Top 5 Job-Getting Skills in Astronomy

Jarron Leisenring & Gail Zasowski
So you want a job...

5. Set ambitious, yet realistic goals.
Set ambitious, yet realistic goals.

- You can’t get a job you don’t apply for!
- Consider all of your options…
  - Government facilities, industry?
  - Academia—small college vs. large research institution?
- BUT know your limits!
  - Pace yourself
  - Focus on what you can accomplish to your level of satisfaction.
So you want a job…

5. Set ambitious, yet realistic goals.

4. Be organized and efficient.
Be organized and efficient.

- Apply to most-desired positions first.
- Set early deadlines for yourself.
- Don’t expect employers to make concessions for you.
  - Get applications in on time and in order.
  - Eye on the calendar!
  - Make yourself easy to be hired.
So you want a job...

5. Set ambitious, yet realistic goals.

4. Be organized and efficient.

3. Qualify yourself for the desired field(s).
Qualify yourself for the desired field(s).

- It sounds obvious, but…
- Technical, specific skills:
  - E.g. computer literacy, instrumentation know-how, mathematical expertise
- Teaching and administration skills
- Personal characteristics:
  - E.g. patience, powers of observation, creativity
So you want a job…

5. Set ambitious, yet realistic goals.

4. Be organized and efficient.

3. Qualify yourself for the desired field(s).

2. Enhance communication skills.
Enhance communication skills.

- It doesn’t matter how good your work is if you can’t share it!
- Talks, presentations, and posters
- Published papers, articles, abstracts
- Teaching and public outreach
- Personal communication
So you want a job…

5. Set ambitious, yet realistic goals.

4. Be organized and efficient.

3. Qualify yourself for the desired field(s).

2. Enhance communication skills.

1. Networking, networking, networking!
Networking!

- “It’s all in who you know.”
- Conferences, especially specialized meetings
- Talks, socialization with speakers
- Research colleagues
  - Past and present → future!
- Personal connections
  - Nepotism—make it work for you!
- Remember communication skills!
So you want a job...

5. Set ambitious, yet realistic goals.
4. Be organized and efficient.
3. Qualify yourself for the desired field(s).
2. Enhance communication skills.
1. Networking, networking, networking!

Any questions?