

# How to Win a Music Faculty Position

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# Mini Case Example

- A. *“I finished my DMA in piano from a top program a couple of years ago and have two MM degrees from one of the best conservatories in the world. . . .*
- B. *“ . . . I have always felt that with my many abilities and terrific recommendation letters, a full-time job was just around the corner. . . .*

## Mini Case Example, cont.

C. *“ . . . But in spite of being shortlisted for a number of academic positions, I have come up empty-handed.”*

–Overqualified and Underemployed

*Letter to the “Ask Edna” blog on MusicalAmerica.com, 5/5/11*

# Questions about Case Example

1. What are some possible reasons that the applicant hasn't been offered a position?
2. What might you advise the applicant to do differently?

# How Applicants Can Succeed

1. Understand the higher ed economy
2. Understand music school missions, needs, economics
3. Acquire a portfolio of knowledge and skills that meet needs and are in demand

# Mini Quiz

*Studio Teachers: Regarding your job performance, what is the primary economic concern of a school that might hire you?*

- a. Your faculty recitals will generate ticket sales
- b. You will publish CDs, books, compositions
- c. You will recruit and retain lots of students
- d. You will bring grant funds to the school

# Mini Quiz Answer

*Studio Teachers: Regarding your job performance, what is the primary economic concern of a school that might hire you?*

- ~~a. Your faculty recitals will generate ticket sales~~
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- c. You will recruit and retain lots of students**
- ~~d. You will bring grant funds to the school~~

# Steps to Succeeding in Academic Job Searches

1. Build credibility
2. Forge a professional network
3. Discover opportunities
4. Submit polished materials
5. Present commanding interviews

# I. Build Credibility

- Artistry
- Teaching
- Recruiting
- Technology
- Service & Governance
- Collegiality
- Leadership
- References

# Artistry

*Ongoing record of activity & accomplishment that demonstrates a compelling artistic vision*

## **Perform, compose, publish, present**

- Concerts/compositions
- Audio and video recordings
- Online content
- Peer-reviewed publications
- Commissions/arrangements

# *Teaching*

*Evidence of successful college teaching*

## **Gain teaching experience**

- Assistantships (official/unofficial)
- Festivals
- Substitute
- Part-time employment
- Advanced pre-college

# Recruiting

*Evidence of successful recruiting*

## **Gain recruiting experience**

- Festival recruiting & teaching
- Recruiting events at your school
- Recruiting events at other schools
- Part-time employment

# Technology

*Evidence of facility with and adaptive use of tech*

## **Use technology to create & communicate**

- Teaching, administering, performing
- Collaboration
- Personal website (blog) & social media
- Composing, creating, fundraising
- Online marketing & PR

# *Service & Governance (1)*

*Activity in professional & service organizations*

## **Join & contribute to organizations**

- Propose conference sessions (CMS, other)
- Contribute to newsletters, journals, blogs
- Initiate and participate in community programs

# *Service & Governance (2)*

## **Participate in organizational governance**

- Serve on committees
- Contribute to innovations in organizations, at school, at work
- Gain administrative experience

# Collegiality

*Evidence of consistent collegial relationships*

## **Collaborate with and support others**

- In school
- At festivals
- At work
- During service activities

# *Leadership*

*Act according to your artistic vision*

## **Take on leadership roles**

- Festivals, committees, collaborations
- New & traditional ensembles
- Concert programming & presenting
- Compositional/commissioning concepts
- Professional and service activities

# References (1)

*Gather relevant references*

## **Employers, colleagues, teachers**

- School or festival directors who have employed you
- Conductors and chamber music partners
- Notable composers and performers you've collaborated with
- Major teachers of note  
(teacher-employers make better references)

# References (2)

*Request and store letters strategically*

## **Provide key points to references**

- Indicate how a job and your work with the reference overlap
- Send talking points in bullet form, if helpful
- Request generic and job-specific letters
- Have references upload generic letters to your [Interfolio](#) account
  - store official transcripts on Interfolio too

## II. Forge Networks

- Participate in festivals & conferences
- Collaborate
- Grow online communities

# *Participate in Conferences and Festivals*

- Present, teach, perform, attend
- Interact with diverse participants
- Connect with prospective colleagues

# *Collaborate*

- Initiate projects with diverse colleagues
- Identify organizations that share your vision and then contribute to their programs
- Participate in innovative work

# *Grow Your Online Community*

- Maintain a portfolio website
- Create profiles on social networks and then steadily build connections
- Contribute to online communities, blogs, journals

# III. Discover Opportunities

- Search job sites regularly. See: [peabody.jhu.edu/conservatory/mecc/jobsearch/#highered](http://peabody.jhu.edu/conservatory/mecc/jobsearch/#highered)
- Research institutions that may lack yet need the skills you possess
- Connect with other professionals

# IV. Submit Polished Materials

- Address all duties & qualifications
- Be clear and concise
- Obtain pre-submission critiques
- Update your websites & social media

# *Address Duties & Qualifications*

- Create a checklist or spreadsheet
- Give examples of how you meet required and preferred criteria
- Articulate your vision
- Convey energy and expertise

# *Be Clear & Concise*

- Organize your CV meticulously
- In a cover letter, indicate why you and an employer make a good match; don't merely restate content from the CV
- Answer questions that will be foremost in committee members' minds
- Research an institution's needs

# *Obtain Pre-Submission Critiques*

- Prepare materials far in advance
- Send your draft materials and links to position descriptions to the Peabody Career Center – [mecc@jhu.edu](mailto:mecc@jhu.edu)
- Plan to revise multiple times
- Ensure that your materials are in top shape before you submit them

# *Update Web Content*

- Communicate your identity and mission
- Give prominence to artistic abilities
- Inspire site visitors
- Edit text and design meticulously

# V. Present Commanding Interviews

- Prepare to address all duties and qualifications in concise, articulate ways
- Do mock interviews ahead of time
- Display artistic excellence, pedagogical command, collegiality, leadership
- Emanate enthusiasm and curiosity
- Study [interviewing resources](#)

# How to Win a Music Faculty Position

1. Understand the higher ed economy
2. Understand music school missions, needs, economics
3. Acquire a portfolio of knowledge and skills that meet needs and are in demand
  - a. Create multi-year action plans
  - b. Take steady constructive steps

# Questions?

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