

10 tips: How to get the job you really want

1. What is your USP? (USP stands for **U**nique **S**elling **P**oint) You will be competing against others. How can you make yourself stand out from the crowd? Sometimes you will need to think laterally. If everyone has a MB, MD and a PhD, then maybe you don't want to get a further qualification, but add something to your CV that gives you added appeal to the panel.

2. Get yourself known. It is better to be thought of early by people looking for a new colleague than it is to be very impressive but only announcing your presence at the last minute. 'Her name was always on it' Don't you want that to be you?

3. Join up, sign up and show up. There will be groups around the country based around your specialist interest or sub-specialty. The more you appear at these groups, offer to speak and even organize things, the better you will be known. These groups are great for networking, and will often hear of jobs coming up before anyone else.

4. Speak at Teaching afternoons. Another great networking opportunity. In addition, this is a great chance to develop (and talk about) your USP. As well as networking, you will also gain valuable information about what is happening around your area of special interest up and down the country or region.

5. Teach as often as you can. Consultants have to teach. Trusts would rather have a teacher who is trained, who has a lot of experience and seems to enjoy the role. Broaden your opportunities by offering to run sessions on courses as well as at your current Trust. Don't forget Nurses, Pharmacists, Hospital managers.

6. Audit. Start now by thinking about how to strengthen the Audit section of your CV. Audits should be properly done, as well as followed up (so keep in touch with events when you have moved on). What SpRs often leave out of the Audit section of their CV- if they have one- is what effect doing the audit made on practice. Include figures if you possibly can.

7. Management. Consultants, Senior Lecturers and other jobs require a lot of management skills. You have to demonstrate that you have these on your CV. 'But I don't manage anyone' is not an answer. Management skills include budgeting, influencing, scheduling, organizing, motivating. You do all of these and you need to stress in your CV the areas you have gained them in (e.g. doing rotas, being the junior rep, organising meetings). If you want to beef this section up, volunteer for 'management' type roles. Your Trust has loads of them, as well as outside bodies, e.g. School Governor, Citizens Advice Bureaux, Parish Council etc.

8. Rehearse your Interview. Considering how you have focused all your working life for this one chance, it is astonishing how little SpRs prepare for Interviews. You can find out what questions are being asked. Get a 'dummy' panel of colleagues to grill you until they are satisfied with the answers you give.

9. Rehearse your Presentation. Increasingly interviews have the added stress of having to give a five or ten minute presentation, usually at the start. You need to rehearse this in front of a critical audience, and be prepared to change things if they advise you to. The biggest fault of presenters according to panel members? They don't answer the question that was set.

10. Get feedback. Whether you get the job or not, always ask for formal and informal feedback from the Interview. You will be unlikely to improve if you don't know what you are doing wrong. Ask the panellist who does the feedback to be as honest with you as they possibly can.

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