past, present, future)

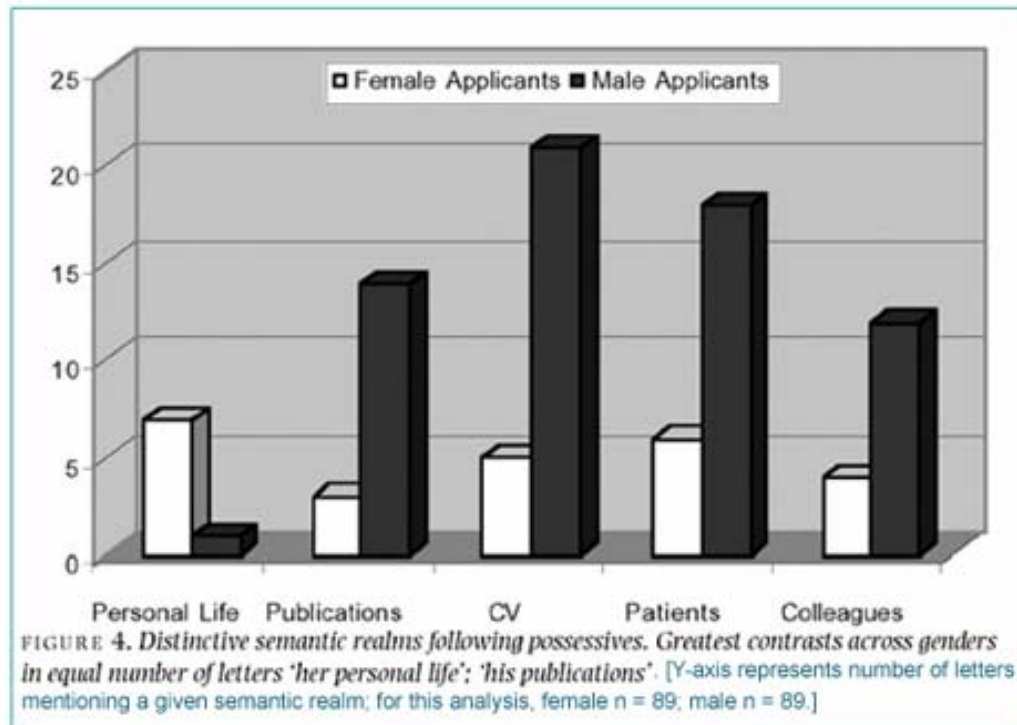
References

- usually names of contacts (though sometimes letters - **read the ad**)
- meet with letter writer and ask them beforehand
- explain why you want them to be a reference
- give total application and job announcement
- make sure you keep your references up to date
- **REMIND REFEREES OF DUE DATE (?)**
- --let them know what happens?

"Exploring the color of glass:..."

Trix and Psenka, 2003

Letters of recommendation



Trix and Psenka [2003] analyzed 312 letters of recommendation for 103 successful applicants for faculty positions in a large medical school. Thirty percent of the people hired were women. Trix and Psenka found that letters for women were shorter than letters for men, which meant that fewer of the women's credentials were being described; women's letters also had more "doubt-raisers", more "grindstone" adjectives, and fewer "stand-out" adjectives.



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Ask recommenders to comment on your research, skills, and career goals

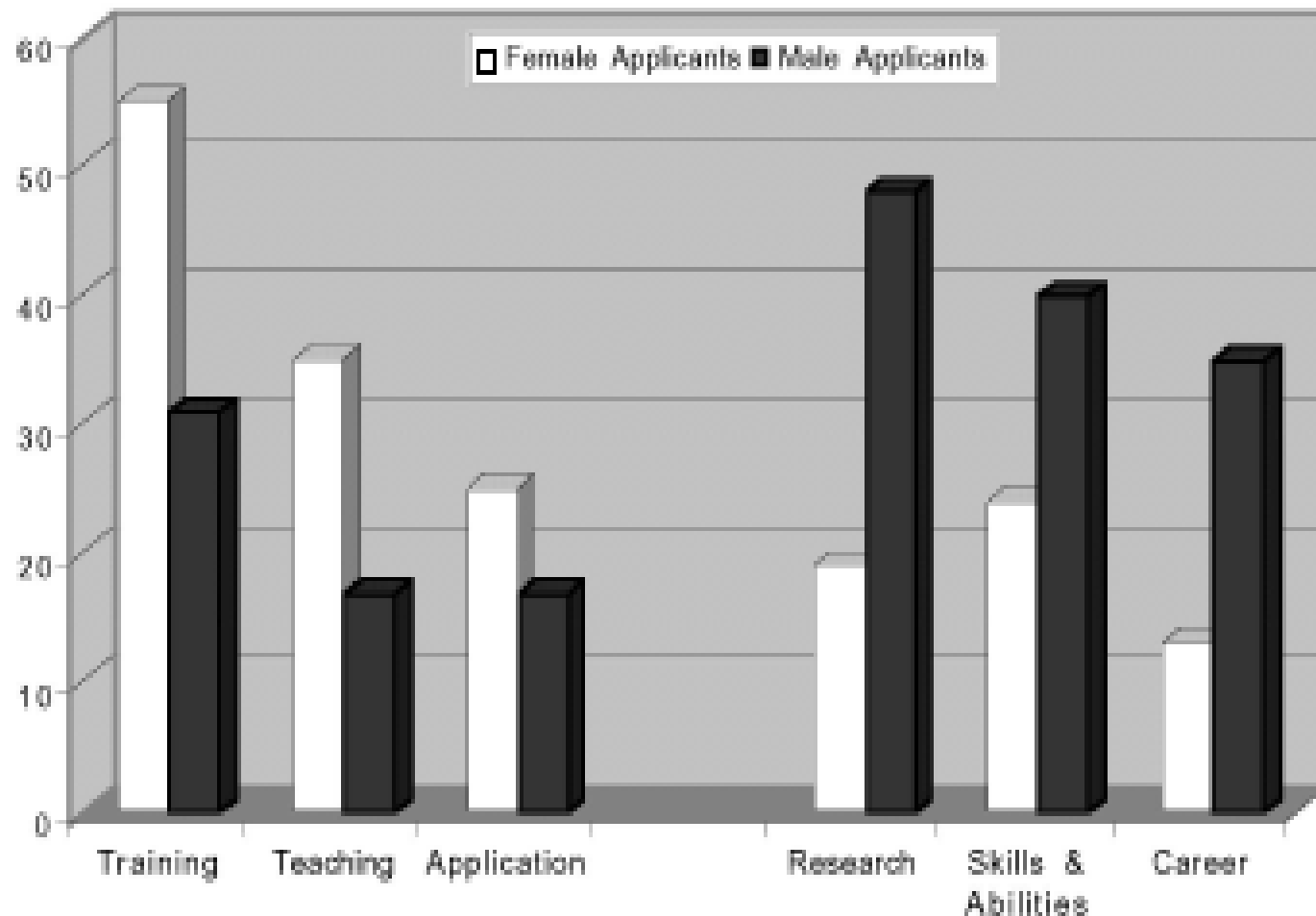


FIGURE 3. Semantic realms following possessives. Rank-ordered within gender sets from equal numbers of letters 'her training'; 'his research'

Application process at institution— why does it take so long?

- most applications received the week before deadline? - may want to get in just a little earlier
- **make sure your application is in on time**
- usually sends out affirmative action form to fill out
- may or may not acknowledge receipt of application (email)

Search committee

-reviews all applications

- usually faculty in the department
- usually 1 (or more) people in your area, some NOT
- may include faculty from other departments
- weighting of characteristics:

area of specialization

scholarly productivity

compatibility of personality

teaching skills

diversity

other

Search Committee

- Selects top 10 or so to ask for letters of recommendation
- Generates a short list to invite for interview 3-5 candidates
- in addition to research, teaching, ??may check for affirmative action, partners needing job/positions??

Important for first impressions

- remember where you applied and names on ad!
- listen for what aspect of your experience and skills most interested them
- look at dept. web site and know names and active research of faculty
- look at geographic locality and find out something about school, area

Next Up:

- **Career choices for PhDs in Biology**
Mon, Oct. 10th - 5 member panel
- **The Job Seminar:** Tom Carew, N&B
Mon Oct. 24th
- **The Interview:** Arthur Lander, D&C
Mon. Nov. 7th

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