TIBBS Career Blitz – February 2013

Career Profile – Brian Rybarczyk, Ph.D.

What is your current title and how long have you worked in your current job?
Director, Academic and Professional Development
Director, Preparing International Teaching Assistant Program (PITAP)
Coordinator, SPIRE Postdoctoral Fellowship Program
Lecturer, Department of Biology

Where did you get your PhD and what discipline was it in?
University of Rochester School of Medicine – Dept of Pathology (now Molecular Medicine)

Did you do a postdoc?
Yes, here at UNC Chapel Hill – SPIRE program

What are your main daily responsibilities?
It varies, lots of communication, organizing programs, data management, workshop facilitation, administrative “stuff” (forms, accounting, etc), teaching, planning, managing people (Students/trainees and staff), collaborating with other groups on campus.

What are the keys to success in your career field?
Communication, organization, relationship building, effective and timely responses to requests. In many cases, I act as a middle man and thus don’t want to hold up a process if someone is awaiting a response from me.

What were the most important factors in choosing your career path?
Being in the right place at the right time, network, already establish skills

What 1 or 2 pieces of advice do you have for people who want to land a job like yours?
1) Network and learn about what other people do in their careers, steps they took, 2) be conscious of building skills that are transferable to many different situations (including research).
3) Gain experience where you have the opportunity (seek out opportunities to gain experience).
4) Clear and effective communication in job application materials and on the interview will make you a competitive candidate (lots goes into how to do this). Connect with the position/institution, don’t just talk about what you did in your dissertation or in your postdoc research.