

cosmology. I think that in the interests of accurate historical perspective it is only just and proper that he and his colleagues be given full credit for what they have done. After all, they did provide a pretty "Big Bang" in the great game of the "Origin of the Elements" and the evolution of the expanding universe.

SHIRLEIGH SILVERMAN

National Bureau of Standards

Matching candidate and job

It now seems to be established that there is an excess of physicists on the current job market. Although this is due partly to overproduction, the real problem is probably the employer's excessive preoccupation with matching the candidate's education and experience to the "requirements" of the job. This introduces an inflexibility into the job market that results in the waste of valuable skills. The irony of the situation is that the game of seeking the "perfect fit" is almost pure nonsense. Studies of the inventive process show, for example, that most significant inventions are made by people who never would have been hired to work in the area of the invention.

The alternative approach is to weight general technical and scientific ability more heavily than "fit" in the selection process. This will reduce hardship for those who happened to have worked in the wrong areas. It will also give the employer the considerable benefit of having his technical groups exposed to new viewpoints from time to time. The general level of ability of the employer's scientific and engineering staff will also be higher.

Selecting candidates on the basis of fit is easy to do because very little judgment is involved. This method, therefore, will continue to prevail. It is well to realize, however, that selection emphasizing the match between job description and the background of the candidate is shortsighted.

CHARLES P. JAMIESON

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A CORRECTION: We apologize for dropping a digit in our table of the fundamental constants (PHYSICS TODAY, August, page 67). Planck's constant should be $h = 6.626196 \times 10^{-34}$ joule-second. □

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