
Miami: a recruiter's perspective

George Plesko

-
- Miami in one word:

Awkward

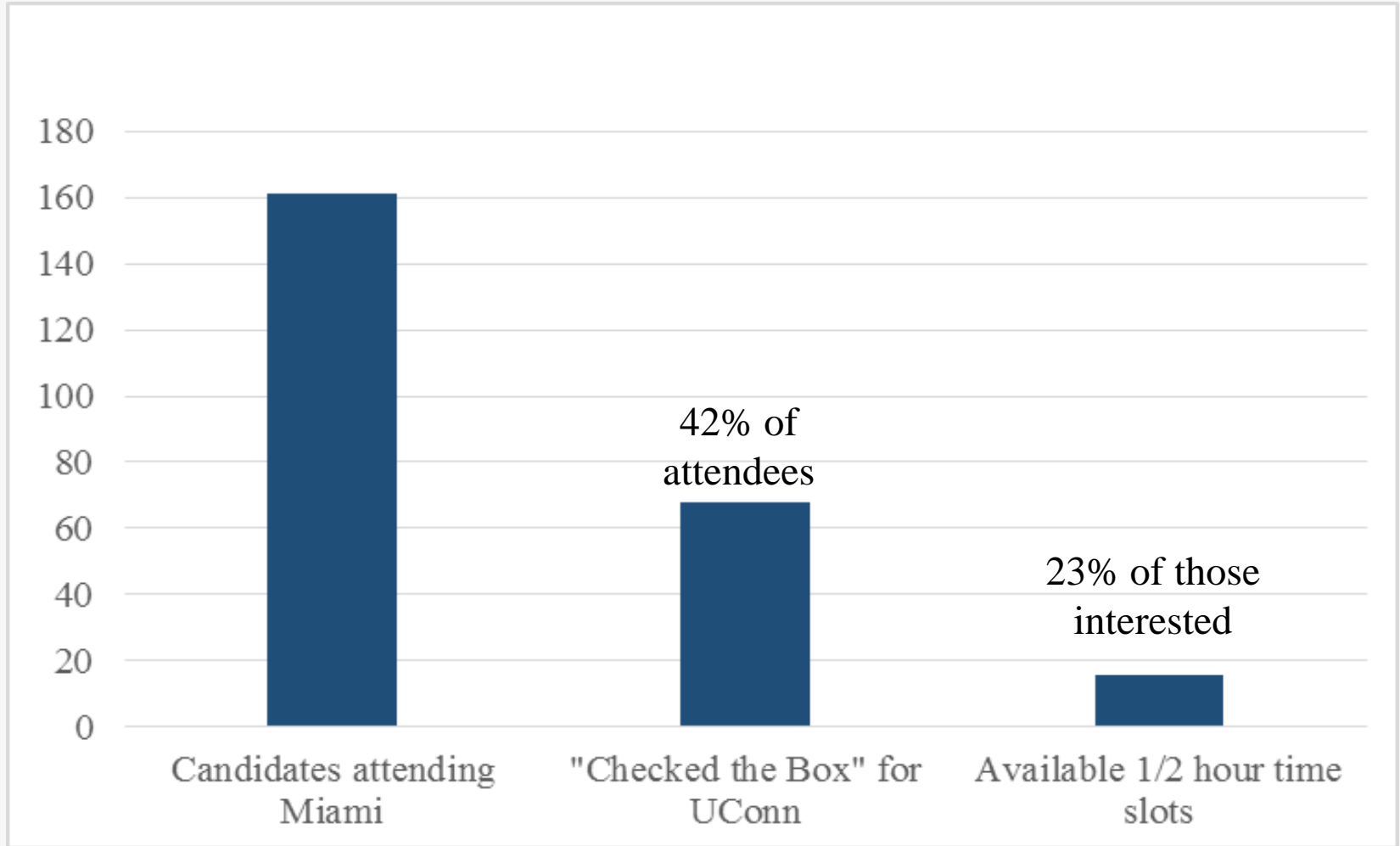
Some Initial Thoughts

- Don't take it personally.
- Be open-minded.
- Tax people have an advantage.
- You'll be alright.

Before Miami

- Talk to the students going on the market the year before you.
- Involve your advisor.
- Think carefully about which schools you “apply” to.
 - Are they really looking for you?
 - Are you really looking at them?
- Perfect your presentation
 - Yes, you will be judged.

Miami Demographics



UConn's approach

- At some level we screen everyone who will be at Miami
- We focus on those we identify that also ‘apply’ to us.
- We identify a group that we may be interested in and want to talk to or see present.
- We schedule some meetings in advance, but also leave slots open.
- We utilize the social events.

At Miami

- Don't be shy – be brave but not aggressive.
 - Introducing yourself is always a good thing. Be social.
 - Asking to meet won't get you a meeting.
 - Convey any particularly relevant information.
- Make yourself identifiable.
- If we've communicated beforehand – find me
- Don't read too much into the attendance at your presentation.

When meeting with a school

- Be courteous, curious, and informed
- Be sure you did your homework
 - Research your schools
 - ...and the department
 -and the faculty you will meet
- Be ready to sell yourself as a valuable addition.
 - Recruiters have limited time and may not be fully informed.
 - Have a short pitch prepared.
- Be prepared for anything (are they buying or selling?)

When meeting with a school

- Ask good questions (e.g., departmental strategy, growth, etc.)
- Think about revealing relevant information that might help you
 - Geographical preference
 - Joint-decision considerations
 - Connections with the department or research interests

When meeting with a school

- General or routine questions about the department/school are fine, as are ones about procedure, recruiting timeline, but....
- Don't ask or say things that are going to be repeated to someone like me asking others about their worst conversations at Miami.
 - “I don't really know what you guys do at your school – what can you tell me?”
 - “Where are you located?”
 - “Why did it take 6 years for you to finish your PhD?”
 - “What does it take to get tenure?”
 - “What do you pay?”

After Miami

- Take a deep breath
- Keep schools you've met with informed
 - Send a thank you note.
 - Be honest about your interests
 - Think of your reputation and the future
 - There are few secrets
 - 2 of our last 5 hires were experienced assistants

On-Campus Interviews

- If you really aren't interested, think carefully about visiting
- Appropriate time to ask more detailed questions about the environment, expectations, etc.,
 - Don't necessarily expect detailed answers or firm commitments.
- Evaluate the school as a “package.” Does it provide what you need to succeed?
- Remember that both sides are being interviewed and evaluated.
- Pay attention to workshop comments as if they were a referee.

After your visit

- Follow-up.

Dear George,

It's been a busy few weeks, and I'm enjoying being back in Frostbite Falls. I wanted to send you an overdue thank you for my visit to UConn. My workshop with your faculty was hands-down the most enjoyable and I thoroughly enjoyed meeting with all of the faculty.

I wanted to give you a quick update of my status on the job market. I recently received an offer from Wossamotta U. Given the strong fit I have with their group, I don't foresee an alternative where I would decline their offer. It's been a long recruiting season, I'm sure for you as well.

I appreciate having had the opportunity to visit UConn and hope to continue the connection I made with you and the other faculty. I'm certain our paths will cross again very soon.

Best regards,

Bullwinkle J. Moose

Frostbite Falls, MN

Final thoughts

- Yes, it's a job search but it's also a learning experience.
- You are establishing connections that will last your career.