

ONE TIP

PRESENTED BY APA DIVISION 15

JANUARY 2018 EDITION



DR. PHIL WINNE

“I’ve been invited for an interview! Yikes!!” Interviews can be challenging. What’s involved? What if you’re offered the job? Is it for you?

Websites galore offer guidelines for electrifying job talks. Talk about your slides, don’t read them. Are interruptions OK or do you prefer questions at the end? Take heed of time allowed. There are lots of guidelines. There’s more than your talk. How can you prepare?

First, gather data. Root through the department’s website. What research do your potential colleagues do? Is there opportunity for collaboration? Ask for a meeting. It can kick start your social life. And they know the bureaucratic ropes, have networks that might open opportunities, and perhaps resources to share.

While you’re online, look for lines of research the department wants to initiate or augment. What’s in the department’s and the university’s 5-year plans? How can you contribute? Do these mesh with your scholarly goals?

Research is important but it doesn’t pay the bills. Student enrollment does. What courses might you be assigned? Dig deep for course syllabi. Do you want to propose a new course right up your alley? Does it mesh with what’s in place? What value is added from the department’s standpoint?

More digging should mine other key data. Are salaries online? What’s in the benefits package? What’s not? Are there mandated delays for some benefits?

Who pays what portions? If faculty are unionized, ask to meet an officer for an overview of the contract.

OK, you’re on campus. Be real. At meals, applicants are pelted with so many questions they barely get to eat. Arrive with questions of your own. What do people at the table think about the 5-year plan? Are initiatives underway to change curricula or reshape the unit’s research profile? What does startup funding really buy? Are there other sources of internal funding? What about support services for writing grants and managing projects? A fun one: What contentious topics came up at recent department meetings?

As you know, much depends on graduate students. Meet with them. What are they like? What’s their view of the department? What do they hope for in the new hire?

Look beyond campus. What about your favorite recreations – theatre, music, microbreweries, hiking ...? How about access to the rest of the world for conferences and holidays? What’s housing like? Is there housing for new faculty on campus? Mortgage assistance? What’s rush hour like? Consider asking for a referral to a real estate professional. Location, location, location.

Sure, you want a job but not any job. Bring your list negotiating items to the meeting with the Chair/Head/Dean. Prepare by asking mentors and colleagues who recently started positions what they negotiated. Maybe ask the same of a recent hire you meet during your interview. What’s not negotiable for you? Spoiler alert – there is no easy parking.

When an offer arrives, it won’t be perfect. Be honest with yourself. Remember your strengths. You can do lots once you arrive and get started. Good luck!!!

One Tip is published bi-monthly by the Membership Committee of APA Division 15 (Educational Psychology). In *One Tip*, senior scholars tell their stories and share insights for junior scholars. If you would like to contribute a piece, please contact Division 15 Membership Committee Chair, Serena Shim at sshim@bsu.edu.