Some Tips to Prepare for Applications and Academic Job Interviews

Take it seriously: Preparation is everything
Beware that the preparation takes lots of your effort and time. Look on each interview as an individual project. Learn from your experience of being interviewed for the next one.

Work Closely with your PhD supervisor
Your PhD supervisor is primary person to consult with for applying posts. Consult with your supervisor on various aspects of applications, including CV, job specification, etc.

Look into the post and organisation
Prepare by finding out all about the post you are applying for and the organisation you're applying to.

- The job discretion explicitly or implicitly specifies what qualifications the successful candidates are expected to have. Sell yourself in the cover letter and CV, inclining these specifications.
- Look into the department/faculty/school website, to find out who there are, what are their main research groups, size of organisation etc. Also try to find out the names of your interviewers and their research topics.

Prepare your presentation
If you are giving a presentation as part of your interview, time it, practice it, and polish it. You may want to modify the presentation slides each interview according to the time frames and/or target audience. Print up copies to leave behind.

Prepare the interview
Write down how to respond to frequently asked questions and possible organisation specific questions, such as:

- Briefly explain your PhD research and why do you think it is important?
- Research Plan of next 3 (or 5) years.
- Why have you applied to this department?
- What you can contribute to our department?
- What is your teaching philosophy? What is your teaching experience? What modules do you want to teach?

Be yourself
In the interview process just try to be yourself and relaxed. Remember that you will be talking to ordinary, normal human beings, just like yourself.

Sources: