Job Market Advice

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*This document is based off advice from a huge range of sources, including (but not limited to) Al Hájek, R.A. Briggs, David Chalmers, Hanti Lin, Robbie Williams, Jessica Isserow, Matthew Kopec, Alex King, and a number of sources freely available on the internet (listed towards the end). Nevertheless, the advice here is my own; it does not necessarily reflect the opinions of the sources just mentioned, nor should it be taken to reflect the opinions of the School of PRHS at Leeds.

1 Timeline

1.1 The Most Important Thing

By far the most important thing here is *timing*! There are many documents that you'll need to prepare, and you'll definitely want to give yourself plenty of time to prepare them. Some of these documents will take weeks to prepare, others will take months if not years. And some things — including the most important things — you should be thinking about *years* in advance of finishing your PhD.

You should be reading this document long before you finish, so you know what you need to do if you're to have the best chance at succeeding in an extraordinarily difficult job market. Waiting until just before you apply (i.e., less than 6 months) will often be too late, and you'll have missed some of your best opportunities.

1.2 Publications

For almost any job application, you will ideally want high quality, peer-reviewed publications at good journals. Your chances of being successful in any application go *way* up if you have at least one really good publication. They're better still if you have two or three, but the returns are diminishing here.

Of course, applicants without publications can still get jobs, and applicants with dozens of publications can still be turned away. Getting publications is not a guarantee of success, but it does load the dice significantly more in your favour. Note furthermore that merely having *many* publications may not count for much, especially for some jobs, if those publications are not (a) peer-reviewed journal articles, and (b) published (or forthcoming) in well-known and well-regarded journals.

Before you start submitting papers, you should have a general sense of what journals are well regarded in your area. You should also ask your supervisor for advice on where to send your papers. Contributions to edited volumes will also usually be well received, especially if it's a fancy volume, but not on the level of a peer-reviewed journal publication. Book reviews count for very little (read: next to nothing); they're also very time consuming, so you should be careful to think about the time costs versus CV benefits when agreeing to do a book review.

I have put the discussion about publications right at the start for another important reason: *getting even one good publication will probably take a very long time.* Expect that it will take at least 9 months to 1 year, *if you're lucky.* Statistically speaking, you almost certainly won't get anything accepted in less than 6 months. There's a good chance that your first publication might involve several *years* of revisions, submissions, rejections, resubmissions, and so on, until it finally gets through somewhere.[1] So, you should be writing up high quality papers and submitting them to journals *long* before you complete your PhD, and long before you start applying for jobs. Waiting until the final 6 months of your PhD to submit papers is likely to leave you with no publications at all when it comes time to apply for jobs.

[1] Try not to be disheartened by this. This is happening to everyone, and no one's happy about it.

Finally, a note on co-authored publications. There is nothing wrong with having co-authored papers on your CV, since they show that you're a good collaborator. However, they usually won't count for as much *unless* you also have some solo papers. That is, once you've got some solo papers out there, the value of your co-authored papers goes way up; before that, they're worth little. The reason for this is that many people will worry with a co-authored paper about what your specific contributions were, and whether you have what it takes to publish papers on your own. (This goes double if one of the co-authors is more senior than you, where the default assumption will usually be that the more senior author did most of the hard work.) But once you've shown that you can make it on your own, these worries can be put to rest.

For additional and very helpful advice on publishing in philosophy, see here.

1.3 Timeline

See here for a general timeline for job applications in the US. Everything here applies as much to philosophy as to any other academic discipline.

The timeline for jobs in the UK and Europe will be a little less rigidly structured, but generally the same pointers apply. Everything follows the US.

2 Application Preparation

For each of your application documents, make sure the overall presentation is nice. That means things like having reasonable margins and font size; and make sure you use a "nice" font for everything you do. Make sure you use justified alignment. If you're using Word and you worry that justified alignment causes some lines to stretch out in an ugly way, turn on the auto-hyphenation option to prevent this.

Basically, make the document — especially the writing sample — appear professional. Don't half-arse the presentation, and for the love of all that's holy, *check the damn spelling*. It's nice to think that only the ideas matter, but that's psychologically unrealistic. Impressions also matter, and the effects of those impressions might not always be conscious.

2.1 Webpage

You should ideally have a webpage up well in advance of sending out your materials for the job market. It's best to create the webpage several months in advance of any applications, to give Google a chance to find and catalogue it. This should not simply be a page on your department's website, or on Academia.edu. Good sites to use are Wordpress and Weebly. Look at the websites of other recent and successful PhD students to get an idea of what kind of website you might like.

Your webpage should include the following:

1. A photograph of you which doesn't make you look unprofessional

2. A way to contact you
3. A short summary of your research interests
4. A copy of, or a link to, a recent version of your CV
5. Copies of, or links to, your *polished* papers

Note the final point: do not include in your website incomplete or half-baked drafts. If it's something you wouldn't want members of the search committee to read, don't put it up. More generally, don't put anything on your website which might make a department worry about hiring you!

If you wish, you may also want to include:

1. Additional professional (e.g., teaching) resources (only if they're noteworthy)
2. A small section about some interest of yours outside philosophy

2.2 Cover Letters

This accompanies your applications. Its purpose is twofold: to highlight your research and teaching strengths (including those that may not be obvious from your CV), and to show that you would be a good fit for the job.

As a general rule, you should use an official letterhead for your cover letter, and sign it off with a proper signature. And make sure it's addressed to the right school. (You'll be sending off so many of these that you're likely to make that mistake at least once.)

Usually, you will want to have a sentence or two at the beginning of the letter stating your main areas of research, but then mention some things outside that area that have been pursuing or plan to in the future. Beyond that, different types of institutions in different regions have different expectations. Discussions of these follow.

2.2.1 North American cover letters

For jobs at top research schools, the usual advice is to keep your cover letter minimal. If you do include one, make sure it's less than a page. There's a reasonable chance that no one will even read it.

For many others, the cover letter should be about 1 to 1.5 pages long, and if you can, make it tailored to the school you're applying to. At liberal arts colleges and institutions with a teaching focus, you should prepare a longer cover letter of about 2-3 pages which focuses a bit more on your teaching qualifications. Try to make a good case that you're genuinely interested in the job (and not merely as a stepping stone).

It's helpful to follow a rough structure: (i) here are my research strengths; (ii) here are my teaching strengths; (iii) here is why I would make a good colleague. Then fill in the name of each institution, and have a few spots in the template where you fill in specific details where you explain your fit with that institution.

2.2.2 Australasian/UK cover letters

Address the selection criteria in the job ad. You can be very explicit about this: feel free to use key phrases from the selection criteria, or even quote.

Say something about how your interests mesh with those of the department. Play up how you complement their own research interests — overlapping in beneficial ways, but also covering some new bases. Note that fairly often institutions in both Australasia and the UK often ask only for a CV and cover letter initially, and only request letters of recommendation for a select few later on in the process.

2.3 Your CV

Your CV should be nicely formatted using a reasonable sized and standard font, and generally very easy to read at a glance. *Do not* make it overly complicated or difficult to read. Indeed, in the best case your CV should look roughly like everyone else's CV.

It's useful to structure your CV so as to make sure that the most important stuff is up top, and easy to see immediately. *Never* bury important details way down the bottom of the CV. For example: I've seen CVs where the fact that a candidate had a postdoctoral research appointment at a top research university was only mentioned on the 3rd page of the document, hidden amongst a list of small research assistance positions. This is a major mistake — getting a postdoc at a fancy university is an achievement, and therefore should be immediately apparent from a quick glance at the CV.

In general, your CV should include (usually in this order, but you should make individual decisions in light of the foregoing comment; e.g., if you've got a post-doc appointment already, you may want to put that before your education):

1. Name
2. Email
3. Phone number(s)
4. Webpage
5. Areas of Specialisation (AoS)

    These are defined as the areas in which you actively research, and would be prepared to supervise grad students and teach graduate level courses.

    You don't want to list too many AoSs. In general, you'll want two, maybe three — though only if at least a couple of those are in closely connected sub-disciplines. Unless your research profile (that is, your publications) backs it up, no one's going to believe that you've got AoSs in Philosophy of Mind, Formal Epistemology, Post-Kantian Continental Philosophy, and Metaethics. At best, it makes you look like a Jack of all trades; at worst, a liar.

6. Areas of Competence (AoC)

    Defined as areas in which you would be prepared to teach undergraduate courses. They should also be areas in which you have some experience — e.g., teaching a course, attending graduate courses or reading groups, producing a paper, giving talks at conferences. Do not fudge the facts here, as there's a good chance you'll be caught out.

7. Education

   Include details of degrees, dates, and universities, including expected date of completion of Ph.D if it's not yet done. With regards to the PhD, you should generally want to mention relevant dissertation information; i.e., the title, your supervisor and committee members.

8. Academic employment, if any

   Note that this means things like post-docs and lectureships — the kinds of jobs which would typically require a PhD. It doesn't mean research assistance positions, or getting paid to mark some theses.

9. Publications, if any

   If you have publications, these should definitely be mentioned early, to attract attention. Most importantly, do *not* inflate this section with spurious "publications" that are merely papers under review! In very many cases, doing this will be seen as a sufficient reason to reject your application. You should only list an article here if it has already been published, or it is officially 'forthcoming' (i.e., has been accepted for publication). If you have a DOI for any forthcoming works, then it might help to add an air of authenticity if you add it, but this isn't important.

   Likewise, book reviews generally shouldn't be counted amongst your full publications. These should be included in a separate section, with a clearly labelled heading. The rule here is: *don't be misleading!* Even if it's unintentional, it will be noticed, and it doesn't look good.

10. Works in Progress/Works Under Submission (optional)

    If you want to, it's perfectly fine to have a 'works in progress' section, where you can note that you have such-and-such papers under review, or under revise and resubmit, etc. If your paper is under RnR, you should certainly mention this, and say where. But don't bother to mention where a paper is merely under initial review — anyone can submit something to *Philosophical Review*, and it's not impressive that you have several papers under submission at top journals.

    One thing to note about this section: if you list a paper here, be prepared to be asked for a copy of the paper. If you've got nothing written, or only a half-baked draft that you wouldn't want a member of the search committee to read, then it might be a bad idea to list the paper.

11. Prizes, honours, and grants, if any.

    It's often helpful to include a line explaining what they are, where this is not obvious from the name. Also include the dollar values, then mention these as well. (You may want to translate GBP and EUR to USD, if you're applying for a US job.) If you have a PhD scholarship, then this counts here.

12. Conference participation/presentations (presenter or commentator), if any

    It can be helpful to note which presentations are invited, which were presented at a peer reviewed conference, etc.

13. Teaching experience, if any

    Note course titles, dates, and (briefly) your role.

14. References

    Include the names and email addresses of your letter-writers. You may also want to include for some references a label highlighting their relation to you (e.g., Supervisor, or Teaching Reference).

    Note that for some North American jobs, if you don't send a reference letter from one of the philosophers listed in your references section, they may wonder what's up and think there's a problem.

You may also want to list (at the end of the CV, just before the references):

15. Graduate coursework and reading groups. This can be used to bolster the case for an area of competence, if it's not clear from your research profile already.
16. Professional outreach or impact activities, if any — newspaper op-eds, public lectures, radio appearancee. This can be important if you are applying to departments interested in impact outside philosophy, e.g., in the UK.
17. Academic services: official refereeing for journals (mention which ones), organising conferences, running a regular grad student activity (to show that will be a good departmental citizen). If you're a member of a Minorities and Philosophy chapter, mention it here.
18. Dissertation abstract/summary: Keep it short. Aim for one page maximum, though a paragraph or two is better. You just want something that one can quickly skim to get an idea of the topic and your views, nothing detailed.

Overall, remember not to clutter your CV with junk. Every line should earn its keep, helping to build the case for why you should be hired. There's nothing wrong with a short, crisp CV, and it's better than an unwieldly great mess of irrelevant details. Especially when the latter often just looks like an attempt to fatten up the CV.

Go online and find examples of CVs from junior philosophers who have recently been successful on the job market for ideas about how to format your CV, and what to include.

And let me say this again, because it's important: *do not list works under submission under 'Publications'*! If it hasn't been officially accepted, then it's not a publication, and you *will* annoy whoever is reading the application if you list an R&R as a publication.

2.4 Dissertation Summary

This is typically 500 – 1000 words, written for a broad audience — make every effort to be as clear as possible, as most of the people reading it will have no familiarity with your topic and the jargon you may be used to using when discussing it.

It should make the most important points first, beginning with a summary of the important bits before going into detail later.

Really try to emphasise the importance of your thesis work in your description. Basically, you want readers to think that it's world-leading, ground-breaking research on an important topic that will lead to (or has already led to) many publications, and the beginning of a promising research agenda in the years to come.

2.5 Teaching Statement

This is usually 2-3 pages long, though some jobs will ask for a teaching statement of a specific length. It is supposed to summarise the basic goals you aim to accomplish in teaching, the strategies you use to accomplish those goals.

In writing your statement, you should think about it like how you'd want a good undergraduate essay to be written: pick two or three goals, and go into depth discussing them. Don't try to include a brief survey of pedagogical opinion you have, only the most interesting things that you can say interesting things about.

The key here is to always include *specific examples* that illustrate, for any strategy you mention, how you've made those strategies work for you in the past. Be concrete: readers want to get a sense that you've actually got some teaching experience.

Also important is that any examples you use should set you apart. Don't bother to mention trite procedures like "I got students to do group work because it encourages discussion". Say something interesting and unique that you've done, and why. If you don't have anything interesting and unique to say, then now is the time come up with something for the next class you teach!

2.6 Teaching Dossier

This should include:

1. A contents page
2. Teaching statement
3. Teaching experience

   Be specific about what courses you've taught on, and what your role was for each course.

4. At least one detailed sample syllabus

   Hopefully, this will be something that really stands out; i.e., it's unique and interesting, and looks like a fantastic course to take. Put real effort into this, and it will pay off. If it's lacklustre, it will work against you.

   Make sure that the amount of work suggested by the syllabus isn't far too much, or too easy. For example, don't have 60 pages of reading per week, which isn't realistic. Don't have readings which are extremely difficult; make sure they're all appropriate for the year level your course is pitched at. (And make sure you make clear what year level you want your course pitched at — it should be an undergraduate year, usually 200- or 300-level.)

   Make sure your readings are diverse, at least as much as the topic and appropriateness of difficulty allows. If you can inject some creativity into the readings, that can be helpful too; i.e., don't just follow "the standard" readings if you think there's a more helpful or interesting approach.

5. A number of shorter sample syllabi

   One page, with at least a rough schedule of lectures and readings, and an overview of the topics of learning and outcomes.

The same rules about interestingness and realism apply here. Your sample syllabi should paint you as an instructor with lots of interesting and fresh ideas for lots of interesting courses, which are still realistic for the undergraduate students at the university you're applying for.

6. Teaching evaluations

   It can be helpful to make your own tables/graphs for these, if the official documents are difficult to read. If you have access to them, a comparison of your evaluations with school/university averages can be helpful too.

   If your evaluations include comments from students, be honest about them and include even the negative comments. Keep in mind that it may not be possible to include all comments from all classes you've taken (doing so may take up many pages), so you may want to take the comments from one or two selected classes. In that case, mention that the full comments for other classes you've taken are available upon request.

7. Letters/commendations from students, if any

2.7 Writing Sample

Your writing sample should be your best piece of writing, but it should also of a reasonable length, and hopefully also accessible to a wide audience. You also want the paper to be substantial, but not so long that a search committee with hundreds of papers to read hates you for sending it. (They won't read it if it's too long.) 8000 words is a good average, and 10000 should be considered an absolute maximum. Good luck with all that.

If you can, you may also tailor the writing sample somewhat to the job you're applying for, and what they are looking for in a candidate. For instance, if you've got two great papers, one in Phil Mind and one in Logic, and they're after a logician, then send the latter along. In general, make sure that the writing sample "fits" your stated AoSs and is the kind of thing that a committee interested specifically in hiring someone in field X will want to read.

All else being equal, though, if your paper is of broader interest, then it'll be better off. In most cases, most of the folks reading the paper won't be in your area, so don't expect them to know immediately why the topic of the paper is important or interesting. Indeed, many readers won't make it past the first few pages. This means two things. First, make sure you've made your main claims and why they're important are all clear to the reader within those first couple of pages. No one is going to keep reading 10 pages on to get to good bits when they've got dozens and dozens of papers piled on their desk to read. And second, those first few pages should be the best, most engaging, most polished writing you've ever done.

For similar reasons, it helps if your sample has an abstract at the top. If the abstract looks interesting, you'll increase the chances the paper is read all the way through.

Do not use a co-authored paper as your writing sample. The reasons why should be obvious. If you want to use a chapter from your thesis as a writing sample, make sure you prepare it so that it works as a stand-alone paper. That means explaining all relevant background fully, removing references to other chapters, etc.

2.8 Research Statement

You've got two goals here. The first goal is to show that you can communicate about your work on your specific area of research well, so that you'll be able to interact usefully with others in the department. Writing well and clearly, for a broad audience, is how you'll achieve this. Keep it simple, avoid jargon, explain anything that someone distant from your subfield might not understand. Your other goal is to show that you've got a clear idea for research and publications in the future — i.e., over the coming few years.

In general, you'll want the following two things. First, you want to show that you've got a coherent research project (or at most a couple of separate-but-related coherent projects), which is all yours and yours alone, and which has great potential for finding new and interesting contributions to the wider literature — essentially, that you've tapped into a rich vein of philosophical research that you're uniquely equipped to mine, which will make you (and your department) rich with lots of high quality publications and grant successes over many years to come.

And second, you want — no, *need* — to discuss specific examples of papers, grant proposals, workshop you want to host, etc., that you are interested in for the future. Don't just mention a bunch of topics that you're "really interested in" and would "totally like to look into further someday". No one will believe that you'll actually follow through. Mention specific papers you intend to publish, described (as mentioned) at about the level of an ordinary abstract. Discuss specific grant proposals you have in mind, or conferences you intend to organise.

Do not underestimate how hard it is to write up a really good research statement. It's usually only 1 to 2 pages, but in a certain sense it should take many weeks to write. That is to say: very early on in your graduate career you should be thinking about your own project and how it might evolve into a fruitful, broader project. If you only give yourself a day or two to write up your research statement, you won't have nearly enough time to develop, and convincingly demonstrate that you have, clear and fruitful research plans for the future.

2.9 Recommendation Letters

You'll want to get yourself a number of strong letters of recommendation. Almost all applications will require at least three letters, though often applicants will submit (and even expected to submit) five or more. (How many should you submit? That's a good question. The answer? Who knows! For discussion, see here.)

Make sure you have a letter from your supervisor; that's important. Also important, if possible, is a letter from someone external to your university. Even better would be multiple letters from several folks at different universities.

Many readers won't pay attention to letters that come from your home department, since it's basically their job to get you placed somewhere. A letter from an external evidences that someone with no strong institutional incentive to stick their neck out for you is nevertheless willing to do so. For many candidates, getting good external letters is one of the hardest parts. It means that you need to (somehow) make yourself known to (hopefully very fancy) people outside of your department. That means networking: going to talks, asking questions, going to conferences, spending time at other departments.

You should also make sure you have a strong teaching letter. This may mean that you have to be proactive in getting a certain member of staff to observe you teach, so that they can say good things about you. It can be good to have a member of your supervisory team to observe you teach so that they can say something nice about your teaching in addition to your research, but you should also hopefully have someone not on your committee who can write your teaching letter.

Finally, make sure you ask potential letter writers early. Don't wait until a week or two before the application is due! If at all possible, try to ask a couple of months before hand. Even one month is cutting things short, and you'll likely annoy your reference writer if you ask them to write something up for you in that kind of time frame. (And a reference writer is not someone you want to annoy.) Obviously, there are exceptions to this, and it's not always possible to ask long in advance. But if you have the opportunity to ask early, take it.

I'll say that again because it's important, and it's a mistake that I see many grad students making: *request reference letters at least a month (if not more) in advance.*

3 Interview Preparation

3.1 General Advice

If you get an interview, do some research on the department in advance. Look at who's there, what sort of research they're doing, how it might interact with your own. If there is someone there who works on stuff related to yours, try to get to know their views so that you'll be better equipped to discuss ideas with them. Be enthusiastic — it's your heart's desire to work there!

If there's a teaching component to the job, also look at what courses are being taught, what courses you could teach (be realistic), and what sorts of courses you could teach that they don't currently have and would usefully complement their current profile.

If it's at all possible, try to organise a mock interview well in advance of any interview you might do. This might be with your supervisor, or another member (or members) of staff, or other graduate students (it's best, though, if someone in the room knows what sorts of thing interview panels will be looking for, and can comment accordingly). Getting feedback on how you deal with questions in an interview setting will be immensely valuable. If your first interview is over Skype, it can be good to do the mock interview over Skype as well — even if the interviewers are just in the room next door.

If you get the option to choose when you do your interview, aim either for earlier in the morning (but not first thing in the morning), or shortly after lunch. The reason for this is to avoid the negative effects of decision fatigue. (If you don't know what that is, then Google it.)

At the interview, dress well — conservative, but try not to look like a lawyer.

3.2 Job Talks

This should be the best presentation you've ever given. The process here should be similar to the selection of your writing sample — most of the same tips and rules apply. For example, choose something on the advertised AoS; don't present co-authored work; make sure that the importance of the work is immediately apparent.

There is one important difference, though: in general, it's better to do your job talk on something *un*published. It's ok to send as a writing sample an already published paper, but giving a talk on something already published (a) can potentially signal that you don't have any new cool ideas, and (b) is just frustrating for an audience, since you won't be able to incorporate their comments into the work.

However, do not confuse *unpublished* with *unpolished*. You don't want to present something which is very rough around the edges, or which you haven't thought about a great deal. The worst circumstance would be having your argument entirely demolished because of some objections you hadn't considered.

Finally, many people will recommend that you don't give your talk on the same thing you used for your writing sample. The worry, of course, is that if you do that, you may end up looking like a one trick pony. Of course, this advice should be tempered by the other advice just given. You can't always satisfy every recommendation, and individual circumstances may differ.

A few general tips on presentation:

1. You should be animated and engaging, the topic and discussion should be accessible to a wide audience — or at least there should be enough in the presentation that's accessible so that members of the audience who aren't in your subfield can still ask meaningful questions. Make sure you pace yourself properly, don't speak too fast, or too slow. Basically: be perfect.
2. *Do not simply read a paper*. This is an incredibly bad way to present a paper, and you'll achieve nothing but sending the audience to sleep. On the other extreme, do not try to improvise from a hastily written handout. You should have a well-rehearsed and engaging presentation. In general, you'll probably want to have rehearsed the talk four or five times. Rehearse in front of an audience as well, and make sure they give you detailed and harsh feedback on your presentation.
3. *Don't go over the time limi*t. That's a great way to annoy your audience.
4. Don't begin your talk with an apology for, e.g., being jet lagged, or having a rough sleep the night before, or (worst of all) having a really big night out. Excuses aren't going to get you special treatment, and they'll only make you look bad.
5. Avoid constant 'um's and 'ah's. Be confident and articulate in your presentation. Here is one place in which rehearsing the presentation helps.

Some people will differ on this, but I am a firm believer in the utility of handouts.[2] If you do choose to use a handout, make sure it's done well. The handout should do several things. First, it should make the structure of the paper clear. It should also allow the audience to "catch up" should they lose track of the thread for whatever reason. And, it should allow them to revisit potentially difficult arguments after they've passed, so they can scrutinize them more closely after the fact. Each of these things is invaluable, at least to many audience members, so you should always have a good handout. (All of this holds true even if you're also going to do a powerpoint presentation.)

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[2] The arguments against handouts are truly baffling: some people say that they personally find handouts distracting. This is a terrible argument for not using them, for two reasons. First, just because

Some general tips for handouts:

1. Make sure the handout is not too dense. Your audience can't read long paragraphs of text and listen at the same time.
2. And if you're doing powerpoint, make sure the handout and the presentation are in sync. This means things like keeping stuff in the same order, and using similar headings. An easy way to do this is to use a print out of your powerpoint slides as the handout itself. This can also be useful in the event of technological failures (see below).
3. Also, if you're going to be in charge of printing off the handouts, make sure you print enough off! Don't show up with 10 handouts for an audience of 30, as you'll only hold people up while they wait for more to print and annoy everyone. And certainly don't ask someone at the institution to print off your handouts at the last minute. You want to appear organised, and a last-minute shuffle to prepare presentation materials does not inspire confidence in your organisational capacities nor in your seriousness for the position.

It's can also be a good idea to also have a powerpoint (or beamer, etc.) presentation to go along with your talk, though this isn't as important as having a handout. If you do have a visual presentation, you have to do it right. Powerpoint presentations are easy to mess up...

1. First, *don't* cut and paste the written version of your talk into the presentation. This is all sorts of bad: it's ugly, it's lazy, it's difficult to follow.
2. Make sure the dot points aren't too long or difficult to read — use simple, short sentences. (The dot points don't even have to be grammatically complete sentences, just so long as they're easy to follow.)
3. Likewise, use a simple, but interesting, format for each slide. I've seen slides that were so "engaging" that they gave some members of the audience motion sickness. I'm not joking. Try to avoid that.
4. Do not have too much stuff on one page. That doesn't mean: spread lots and lots of points over many pages. It means that you should "chunk" your points up fairly coarsely, roughly 3 to 5 dot points per page maximum, discussing each dot point over (at least) a couple of minutes.

one finds them distracting doesn't mean that most people do, and in fact most find them useful. And second, if one finds handouts distracting, the correct solution is to not look at them, not to insist that no one else looks at them!

5. Don't simply read off the bullet points from the presentation. You should see the bullet points as "talking points" or memory joggers — something from which to launch your (well-rehearsed) discussion on the next point in your talk.

6. Do not rely on technology!

   - Don't assume that you'll be able to hook up your macbook — or any laptop — to the projector they've got. There are so many things that can go wrong here, so don't expect that you'll be able to use your own hardware. If you've got a presentation format that requires you to use your own hardware, then *change it*.[3]
   - Powerpoint slides can be saved as pdf files, and it's highly recommended that you present them in this format unless you've got animations. The reasons for this are several. First, different versions of powerpoint can screw up your carefully chosen formatting, making what was a nice looking slide into a hideous unreadable mess. Saving the slides as pdfs guarantees that they'll look exactly as you want them to look. And second, almost every computer will be able to read pdf, whereas not every computer will be able to handle powerpoint. At the very least, you should have both a .ppt and a .pdf version of your slides. It's not like it'll cost you to have both versions on hand if needed, and it only takes a second to save a file as a pdf.
   - Put all versions of your slides on a thumb drive so you can access them again if anything goes wrong. Also, email them to (a) yourself, and (b) the chair of the talk, for the same reason. Have (sufficient numbers of) print outs of your slides just in case everything else goes wrong.

The theme here is *redundancy*. There should be exactly 0% chance that things will go horribly wrong; if it does, then it'll probably be perceived as your fault. Because it is. Because you weren't properly prepared, and didn't take the job seriously enough.

In general, think back to the really good presentations or lectures that you've seen, and try to think about what made them work. Also, think back to the really bad presentations you've seen, and why they didn't work. Additional useful tips on presentation can be found here.

Finally, note that getting really good at giving enjoyable, engaging presentations will often take years of practice. This is one thing that you should be thinking about early on in your graduate career. Practice giving talks not only to your peers, but also at conferences, local centre seminars, and external departments.

3.3 Sample Questions

Make sure you have answers to a range of standard (and not-so-standard) questions, some of which are listed below. There will almost certainly be questions you have to deal with which are not on the lists that follow.

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[3] The worst job talk I've seen was one where the audience was sitting around waiting for *25 minutes* because the speaker insisted on using their own hardware (a mac). I've also seen talks where the presentation was saved and had to be run through a specific website, which, of course, was have problems on the day of the presentation. These sorts of things can be easily avoided.

For instance, usually the resident expert will ask probing questions about your writing sample. And sometimes you will get questions about your research which are totally out of left field. You can't really prepare for those, except by knowing your own work really well. If it's been a while since you've written your writing sample, it might be a good idea to brush up on it before any interviews.

3.3.1 Research & impact questions

1. Tell us about your research
2. Tell us about your dissertation
3. What are your plans for future research?
4. What are your strengths as a researcher?
5. What are your weaknesses as a researcher?
6. Tell us about the opportunities that your research presents for interdisciplinary collaboration?
7. Do you have the potential for establishing an international reputation?
8. If you ran a reading group, what would it be on and who would you read?
9. If you held a workshop, what would it be on and who would you invite?
10. What's happening in your area right now that excites you?
11. We want to get a sense of what kind of philosopher of X you are. Aside from your specific areas of research, which other topics in philosophy of X are you interested in?

In the UK especially (though not only), you'll also want to think about the following questions:

1. How can or does your research benefit the wider (non-academic) community?
2. What sort of impact$^{\text{TM}}$ does your research have?
3. How do you measure the impact$^{\text{TM}}$ of your research?

If you don't know *exactly* what 'impact$^{\text{TM}}$' means in the context of UK academia, then you should be looking it up now.

3.3.2 Teaching questions

1. What is your teaching philosophy?
2. How does your research inform your teaching?
3. How would you teach an introductory course?
4. What's your "vision for 'normal' philosophy courses" and your methods for teaching?
5. What would you teach if you got to design your own course integrating material from other disciplines?
6. How would you teach a course in [your AOS]?
7. How would you teach a course in [your AOC]?
8. Tell us about a memorable teaching experience
9. Tell us about a difficult or challenging teaching experience, and how you dealt with it.

10. hat do you do to help students read difficult texts / master formal logic / something else that's hard?
11. How would you handle a student how was going through a crisis of faith because of your class, or a student who refused to accept what you were teaching because of her beliefs?
12. Describe a time you had to deal with a problem student
13. How would you engage students that are required to take philosophy courses but who otherwise would not have?
14. What techniques would you use to engage students, in the same class, of very different levels of ability and interest?
15. What are your strengths as a teacher?
16. What are your weaknesses as a teacher?
17. What is special about your classes?
18. What technology do you use in teaching?
19. How would you deal with a few students who are doing badly in the class?
20. How you would deal with a significant portion of the class that is doing badly?
21. What was your worst/best moment as a philosophy teacher and why? How did you react/respond?
22. Describe your most challenging teaching situation and your most rewarding experience.
23. Which of our courses would you be interested in teaching?
24. Are there any courses that we don't offer that you'd be interested in teaching?
25. How would you work with our students as opposed to the ones at your current institution?
26. If you had the opportunity to teach a graduate level course on something outside your AoS or AoC, what would it be?

3.3.3 Miscellaneous questions

1. How would you get students exciting about doing any kind of philosophy? (i.e., not just ethics or philosophy of religion or [insert easy topic for everyone to talk about])
2. How do you plan to deal/how have you dealt in the past with disagreements with other faculty members?
3. Tell us about a difficult or challenging experience, and how you dealt with it.
4. What qualities do you look for in a colleague?
5. If you were on a search committee within our department, what would the three most important qualities of a candidate be?
6. Tell us about your professional development
7. Which do you see as you primary focus: teaching or research?
8. What is philosophy?
9. How could you see yourself contributing to our [special local thing]?
10. Why did you decide to apply for this job?
11. How do you think you would fit in with our current faculty?
12. What sorts of limitations do you see yourself working around in your research here?
13. What is the most exciting prospect about working with our current faculty?

3.4 Do you have any questions for us?

Don't ask anything such that, were they to answer the question, it has a reasonable chance to make things awkward or uncomfortable.

A good question is simply "when do you expect that I'll hear back?". Another thing you can say if you don't have any questions is "I don't have any right now, but would you mind if I emailed any that come to mind?"

Feel free to take this opportunity to update them on anything new in your CV since you applied.

4 Summary

A list of the most important points:

1. Start thinking about this early — submit papers early, network with potential reference writers early, practice giving talks early, prepare teaching materials early, and think about your long-term research goals early. Don't wait until just a month or two before you go on the job market, because you *will not* have enough time.
2. Have a good CV, which is nicely formatted, easy to read at a glance, and has all the important information readily accessible.
3. Use specific examples in your teaching and research statements. Don't recapitulate trite generalities — show you've got experience with teaching by using examples, and show you've thought about your future research in good depth by talking about specific projects and papers you'd like to write.
4. Have someone (preferably someone experienced) look over your application materials. Likewise, organise a mock interview, and a mock presentation. Your first attempts are unlikely to be very good, and a little bit of critical feedback will help vastly.
5. Polish everything — polish your CV, polish your website, polish your writing, polish your presentation skills, polish your damned formatting! Yes, polish matters. Your ideas might be brilliant but so are everyone else's, so put some genuine effort in to shining them up nicely.
6. Don't bullshit. Don't list areas of expertise that you're not much of an expert in. Don't pretend that a paper under review is a 'publication'. The search committee will spot the bullshit and you'll be worse off for it.

5 Additional Resources

You should absolutely not rely only on the present document for advice. Ask recent successful job-seekers for sample materials you can use to guide your own ideas. You should also be reading the advice from the following sites. The philosopher's cocoon 'Job Market Boot Camp' series is exceptionally helpful...

1. Philosopher's Cocoon Job Market Boot Camp (read at least parts 1 through 20)
2. Hanti Lin's advice for the job market (somewhat more focused on networking)
3. Dan Korman's advice for the job market
4. Dan Korman's advice for making the most out of grad school (not specifically job market focused, but important nonetheless)
5. APA online placement brochure
6. https://twitter.com/BucarLiz/status/1096485248785936385

Some of the advice you get will conflict, though most of it should be fairly consistent with what I've said here.[4] Advice will generally vary because every job search committee will be looking for different things, and will have different priorities and opinions about what materials are important. Where advice conflicts, you'll need to make up your own mind on the basis of the reasons given and your own personal circumstances.

For every single document you need to prepare, there will be examples you can search for online of the kinds of things folks are after. You should be searching for these yourself. You can also ask members of the department if they have any job application documents that they'd be willing to share with you.

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[4] Some people will say that getting lots of advice is a bad idea, you should just find one or at most a couple reliable sources and avoid confusion. That's good advice too.