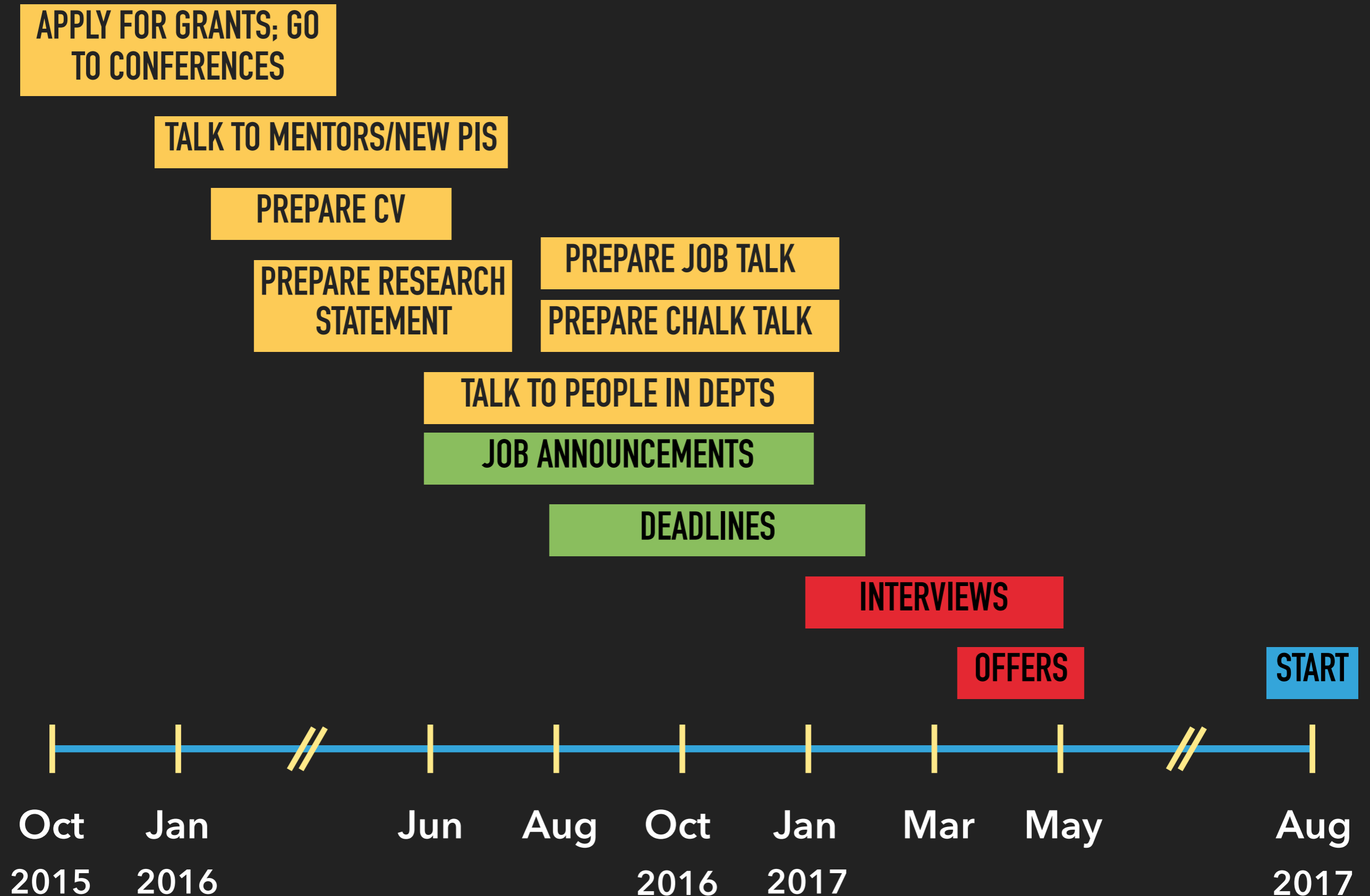


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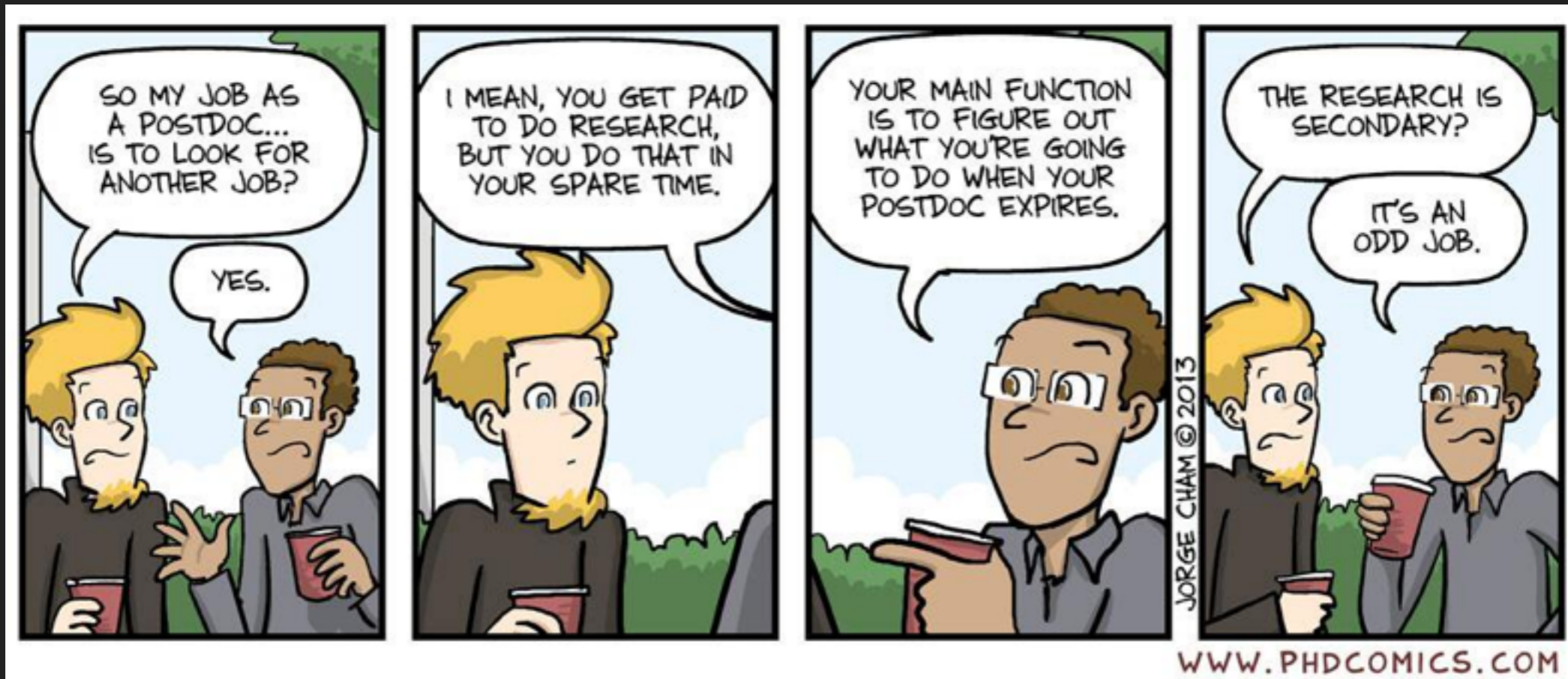
PDC CAREER SEMINAR 2016

**FACULTY JOB HUNT OR: HOW I LEARNED
TO COPE WITH THE STRESS AND EVEN
MILDLY ENJOY THE PROCESS**

BEFORE YOU BEGIN: KNOW THE TIMELINE



BEFORE YOU BEGIN: IT'S TIME-CONSUMING



**Know that things can slow down quite a bit,
and even come to a grinding halt.
So, plan ahead.**

BEFORE YOU BEGIN: TALK TO PEOPLE

- ▶ Have “the talk” with your **postdoc/ph.d. advisor**.
 - ▶ As early as you can; 1 full year before you begin your search if possible.
 - ▶ Make sure they’re onboard to fully support your application and spread the word.
 - ▶ Decide on what you’ll be finishing here and what you’ll be taking with you.
- ▶ Talk to your **partner/better-half**. You will need their help every step along the way and in making final decision.
- ▶ Talk to **mentors and new assistant professors**.
- ▶ Let people in your **professional network** know that you’re on the the market looking for a job.
- ▶ Start thinking carefully about potential **referees** (at least 4) who can write a set of complementary letters about you.

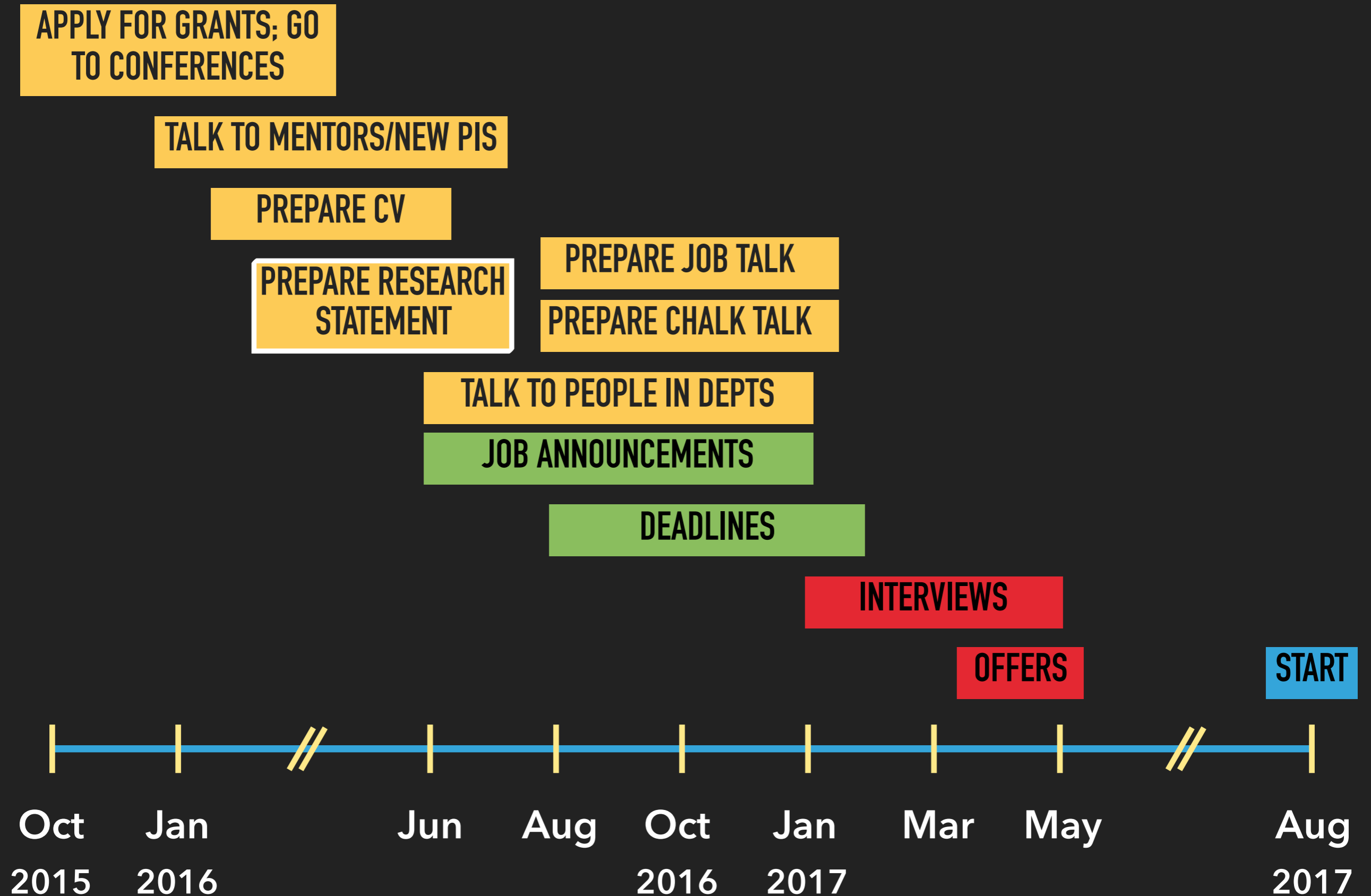
PUT TOGETHER YOUR CV

- ▶ **Most important piece of your application.**
[Well-structured, easy to read, and 100% free of typos (read from the end).]
- ▶ Highlight collaborators in various places. [If you don't have enough, its time to start working with external people.]
- ▶ Grants you've co-authored, applied for, been funded. [If you don't have this, its time to start writing small grants.] [Bridge-to-independence.]
- ▶ Mentoring high-school, undergraduate, and graduate students.
- ▶ Papers:
 - ▶ Submit your work to preprint websites. 'In preparation' doesn't count.
 - ▶ Can update search committee about status of manuscript; Call chair of search committee.

**Simple/elegant academic website containing your entire up-to-date package:
CV (w/downloadable PDF) + decent Photo + Publications + Research + Contact**

PEOPLE ARE GOING TO GOOGLE YOU!

TIMELINE



PUT TOGETHER YOUR RESEARCH STATEMENT

- ▶ Research statement is a great way to **coherently think about your past, current, and future** scientific pursuits.
- ▶ Have an **ambitious, broad-enough vision** with 2-3 major research directions for the next 3-5-10 years. [Think & present in pictures.]
- ▶ **New** [areas/systems | problems/questions | skills/techniques].
- ▶ Try to strike the “not-too-broad, not-too-narrow” mark. Remember to **plan work for a small team of scientists** but not for an entire dept.
- ▶ Be **as specific as possible**: 2-3 grant apps you can write. 3-5 projects your first 2-3 graduate students & 2 postdocs can do.
- ▶ Start identifying **specific funding agencies** & specific study sections.
- ▶ Bring your past/current work to set the context and back-up your future goals. Bring out your unique voice, **your personal ‘brand’**.

Brainstorm with people > Write it out > Ask for feedback from friends/colleagues > Iterate

TIMELINE

APPLY FOR GRANTS; GO TO CONFERENCES

TALK TO MENTORS/NEW PIS

PREPARE CV

PREPARE RESEARCH STATEMENT

PREPARE JOB TALK

PREPARE CHALK TALK

TALK TO PEOPLE IN DEPTS

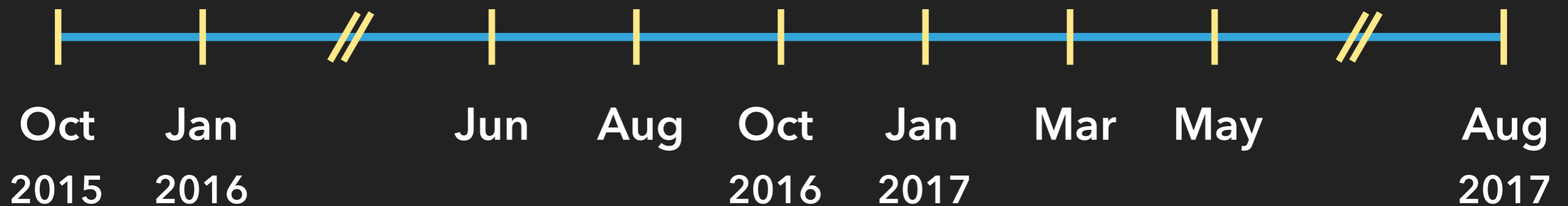
JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS

DEADLINES

INTERVIEWS

OFFERS

START



APPLICATION PROCESS: GET ORGANIZED

- ▶ Subscribe to **job boards**: Nature, Science, Cell, AcademicJobsOnline; Watch out for announcements in **Twitter**.

- ▶ Gather openings as they come in a:

Google sheet:

- University/Department
- Specific area(s) of interest
- Deadline
- Application package required
- Contact information
- Specific instructions for application
- Link to the original ad
- [Sort by deadline.]

Google doc:

- University/Department
- Necessary parts of the job ad w/ link
- Deadline
- Application package required
- Contact information
- Specific instructions for application
- Institutes/Centers/Facilities
- Faculty to collaborate

- ▶ Create constantly updated copies and **share with your referees** along with clear fields with clear instructions for submitting letter, deadline, and box to check once sent.
- ▶ If there's a Dept/Univ you'd really like to go to but there's no ad, just mail the chair.

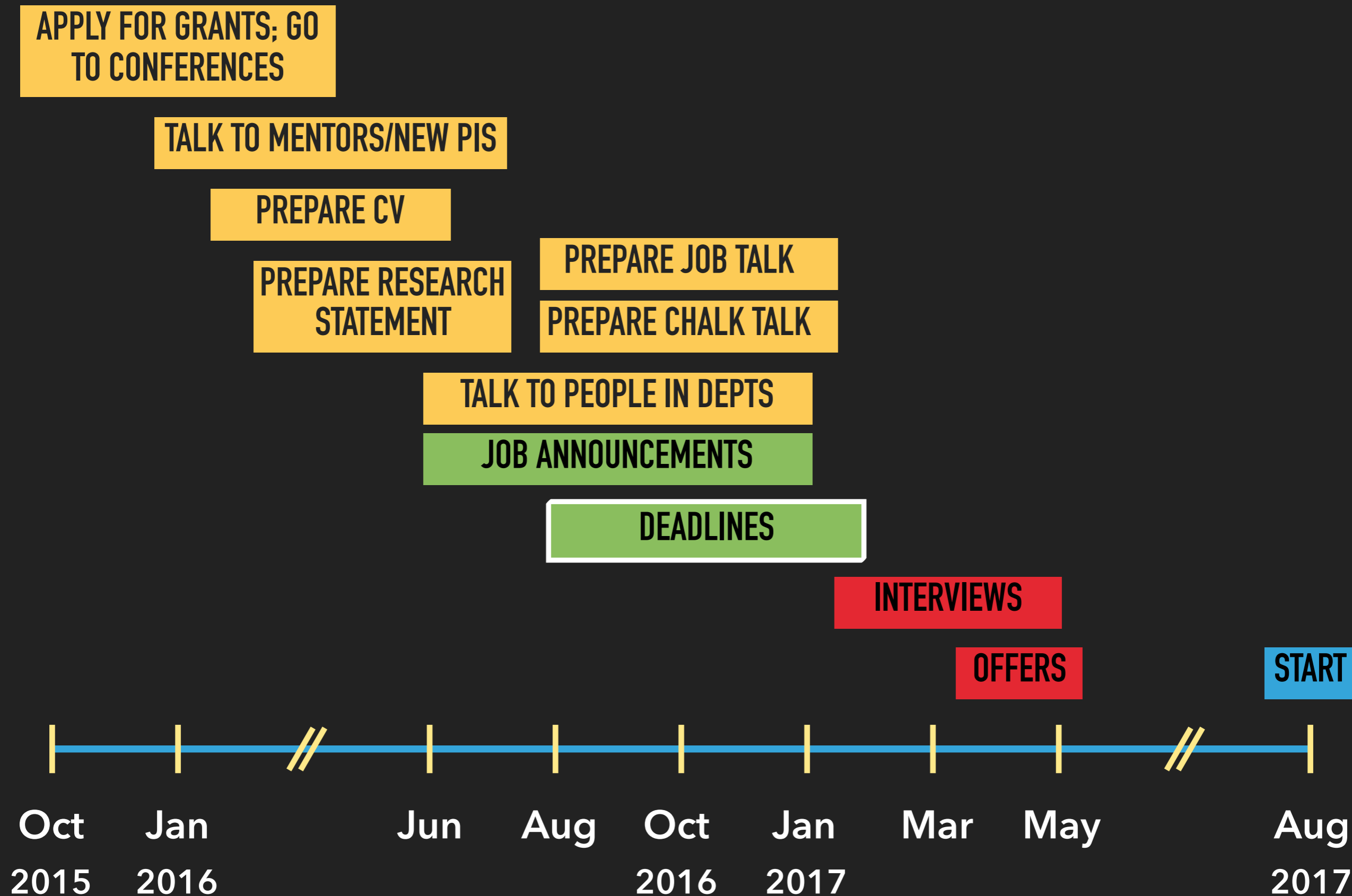
APPLICATION PROCESS: REQUEST LETTERS



APPLICATION PROCESS: REQUEST LETTERS

- ▶ Ask **at least 4 referees** for letters at least 1-2 months before your first deadline.
 - ▶ Reliable people who know your work from different perspectives / different points of time.
 - ▶ Between them, they should be able to highlight your technical skills, creativity & originality, ability to obtain external funding, mentoring skills, work ethics: hard work, teamwork, collegiality.
 - ▶ Send you CV and Research Statement, and talk to them about the type of positions you're applying to and the broad research program you're proposing.
- ▶ After you apply to each position: update your shared spreadsheet, send an email reminder, and follow-up.
- ▶ It is a LOT easier if an administrative assistant can help.

TIMELINE



APPLICATION PACKAGE

- ▶ Cover letter
- ▶ CV **DONE :)**
- ▶ Research statement **DONE :)**
- ▶ Teaching statement
- ▶ Reference letters **DONE :)**
- ▶ Three-five publications **DONE :)**
- ▶ [Diversity statement]

CUSTOMIZE YOUR COVER LETTER

- ▶ **Goal:** How you're a great fit for this position.
 - ▶ Thoughtful & conveying that you're really interested.
 - ▶ Professional
 - ▶ Free of typos
 - ▶ Well-structured
1. **Position you're applying for;** About yourself:
 - Current position + advisor + department/institution + [Ph.D. advisor/school].
 - Summary sentence about your work.
 2. Your key research projects:
 - Contributions to the field.
 - Impact on a substantive area.
 3. [Academic awards + Honors + Grants]
 4. **Job-specific paragraph for tailoring:**
 - **Centers/institutes/facilities/initiatives**
 - **Potential faculty to collaborate**
 5. Closing paragraph:
 - Contents of **your package**.
 - Enthusiasm for **this position** & thanks.

CUSTOMIZE YOUR RESEARCH STATEMENT

- ▶ **Goal:** You're working on something cool/important, you have done impactful work, and you have a detailed plan for the future.
- ▶ Accessible & exciting.
- ▶ Very well-organized coherent narrative; 'Pretty'.
 - ▶ Area/problems-of-interest.
 - ▶ Research accomplishments.
 - ▶ Research plan.
- ▶ **Format varies widely:** 2-pages, 3-pages, 4-pages, 5-pages. So, get these versions ready.
- ▶ **Change language** a little bit **to suit job/audience:** CS/engineering vs. Biology/biomedical. **Tie this to job ad.** Look for keywords/concepts & use them throughout the statement.
- ▶ **Specific:**
 - ▶ examples of projects for students/postdocs.
 - ▶ funding agencies & study sections.
- ▶ **Include relevant facilities/centers in the department/university.**
- ▶ **Custom closing statement mentioning the position/department/university.**

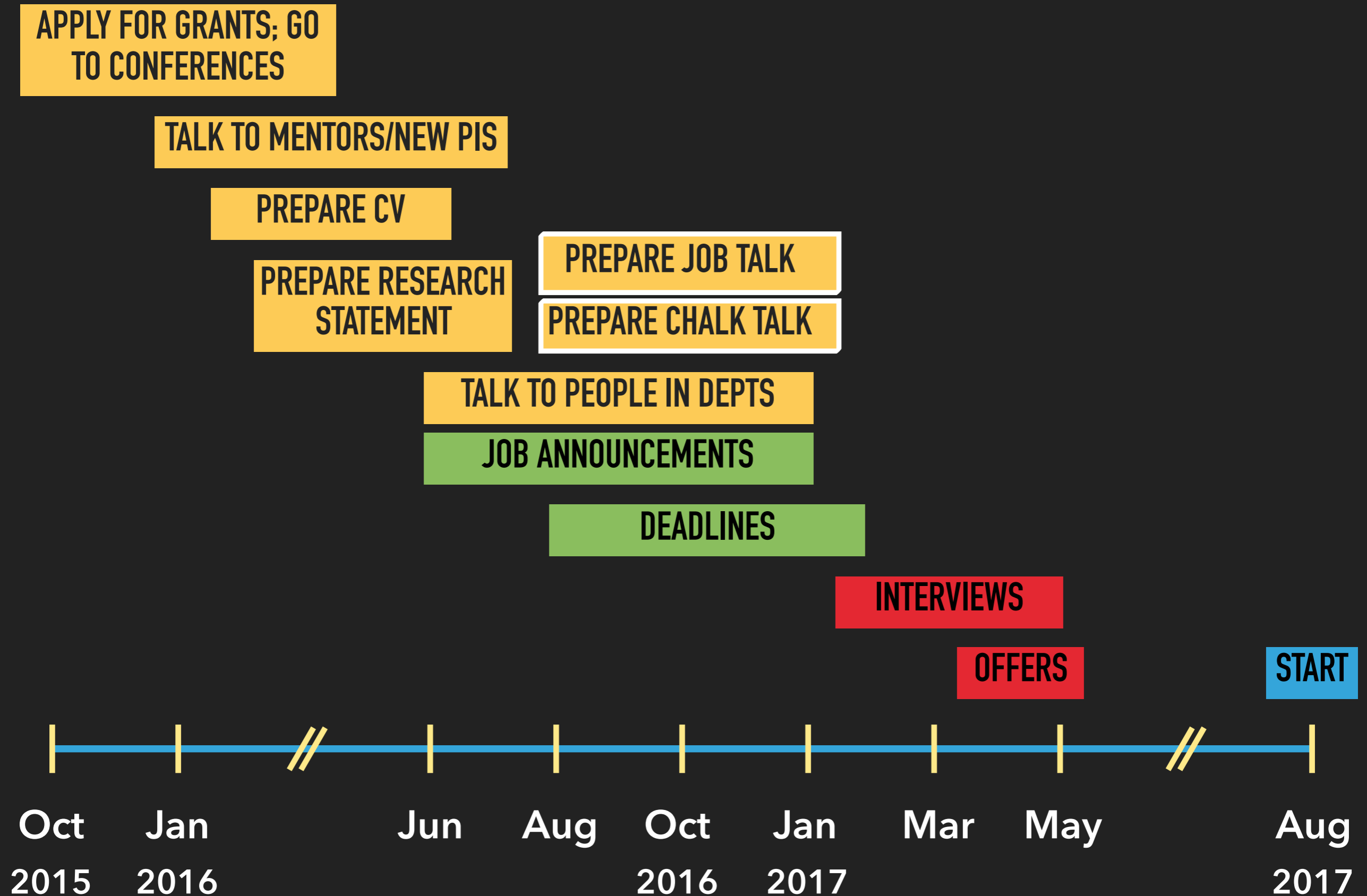
CUSTOMIZE YOUR TEACHING STATEMENT

- ▶ **Goal:** You're committed to teaching and mentoring students.
- ▶ Philosophy & your ideas for creating a better classroom experience.
- ▶ Many times just a formality; But could be important for some positions. Find out.
- ▶ **Format varies:** 1 or 2-pages.
- ▶ **Explicitly mention department/university once or twice.**
- ▶ **Find courses already being taught in the department/program that you can teach immediately.**
- ▶ **Identify 2-3 courses not offered that you can develop and teach.**

APPLICATION PACKAGE

- ▶ Cover letter **DONE :)**
- ▶ CV **DONE :)**
- ▶ Research statement **DONE :)**
- ▶ Teaching statement **DONE :)**
- ▶ Reference letters **DONE :)**
- ▶ Three-five publications **DONE :)**
- ▶ [Diversity statement]

TIMELINE



YOUR JOB TALK — YOUR BEST TALK, EVER

- ▶ **Goal:** You're a leader in the field who knows the big-picture, has done amazing work, and has great communication skills.
- ▶ They're looking for a great colleague.
- ▶ Pledge-Turn-Prestige: Real big picture & highlight crucial problems – How you creatively approached/solved them – What exciting stuff is next.
- ▶ Prepare early, give mock presentations, get feedback.
- ▶ Practice.
- ▶ Tailor to you audience: use their style/jargon. Aim to reach 90%.
- ▶ Practice..
- ▶ *Really* respect time, no exceptions: Aim for 40min + 20min of Q&A. Be prepared to be interrupted during your talk.
- ▶ Practice...
- ▶ Bring your laptop, power cord, adaptor, remote, laser pointer, backed-up file online/USB.
- ▶ Practice....
- ▶ Lighthearted, polite self-deprecating humor can help!



YOUR CHALK TALK – VISION + DETAILS

- ▶ **Purpose:** To layout your future plans for the next 3-5-10 years in an organized manner conveying strategic vision and practical details.
 - ▶ Clarity of plan, communication skills, and ability to think on your feet are all being tested.
- ▶ For each position, **ask for clear instructions.**
 - ▶ Can you bring slides? Typically just chalk on board.
 - ▶ Who's attending? Typically search committee, but can easily include all faculty in the department (even other departments).
 - ▶ What is the format? Typically 1 hr long [Plan for 40min of material] divided into "Short-term (1-2y)", "Intermediate-term (3-5y)", and "Long-term (5+y)" plans with well-defined questions.
 - ▶ Expect lots of questions/interruptions. You should answer them sufficiently, but also bring the conversation back to your message.

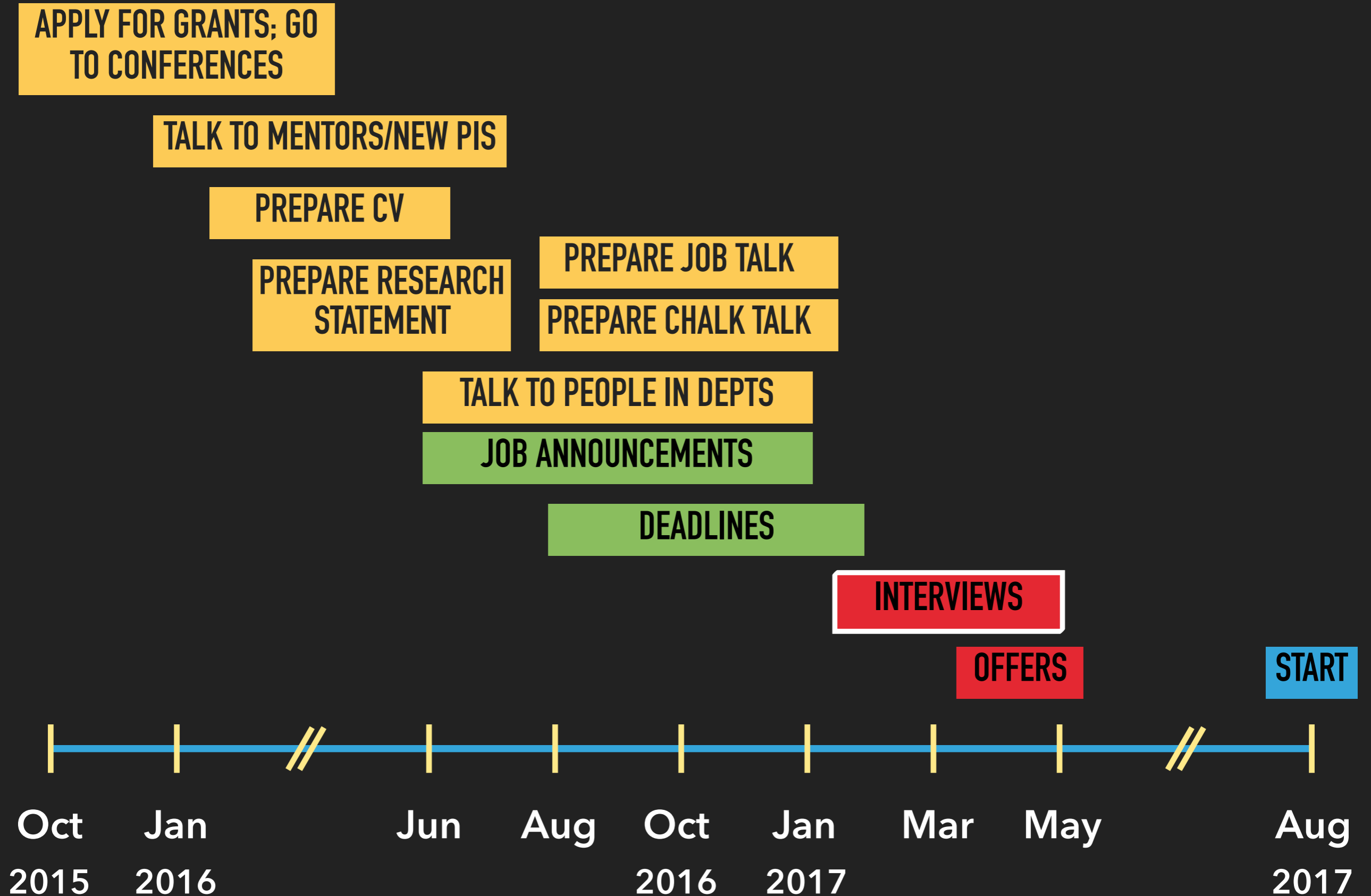
YOUR CHALK TALK — VISION + DETAILS

- ▶ **Short-term plans:** First NIH R01 proposal or the equivalent.
 - ▶ Three specific aims; Build directly on previous research.
 - ▶ What are the questions? Logic of the approach? Why this system?
 - ▶ Details, as well as possible pitfalls and work arounds.
 - ▶ What will the first graduate student or postdoc in the lab be doing?

YOUR CHALK TALK – VISION + DETAILS

- ▶ **Intermediate-term plans:** Broaden the focus of the lab, preferably including one significant new research direction.
 - ▶ Organize around questions and make the logic clear – why is this the right system/approach to answer the question(s)?
 - ▶ Less detail is needed, but should still lay out the major technical challenges and approaches.
- ▶ **Long-term plans:** If all has gone well (with questions from the audience), few minutes left for this section. Very important to lay out a long term vision:
 - ▶ What guides your research? What are the big questions that will motivate your lab? Some new directions. Eagerness to systematically expand focus of the lab.

TIMELINE



INTERVIEWS: WHAT TO EXPECT

- ▶ **Pre-interviews over phone/Skype (20-30 min)** Ask for format/attendees?
 - ▶ Be prepared with concise answers to about research, funding, teaching, potential collaborators, etc. Long-winding answers work against you.
- ▶ **Campus visit (1-2 days)** Ask for schedule at least 2-3 days ahead of time.
 - ▶ Job talk **DONE :)** Hopefully
 - ▶ Chalk talk **DONE :)** in that order!
 - ▶ Meeting with faculty
 - ▶ Looking for a colleague; Read-up; Be interested & engaging.
 - ▶ Lunch with students
 - ▶ Ask about dept. culture, their happiness. Be ready to talk about your mentoring style.
 - ▶ Dinner with faculty
 - ▶ Informal, but still expect questions. Ask about living in X. Keep close watch on group dynamics.
 - ▶ Meeting with Dean
 - ▶ Be ready to talk about your research at a high level and about fit.

Everything here is very enjoyable if you've put some thought and effort into it!

INTERVIEWS: COMMON QUESTIONS

▶ Past and future work

- ▶ What is your most important work?
- ▶ Can you talk a bit about your broad area and the authors who influence your work? What are the biggest Qs in your field?
- ▶ How will your research address them? Strengths + unique aspects of your research program.
- ▶ What would it mean to 'solve' your key research problem? [Definition of success.]
- ▶ Over next few years, lay out a progression of papers.
- ▶ What will you do if something goes wrong?
 - ▶ What happens if your hypothesis is wrong, your experiments fail, you can't get access to the archive you need, your grant is unsuccessful?

INTERVIEWS: COMMON QUESTIONS

▶ Funding

- ▶ What will your first grant proposal be? Second? Third?
- ▶ How you plan to apply for funding?
- ▶ Have you been involved in submitting grants? Have you submitted something yourself?
- ▶ Which specific NIH/NSF programs/clusters?
- ▶ What about private foundations?

INTERVIEWS: COMMON QUESTIONS

▶ Teaching

- ▶ What courses can you teach? What can you develop for us?
 - ▶ Be ready with specifics for at least one course: What level course would it be? What's the topic? Have you considered the general outline? Would it have a lab?
- ▶ What is your teaching philosophy?

▶ Mentoring

- ▶ What are the specific things you might do to get a student to 'blossom' as a researcher, or as a student?
- ▶ Will you be a hands-off or hand-on advisor and why?
- ▶ Discuss a time when you had a conflict with a supervisor. With a colleague?
- ▶ How will you enhance diversity at our institution?

INTERVIEWS: COMMON QUESTIONS

- ▶ **Why this University? In what ways will Dept/Univ be good fit for you?**
 - ▶ Why do you want this job?
 - ▶ Size of the school / department.
 - ▶ Resources, centers, and programs/initiatives that may be helpful to you.
 - ▶ Potential collaborators in the Dept., and across the Univ
 - ▶ How do your knowledge/experience prepare you for this position?
 - ▶ What are you looking for in Univ, Dept, Grad program, Colleagues, etc.?
 - ▶ What kind of startup package are you expecting?
 - ▶ If we offered you this job, would you accept it?

INTERVIEWS: QUESTIONS FOR THEM

- ▶ **Why does this position exist** – what was the impetus for creating it? Is there any particular role/niche you are hoping to fill with this position?
- ▶ What would a **successful first year** in the position look like? How will the success of the person in this position be measured?
- ▶ How would you describe the **culture** here? What type of people tend to really thrive here, and what type don't do as well?
- ▶ Is there a **mentoring** plan/program **for junior faculty**?
- ▶ What are the **teaching expectations**? Are they different for pretenure vs. tenured faculty?
- ▶ How are grad students brought into the program (rotation or not)? How are they supported/funded? How many each year? What are their typical backgrounds?
- ▶ How much does it cost to fund a Ph.D. student for 12 months? Postdoc?

INTERVIEWS: QUESTIONS FOR THEM

- ▶ Is there a history of **collaboration between Search Department and XXXX Dept?**
- ▶ Where do you see this **department/school/college in 5 years?**
- ▶ What's the **overhead on grants?**
- ▶ Is there **help for preparing grants?**
- ▶ What **computational resources** are available? IT support?
- ▶ Is there **lab space** available or will space have to be renovated?
- ▶ What kind of **start-up package** do you think I should negotiate?
(Ask this of junior faculty.)
- ▶ What is the **time line for the interview process?** When can I expect to hear back? What's best way to ask for an update if there's a delay?

INTERVIEWS: GENERAL POINTERS

- ▶ Ask for schedule ahead of time.
 - ▶ At least 2 weeks before, give list of 5-10 people you'd like to meet.
 - ▶ Write a cheat-sheet about interviewers, department, and university. Use this to prime yourself before each meeting.
- ▶ Every interaction with every single person – administrative/departmental assistants, students – is part of the interview.
- ▶ Lots of walking: Wear your Fitbit; Wear comfortable shoes.
- ▶ Very likely to be cold/snowing: Carry a jacket.
- ▶ Almost no time to rest/eat.
 - ▶ People are happy to give you water. So, ask. Pack granola/protein bars.
- ▶ But, relax, and enjoy the process.
 - ▶ Great opportunity to learn about exciting new science and network.
- ▶ Send thank you notes to everyone you met.
 - ▶ Highlight the specific connection/conversation. Exchange papers/files.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN: KNOW THE TIMELINE

APPLY FOR GRANTS; GO TO CONFERENCES

ALL THE BEST!

TALK TO MENTORS/NEW PIS

PREPARE CV

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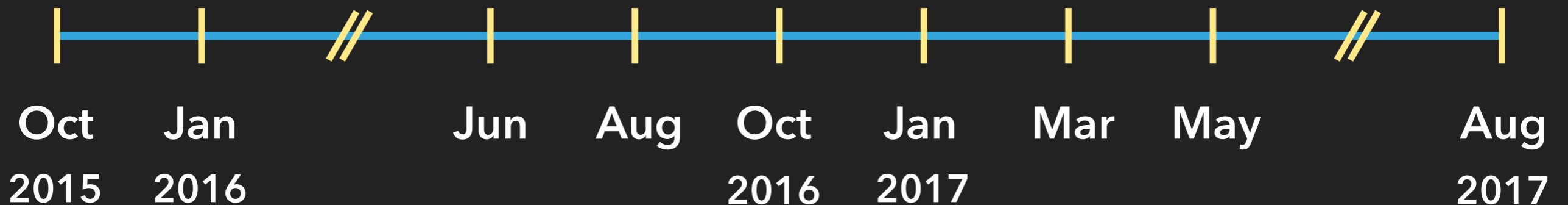
DEADLINES

INTERVIEWS

OFFERS

2nd visit (ask)
Re-evaluate fit
Negotiate

START





QUESTIONS?

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