

So you want to transition from academia to industry...

How do I start?

Be aware of what's out there. Start subscribing to industry-focused newsletters such as [MedTech Dive](#) (or equivalent newsletter for whatever you're interested in) and get a sense of the big movers and shakers in your field, or desired field. Go out to talks and networking events (check out the general [Professional Development](#) page). Whenever you meet new people, add them on LinkedIn!

What's the timeline?

There's a lot of variation, from two weeks (application → interviews → sign offer) to four months. Generally, two months before you want to start working is a good time window to start seriously applying. It can take quite a long time to hear back from an application, especially if it's a cold resume drop.

How do I start looking for a job?

The majority of interviews come through referrals. Reach out to *everyone* you know and their connections too — you will be amazed by how willing people are to help out. We've all been there, and getting the first industry job is always the hardest. Contact lab alumni/program alumni and ask for advice on the academia → industry transition even if you aren't interested in their company. Another tip is to check out your PI's connections on LinkedIn and ask for an introduction; your PI's introduction may carry some serious clout!

Where are jobs posted?

Check out LinkedIn, Indeed, neuvoo, and set up alerts at specific companies you might want to work at (e.g. "systems engineer" at "Roche"). After you see a job that fits you, check back on LinkedIn to see if you have any connections that could give you a referral. Keep in mind that at the PhD level, you may create your own position. If you have a good rapport and are really interested, a smaller company may consider bringing you on as a strategic hire, as opposed to we-need-someone-to-do-this-now.

How do I apply?

Ideally, talk to the person who will be referring you to learn about the process and get some tips!. Always tailor your resume and cover letter to the job description. Consider a blurb on top of your resume that highlights your relevant skills (X years experience in bla bla). For the cover letter, consider listing bullet points of how your qualifications fit specific items on the job description.

What's the interview process like?

It varies depending on the company, but it's usually something along the lines of HR phone interview → hiring manager interview → on-site. The on-site may involve a job talk of your PhD work and several technical interviews. Show that you understand and are enthusiastic what the company does and what the specific role is (read the job description carefully), and that you have relevant skills. Don't forget to ask them questions (about three per phone interview is good, try to read the interviewer) and clarify the role. The same job title may mean very different things at different companies. The most helpful way to prepare is to practice phone interviews and job talks with friends. Plus, you can get free food for your job talk practice by holding a BEST!

Ermagerd I have an offer. Is it good?

A BioE PhD in the Bay Area can expect to make 100k+/yr and up to 150k/yr for a more traditional engineering position, particularly one that is software-based. Startups will pay less for obvious reasons — be sure to understand how much equity you are getting. However, there are many other aspects of compensation to be aware of — health/vision/dental insurance, vacation days, 401(k)s, parental leave, etc. Some aspects of the package are negotiable, and companies will expect you to negotiate. Much more has been written about this elsewhere. That said, the most important thing is whether the company is a good fit for you.

Any other advice?

You got this. There are tons of people who want to support you. When you feel hesitant about asking someone for help, think about whether you would want to help if you were in their position, and commit to giving back when you can. Good luck, and we're all here for you.