The Subtle Art of Succeeding at Interviews

Caroline Chavier - @MrsCaroline_C

Agenda

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1. Introduction
2. How to prepare to interview
3. Academia VS Industry
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5. Diversity
6. Diversity Advocate
7. Conclusion

Introduction

Who I am

"I am working on diversity issues because it's critical. There is an intellectual need for mixing all kinds of minds together to create a more representative workforce."

— CAROLINE CHAVIER, THE ALLYANCE CEO

Who I am

Caroline Chavier

An experienced tech recruiter

Co-Founder of the Paris WiMLDS meetup

Passionate about Machine Learning & Ethics

TEDx Speaker : Diversity and Women in AI

A Twitter lover : **@MrsCaroline_C**

When I first discovered the academic world

Back in 2017, at Criteo, a new Head of Research joined the R&D team

I asked many questions to my fellow researchers

I started to headhunt researchers on **arxiv.org**, follow all the major ML conferences to spot the ML trends, talent and tweet about the topic

I discovered **a whole new world** : new ways of thinking, different salaries, different expectations from pure engineers and strong commitment to do “research”

The Paris WiMLDS Team

+3 700 members

🙌🏽 The #FridayWiMLDSPaper & #BBLWiMLDSParis

Our organizing team:

- **Chloé-Agathe Azencott** (@cazencott)
- **Caroline Chavier** (@MrsCaroline_C)
- **Marie Sacksick** (@mariesacksick)
- **Natalie Cernecka** (@ncernecka)

The Tech Coaching Program

The 10 Surprising Things My CTO And I Learned While Offering Free Coaching Sessions

The full article will help you !

My latest project

Last week, I created my company : The Allyance (**@TheAllyance_One**)

I help both companies and candidates :

- **companies** wanting to reach excellence in **hiring**
- **candidates** wanting to find the perfect job

I work with people allergic to diversity washing and **embracing differences**.

Recruitment / Diversity / Coaching

Today’s goal

I want to **empower** you, help you manage your stress, **prepare** your interviews and succeed at every interview.

How you can prepare to interview

Interviewing

👋🏼 **An interview is a conversation**

An interview is not an evaluation : it’s not a professor / student relationship

Interviewing is also an ability for you to **extend your knowledge**

👇🏼 Interviewers want to know more about your background and expectations

Your resume

📄 There are cultural differences depending on the countries where you apply.

⚠️ There is no universal and perfect resume.

A recruiter takes **a-6-second-look** at a resume in average 🔂

"*The length of the resume does not matter as long as relevant information about your skills are featured*"

👉🏼 We should all relax! Write a complete resume displaying all your experiences in order to be able to personalize it to a specific job.

Personal projects / Academic papers

💻 You are part of an NGO? Your last paper got accepted at a conference? You wrote a technical blog post? You teach people how to code? You developed an app on your personal time to learn a new coding language?

It deserves to be featured in your resume!

💎 It's always smart to highlight what you do (and not just at work) !

Introvert people can shine and show their true colors via the projects they worked on.

Build an application strategy

💡 *“Once you know what you want, know your value, you should **define a strategy**.”*

🎯 **Update** your Github / Linkedin / Personal website / Twitter / Kaggle

🎯 Make sure you feature the **right keywords** : Machine Learning, NN, XGBoost…etc

🎯 If you don’t know how to introduce yourself, ask a friend or a colleague

🎯 Look at the Linkedin profile of the people working in your dream companies…

The right questions

What are your **goals**?

Where are the **experts** in the field?

Do you want to work in a company?

Do you want to pursue a **PhD / Post-Doc**?

List some questions and ask them around

Analyze the vocabulary

📍 Before applying to job offers, **understand the characteristics of the job** you target or the differences between the jobs.

The same job title might not mean the same in different companies : talk to professionals who do the job you target ?

👍🏼 You will **speak the same language** as the recruiters / hiring managers.

Interviews are fun

ML interview like any other interview

Goal(Interviewer) = *max* (information about your technical skills)

Goal(Candidate) = *max* (your technical skills) + *max* (information about the position and the company)

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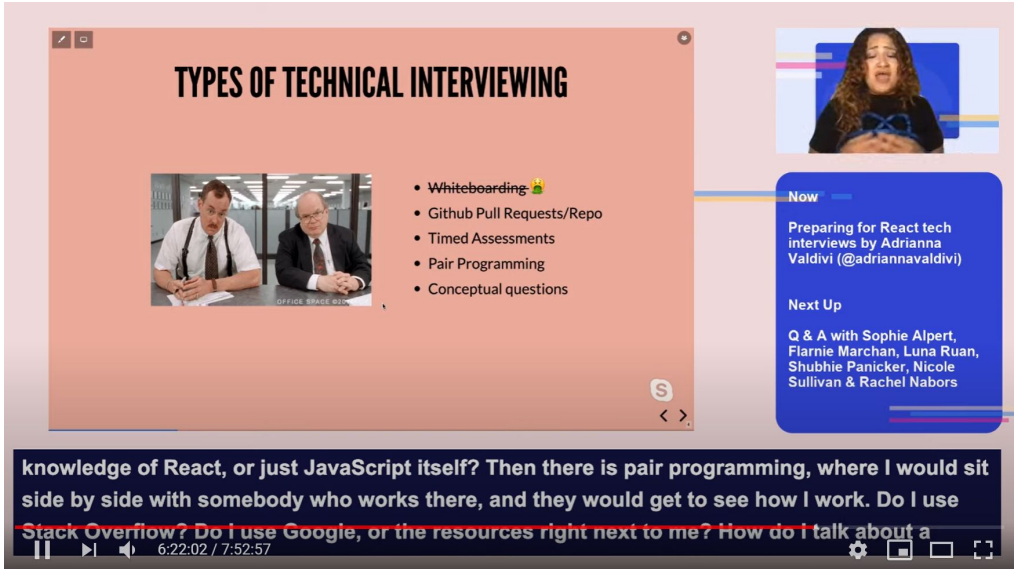
Slides

To prepare technical interviews



💻 [Watch this talk from Adrianna Valdivia]() from the Women of React Conference

Prepare your interview

Recruiters are not dumb.

Look at the lab / team **publications** to understand the challenges they tackle.

Try to identify the **parallels** between your background / PhD and what they work on.

Get ready **to talk** about your work.

List the questions you want to ask.

General pieces of advice

Interviewing regularly is healthy

🤯 As candidates, **interviewing is a job**.

🏋️ Have at least 3 interviews per year even if you don't intend to leave your company.

It is healthy to **keep a foot in the job-interview-world**, forcing yourself out of your comfort zone, knowing your own shortcomings and to feel ready when trying to reach for your next position.

💠 Practice for interviews on a regular basis. **Self discipline** will get you anywhere!

You got the power !

🌷 **You are a valuable asset**! You have skills that are scarce and needed by companies.

🗣️ If you work or want to join the tech industry, candidates choose their company… companies are not the one having full power anymore.

🌸 **You will be the ONE** selecting your next move !

Academia VS Industry

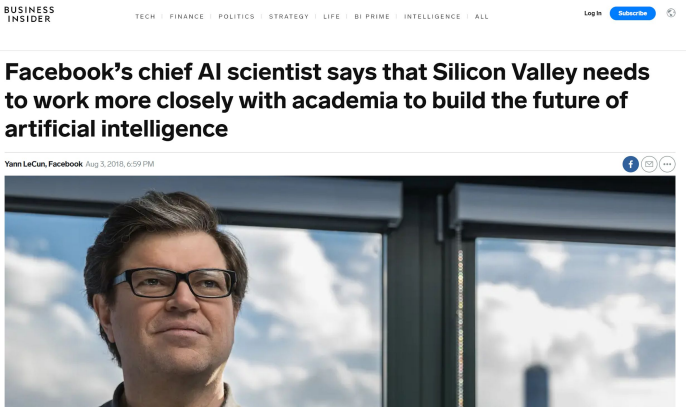
Academia VS Industry

Synergies between academia and the industry

Yann LeCun says that letting AI experts split their time between academia and industry is helping **drive innovation**.

For academics, an industry affiliation offers any number of benefits: resources in the form of **compute power** and **funding**, more collaboration with others, and the opportunity for immediate **real-world application** of research, at a scale.

There are great collaborative research groups



We need academic teachers and labs

We need academic research teams to exist to teach and tackle different research topics.

It is crucial to lead an **independent** and non-profit generating research.

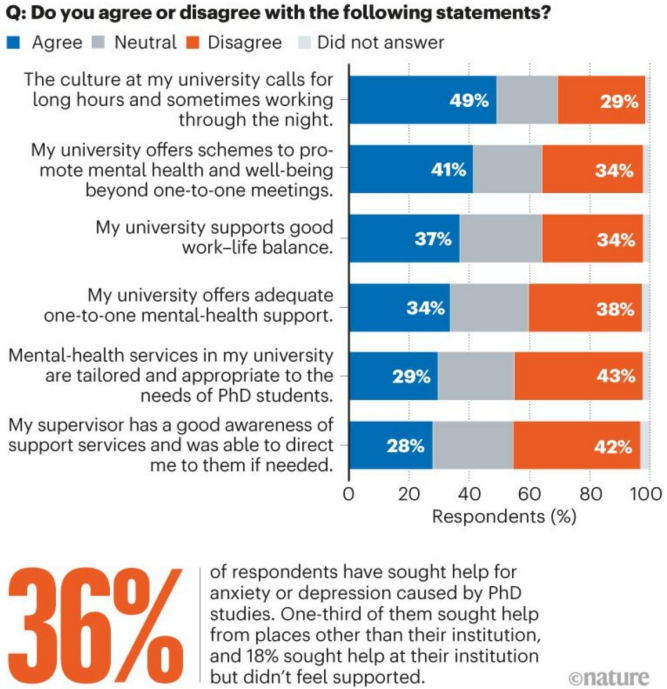
We need talented teachers to be able **to mentor students** and **lead the way** in machine learning.

We need to help academics **focus on research**, not looking for funds. We should encourage collaborations between academic labs as well.

CAREER FEATURE · 13 NOVEMBER 2019

PhDs: the tortuous truth

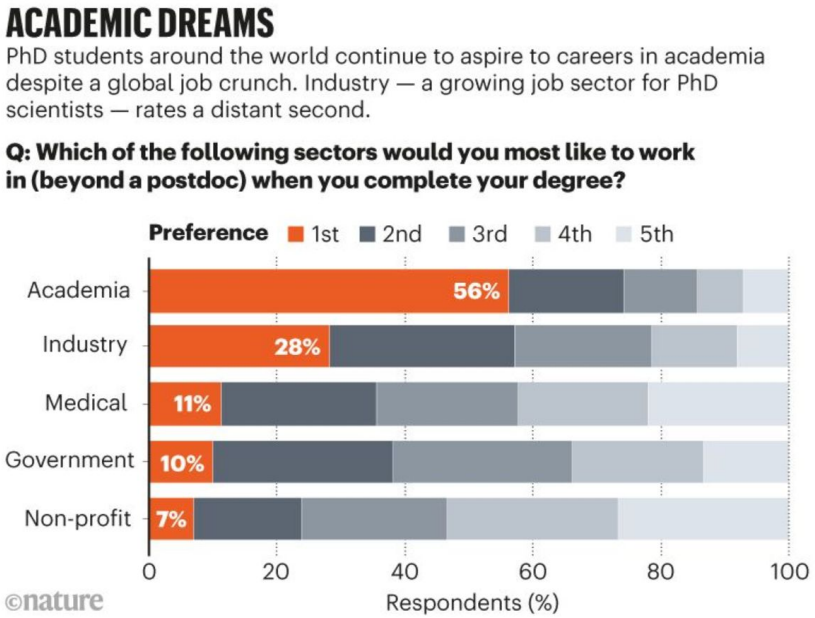
Nature's survey of more than 6,000 graduate students reveals the turbulent nature of doctoral research.



Source: *Nature* PhD Survey 2019

Link

PhD students' desire



Source: *Nature* PhD Survey 2019

[Link]

COVID19

We should relax 💙

We are not dealing with the situation in the same way and it's fine.

It is an opportunity to **plan**, to **be creative**, to **optimize future opportunities**.

You can :

🔎 **Source opportunities & network online** (Linkedin, Twitter, Discord, Facebook...etc)

🔎 Book discussions with peers, professors and professionals.

🔎 Reach out to recruiters

🔎 Have fun : Kaggle, watch documentaries, read books...

If you are having a hard time

Connect with a support group : WiMLDS, WWC, RLadies, Ladies of Code…

Read the news and updates from your company / school / lab

Reach out to your boss, professor or a HR professional to understand what is happening and what the next steps will be : extended deadline, internship postponed?

Do not assume, always probe

Knowledge is power

There is always a solution, someone to help and tomorrow is a brighter day!

Diversity

How did I get interested in Diversity?

My experience as a recruiter

A controversy: James Damore

Discussions with inspiring women

Google's Ideological Echo Chamber

How bias clouds our thinking about diversity and inclusion

go/pc-considered-harmful

James Damore - damore@

July 2017

Feel free to comment (they aren't disabled, the doc may just be overloaded).

For longer form discussions see g/pc-harmful-discuss

Reply to public response and misrepresentation	**1**
TL;DR	**2**
Background	**2**
Google's biases	**2**
Possible non bias causes of the gender gap in tech	**3**
Personality differences	4
Men's higher drive for status	5
Non discriminatory ways to reduce the gender gap	**5**
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Diversity

"It's not diversity that is going to destroy us but fear of diversity"

Federica Mogherini

Gender Imbalance in AI

ELEMENT AI

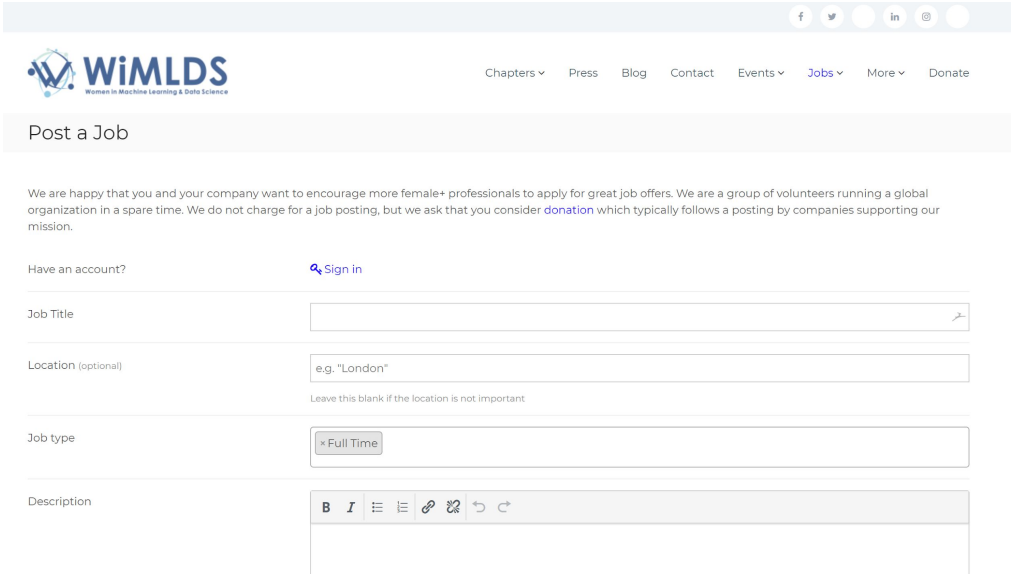
*Among 4000 researchers who have been published at the leading conferences NIPS, ICML or ICLR in 2017

Diversity advocate

Improving Diversity

Companies & Labs can share **job offers**

Entirely free + Global reach *:* http://wimlds.org/jobs/post-a-job/ + http://wimlds.org/jobs/



What can be done

💡 If you hire or interview, consider that less women apply for positions, **rewrite your job descriptions**

💡 If you manage, knowing women ask less often for raises and promotions, **be an advocate for them**

📣 **Let women** speak > **Amplify their voices** at meeting

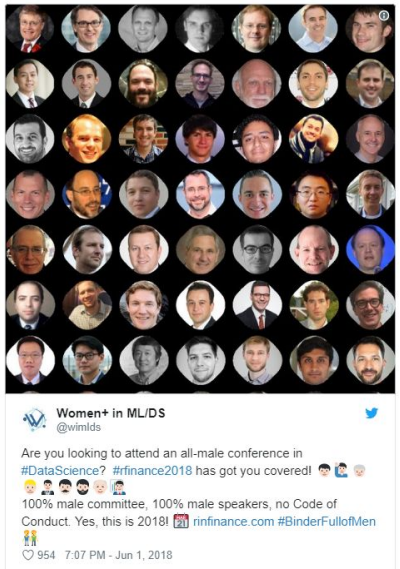
What can be done II

💡 Awareness of “**manels**”: Do not agree to be on a “manel”

Be aware: When men go out for a drink with other work colleagues, it is a disadvantage for women

💡 **Mentor and sponsor** those from URGs

Code of Conduct: **Create a space that is safe** and welcoming for all



Conclusion

Connect with WiMLDS

Email: info@wimlds.org

Twitter: @wimlds

Twitter Local Paris: @WiMLDS_Paris

LinkedIn: @women-in-machine-learning-data-science

Instagram: @wimlds

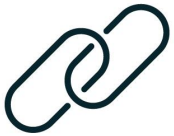
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/wimlds/

Slack: slack@wimlds.org

Website: wimlds.org

Thank you

Questions?



THE ALLYANCE

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