JOB HUNTING EXPERIENCE:
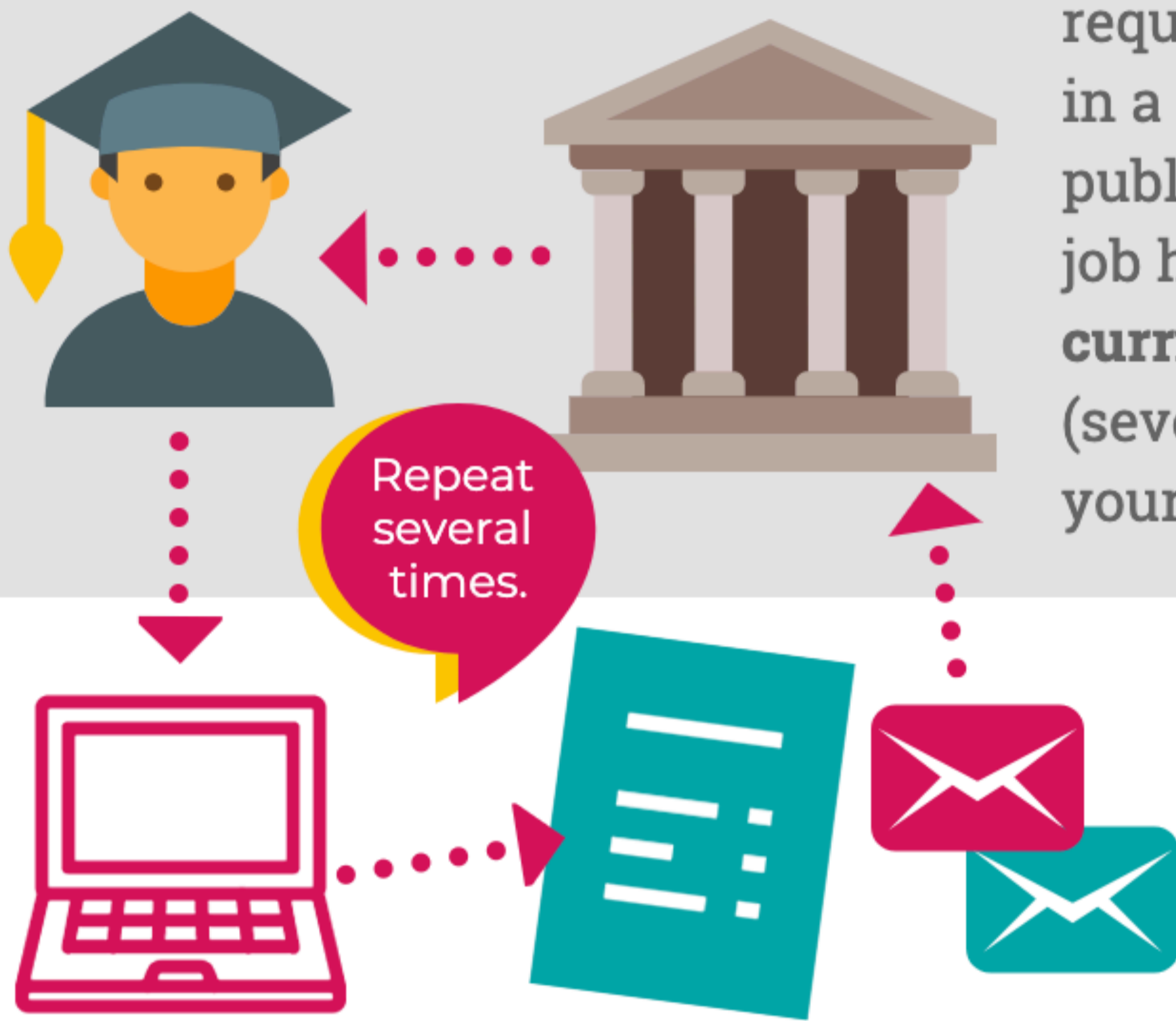## The real struggles of a freshly minted Ph.D. holder

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This is an infographic that aims to visually discuss my experience as a freshly minted Ph.D. who was looking for a job that fits my expertise, skills set, and personality. While there is no such thing as a "perfect job", I have outlined here the 1) **process of the job application,** 2) **outcomes of my application,** 3) **job offers,** and 4) **final decision**.

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The Job Application Process

Applying for an academic job has become more competitive today than ever where applicants are required to have graduate degrees, specifically a Ph.D. in a specific field, with teaching experience, publications, and awards and grants won. To start my job hunt, I had to prepare a **cover letter**, up-to-date **curriculum vitae (CV)**, and **recommendation letters** (several times). In some cases, you need to submit all your published works to attest your research capacity.
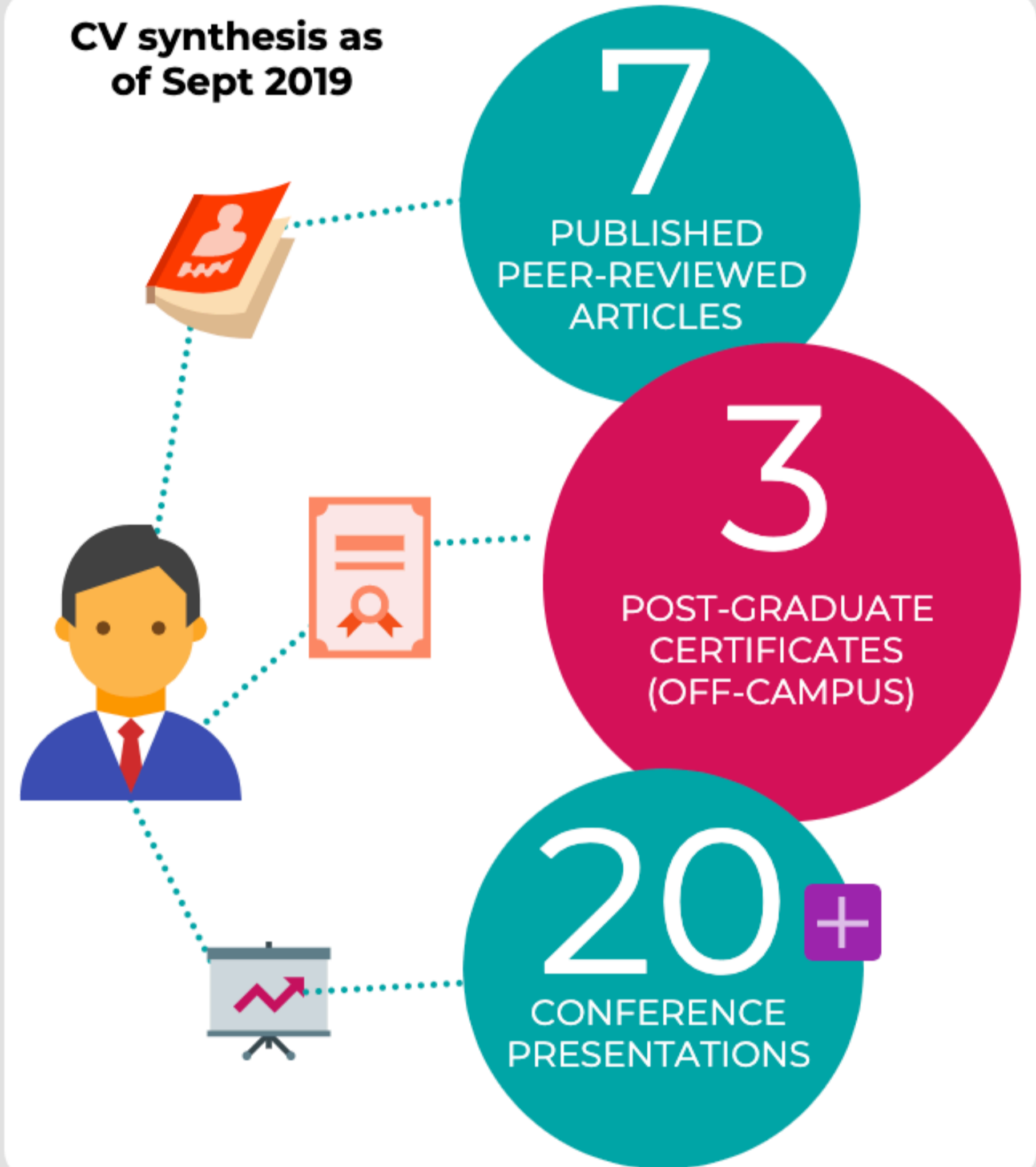
Repeat several times.

In my CV, I declared that I am a licensed occupational therapist with a Master of Health Professions Education and a Ph.D. in Occupational Therapy.

The cover letter I submitted is a two-page written expression of my motivation for the job and explanation of how I have met the **essential requirements** of the job backed by evidence(s).

Moreover, I prepared at least two (2) recommendation letters from any of the following: my immediate supervisor and/or former superior who can **attest my qualifications** for the job.

Lastly, I turned in an **up-to-date and complete CV** which must be arranged depending on the position being applied for. For instance, when I applied for a research-focused post, then I drafted my CV to largely demonstrate my research activities and achievements, followed by my teaching experiences, clinical work, etc.

CV synthesis as of Sept 2019

7 PUBLISHED PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES

3 POST-GRADUATE CERTIFICATES (OFF-CAMPUS)

20+ CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

My Job Application Outcomes

The scheduled date of my Ph.D. graduation was September 2019, hence I started to actively look for a job a year before that with the hopes of getting better chances. Improving my chances meant looking for opportunities around the globe for academic posts. I applied at 12 institutions in 7 countries, of which 4 gave no response, 2 rejected me outright, 6 scheduled me for an interview, and **3 offered me an actual job**.

In my experience, there is 1 job offer per 4 job applications. It was that tough, but that is better than no offer at all.

25%

JOB OFFER IN 12 MONTHS

● No response ● Outright reject ● Interviewed ● Offered job

My Job Offers

Unfortunately, the position being advertised is not necessarily the position to be offered. In this case, **I had to be really certain of what I need and want and be very careful with my negotiations**. After the interviews, I received three job offers as a full-time academic:

Determinants for the Decision	UNIV 1	UNIV 2	UNIV 3
RANK	Ass Inst	Prof	Assoc Prof
TEACHING	Educ	OT	Educ/OT
RESEARCH	Intensive	Not focus	Intensive
TENURE-TRACK	No	Yes	Yes
SALARY*	Very high	Low	High
GRAD STUDENT SUPERVISION	No	Yes	Yes

Final Decision

Applying for an academic job is not only competitive but very uncertain. While I may have demonstrated some qualifications, I realized that I am still a work-in-progress who must be open to learn more. **The normalcy of failing in academia is a constant reminder that humility is key, and not achievements.** Aside from the outlined determinants, my choice was based on my personal values and goals which underline my growth, peace of mind, and real/tangible societal contribution. Therefore, UNIV 3 is my final choice--still praying that everything will be in place.

Acknowledgement

To God be the glory, honor, and power.

*Compared to personal and market expectations

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