

Effectively Planning Your Job Search in Israeli Academia – Tips

Keep in mind that there are MANY Israelis who study abroad; Israel is a small country with a few universities; growing number of colleges; as a result strong competition

- Staying in Touch with Mentors and Heads of Departments in Israel – very important for your future. People forget students who are away for too long.
How to stay in touch?
 1. Paying visits to your mentors/others when visiting Israel
 2. Emailing and calling from time to time
 3. Sending work-in-progress for comments – make them feel they are relevant and that their opinion counts and that you view them as part of your “academic community”; also important for the visibility of your work and getting ongoing feedback
 4. Presenting drafts of work-in-progress during your visits

- Effectively Exploiting Time While You Study Abroad – don’t hibernate.
 1. Build strong ties with your doctorate committee members to the extent it is possible – most of us work with major people in our field – these people play a major role in your academic career so you have to invest in your relationship with them – use them as much as you can (e.g., regular meetings; attending their presentations; attending major conferences they attend; sharing your work more often – not when your final draft is ready). With some it won’t work, so try to use others, even if not formal members on your committee.
 2. Try to collaborate with people in your department – can help with your publications record
 3. Present your work-in-progress in every possible forum and exchange ideas – even with people who are not in your field. Start with your fellow doctoral students at your school and then try to present at your school as well as in conferences and other professional settings. This is VERY IMPORTANT for your visibility and reputation as well as getting constructive feedback from as many people as possible as well as developing good presentation skills
 4. Send your work to major (and junior) scholars in your field who might be interested in your work – some won’t answer, but some will read and give you valuable feedback, invite you to conferences, get to know you and what not. Don’t be shy.

- Effectively Planning Your Job Search in Israel – Due to competitiveness you naturally have to offer everything you can. Consider the following to improve your chances to get noticed and get a job:
 1. Do a post-doc at some other school in your field – consider going to a different place so you can get some additional good references; use your time there to publish and present your work so you can have a few publications before you present your work in Israel

2. Try to teach as a visiting professor in a good school in your field, assuming it is possible – teaching experience will definitely be a plus on your resume
3. Try to search for a job abroad – it is usually not a costly and time consuming process and generally very organized (e.g., law schools have a general conference in DC) – going through the process abroad can first provide you with some good opportunities to present your work to faculties in your field so you can use them as guinea pigs for feedback and practicing your presentation skills; you can also use job offers abroad as leverage for getting jobs in Israel
4. When you contact schools in Israel make sure you ask whether they have job openings – some invite candidates when they don't really have job openings
5. Effectively introducing yourself and your work – make sure you effectively and concisely introduce yourself – prepare a CV that covers all the relevant information about you but do it in a concise way – the shorter the better
6. Practice your job talk as many times as you can –
 - Make sure you also do it in Hebrew a few times (problematic when you are used to terminology in different language – tends to translate and Hebrew sounds bad);
 - Make sure you get feedback from whoever you can on your paper, including from people in Israel;
 - Know the weaknesses of your work and be ready to intelligently address them;
 - If you don't know the answer to a certain Q – don't make up one. Acknowledge the quality of the questions and try to offer some preliminary thoughts to show you are a “thinker.”;
 - Don't be shocked if many people did not read your paper and you get dumb basic questions. This will happen a lot and be ready to present the paper for those who read, but also to those who haven't;
 - Job talk is a critical part of the hiring process – schools want to see you can effectively and confidently convey information and intelligent enough to deal with good questions;
 - Don't defend your thesis to death – acknowledge limitations of your work. Research is incremental after all.