

Motivation Summary

Context

Recognize that being a post doc is a transitional step that does not go on indefinitely

Get clear about what you want to gain from your post doc experience and how you can apply what you learn in a future opportunity whether this is in academia or industry

Recognize that in all work there are things that interest us as well as disinterest us. In any work there are upsides and downsides, periods of lull and periods of “over work” and this is not unique to post docs.

Integrating the professional and personal components of our lives is something we all have to do (and are expected to do) – there are times when work will be at the forefront, and other occasions when we have to make time for things outside of work

Motivation

What motivates us to do our work? Intrinsically? Extrinsically?

- Learning
- Opportunity to grow and advance
- Doing great science
- Praise
- Recognition – posters, conferences
- Career opportunities in the future
- Have to do it – means to an end, essential requirement for something in the future

Moving Ahead When You Are Stuck

- Inaction may not help you move forward
- Start with something small that is doable
- Seek input from mentors
- Seek input from other post docs in the research group
- Look for inspiration in opportunities to learn – symposiums, conferences, articles, talking to others in your field
- Focus on fewer options to gain momentum
- Build in small rewards as you complete tasks and steps

Think Ahead

- What do I need to learn or what experiences do I need for my next step – grant writing, teaching, presenting experiences, mentoring students, supervision
- Identify “step ahead” mentors and get clear about what is needed for success in your next step position
- Be prepared for the hiring process (academia or industry)

- Update your resume regularly
- Get clear about the requirements of the position you are applying for
 - Industry – supervision, grants, project management, setting up new research lab, how job performance is assessed
 - Academia – type of faculty position, teaching and service load, grants, process for review, promotion and tenure
- Become familiar with the requirements of the hiring process. Some examples might be:
 - Job talk
 - Teaching statement
 - Leadership/management style and approach
- Recognize that applying for jobs will be time consuming
- Get clear with your own supervisor about what needs to be completed before you take up a new position