Job Market Experiences

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Outline of Talk

Structure of the Market:

1. Events and timeline

A Swedish Approach:

1. A buy-side perspective
2. Idiosyncratic structure

Personal Experiences:

1. A sell-side perspective

NB: Besides Facts, All Subjective!   **Do Good Work!**

A Job Market Candidate

1. **Average Forecasts:** *Lucas (1972), Sims (2003),*

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Noisy private information

Decreased emphasis on new information **Underresponse** ;

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Behavioral models

Agency-based models   **Misresponse**

The Academic Job Market

Timeline of Events:

1. Mid-Oct: institutions post vacancies

2. Mid-Nov: Application deadlines

- Job market paper
- 3x letters of reference
- Curriculum vitae
- Other material

3. First Round Interviews

- *Mid-Dec:* European jobs (EEA)
- *Start-Jan:* Global jobs (AEA)

Timeline of Events:

4. Second Round Interviews

- *Mid-Jan until Mid-Feb:* Fly-outs

5. Offers Stage

- Sequential, exploding offers/ crunch time

6. The Scramble

- UK and US especially

A Buy-Side Perspective

A Swedish Experience:

- One observation; other places do more/less

- Generally effort is increasing in rank

- It is all two-sided search

The Different Steps:

- Solicit applications

- Assess applications

- Assess first-round interview

- Assess fly-outs and candidates

Two-sided Search:

- Places have a list of XX+ institutions that they solicit from
- They ask contacts who is a "good fit"/"top-code"
- Send them a personal email asking them to apply

Marked Applicants:

- Tracked throughout the process
- Get their files read more carefully etc...
- Lots of built-in persistence

Assess Applications

Too Many Applications:

- Places receives +XXX - +XXX applications

- Despite everyone being involved

- Places can't properly assess that many

Equilibrium Outcome:

- Every application gets assigned someone to view it

- Marked applicants: letters, cv, and paper $\Rightarrow$ mark

- Non-marked applicants: less and faster $\Rightarrow$ mark

Meeting: Decide list of 30-40 to interview

First-Round Interview

Interview Format:

- Discuss Job Market Paper and other research

- A semi-structured/formulaic discussion

- Lots of interviews per day

Personal Experience:

- Every applicant has her/his paper read by several people

- These people *attempt* to lead/keep the discussion on track

- Ask questions, provide feedback, clarify confusions

Personal Experience:

- $X \geq 7$ on one discussion
- Update marks at the end of all meetings
- Adjust to ensure population balance
- Invite 16-20 for a fly-out interview

Personal Comment:

- Luck matters a lot here...

Fly-Out Interviews

Interview Format:

- Candidate presents Job Market Paper (90min talk)

- Myriad of 30min interviews with faculty

- Includes *social* lunch and dinner

IIES Approach:

- A "host" makes everything run smoothly

- All faculty attend talks + meetings

- Presentation is what matters most

Fly-Out Interviews

Candidates are Marked On:

- Quality of work/presentation

- Benefit to the department

- Good colleague/"personal fit"

- Likelihood that they will come

Decision Meeting:

- Entire faculty votes on offer(s)

- Assess dominating offer(s)

- Semi-unstructured discussion

A Sell-Side Perspective

1. Randomness in All:

- If your application gets read properly

- If people pay attention in the first-round

- That the seminar goes well ... and so on...

Reduce Randomness:

- Prepare for formulaic structure

- Learn new skills to do so – control conversations

- Honest conversation with advisor

- ... about options and phone calls   **Apply A Lot!**

A Stochastic Process

Accept Randomness:

- Some interviews will go well

- Some interviews will go badly

  "You're human, you'll slip up. And when you do, dust off your shoulders and get back in the game."
  (Random Post Card, 2019).

Heterogeneity is Important

2. Lots of Heterogeneity:

- How friendly faculty are at any point

- How well prepared people are

- What's the seminar culture ... and so on ...

Robust Planning:

- Assume lowest amount of CK

- Don't expect people to read/do work

- Always be friendly and cheerful

Do You Want to Spend Time with Them?

"Life is short, spend it with people that you like"
(Random Post Card, 2019).

3. Send Correct Signals:

- Schedule better slots with your preferred options

- Be (more) open with your preferred option than others

- Don't end first-round interviews with a bunch of questions

- Don't waste people's time: if $P(accept \mid offer) = 0$ say it!

Spend Limited Mental Capacity Optimally!

Send Signal Rather Than Noise:

"Focus on signal over noise"
(Elon Musk/Random Post Card, 2019).

4. Show Confidence (Not Arrogance):

- You are not at MIT/Harvard/Chicago

- You may feel like you "don't belong"

- … But remember The Clash:

  "When they kick at your front door, how you gonna come? With your hands on your head, or on the trigger of your gun" (The Guns of Brixton, 1979).

And Defend your Work!

5. Other Comments:

- Communicate a lot with your advisor

- Ask for help where possible

- Continue to work on Job Market Paper

- Enjoy discussing your work with many people

And Most Importantly Remember...

It is Just Work

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Thank You and Good Luck!