
Collecting Job Skills During a D Phil

Some Personal Views From

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right attitude/right approach/right alongside
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- There is a position to be filled
- Will you fit the job ?
- Will you fit the organisation ?
- Do you have the potential to be a manager, leader, the Chairman in 10 years time !! ?
- Are you the best of the candidates ?

Remember you need to "sell" yourself

- Jobs – near to or far from University research
 - Research into Materials Science
 - More General Materials Engineering
 - Engineering/technical functional roles
 - Specific jobs e.g. marketing, finance and other fields away from science and engineering
 - Usually functional role
 - Management training schemes

Think beyond the first job.
D Phil people are meant to go high in the organisation



Some Factors in Career Progression

Job	Key factors	Growing factors
Board level	Strategic Leadership People, team build	
Senior Specialist	Leadership, Customers People develop Technical & Authorities	Strategic
Senior Manager	Leadership, Customers People development	Strategic People development
1 st level/2 nd level manager	Management Budgets, people	Wider leadership Strategic, Customers
Functional role	Technical to role Problem solve	Management People issues

Interviewer for first job is looking for clues as to how you might progress

- What does the candidate offer
 - Knowledge
 - Transferable Skills – apply to many jobs
 - You as a person
 - Characteristics/Competencies
 - How you work and relate to others
 - Ambition

- These are the factors the recruiter will explore
 - How ?

- D Phil project
 - 1st degree experience
 - Work experience
 - Sport, interests, hobbies
 - The candidates ambitions
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- How you perform in personal or group exercises

You, the candidate provide the information in written or verbal form.
This means Preparation is key !

- Companies vary but typically
- Application forms – may be on line
 - Possible on line tests
- Interviews
- Tours
- Tests/exercises – individual or in groups
- Discussion

- Education
 - Undergraduate + postgraduate ~ 8000 hours
 - Recruitment
 - Application 3
 - Interviews 4
 - Tours 3
 - Tests/exercises 4
 - Discussion 2
- Total 16 hours
Range ~ 8 -20 hours

Need to be well prepared to sell 8000 hours academic plus 25 years of personal training and development in 16 hours

- Very recognisable and understandable
- Except for some very specific jobs, probably the least important factor
- Knowledge can be gained easily during employment
- An interviewer who only asks you about “knowledge” is doing a bad job

- But.... you may be asked about what you know to test communication

- Communication – all aspects
- Management of yourself – “Time Management”
- Project or task management
- Technical skills
- IT skills
- Languages

Transferable skills because they apply to many job roles.
Very useful at the start of a new job.
Can be gained during a job.

Transferable Skills: What can you do during your D Phil time ?

- Take every opportunity to practice communication in all its forms
 - Include communication to non technical people
 - Be able to describe your DPhil in 5 minutes
 - Can you describe it to a non-technical person
- Develop and practice personal time management
- Develop and practice project management skills
 - Use visual tools to plan your project
 - Substance not just software
- If you have a second language, keep it up

Be able to demonstrate these during the recruitment process

- Working with others
 - Covers many aspects, teamwork, influencing, coaching, leadership
- Coping with setbacks and change
- Self drive and motivation
- Judgement and taking decisions
- Recognising achievement
- Strategic vs. detail thinking
- Concept and or detail person
- Starter or finisher person

These are become increasingly important as your career develops.
These are often the most difficult aspects for scientists to recognise

- The most difficult item..... Its alien to most scientists
- Every few months..... Stop..... think about what has happened to you recently both inside and outside your project
- Note down experiences involving the “You as a person” items
- Prepare to use in the recruitment process

Some companies formalise this as part of career and performance assessment

e.g. 6 monthly recognition or communication, interpersonal skills, planning, decision taking, attitude to improvement and EH&S, problem solving, detail and strategic thinking/actions, doing what you commit to,

- Working with others
 - How did I persuade the technician to machine my specimens when I needed them?
 - What is the feeling like in our research group?
 - Am I leading, coaching,..... Anybody?
 - Do I have an effective leader, coach..
 - Have I had to persuade or sell my idea to anyone
 - Am I a team player... work, sports, interests
 - Do I prefer to lead or not

- Coping with setbacks and change
 - There MUST be examples of this from a D Phil project

Think both about your D Phil work and other aspects of life

- **Ambition self drive and motivation**
 - Recognise what is driving and motivating you
 - Money
 - Desire to beat personal best
 - Passionate interest in the subject
 - Desire to be the first to discover XXXXXXXX

- **Judgement and taking decisions**
 - What decisions have you taken ?
 - On what basis?

- **Recognising achievement**
 - What have I done well
 - What have others done well.... Did I recognise it ?

Think both about your D Phil work and other aspects of life

- Regulated industries more likely to put emphasis on professional qualifications to advance career
- MIMMM, MInstP,.....
- Join while a DPhil student and understand the system
- Gain as many “points” as you can

Demonstrates commitment to your profession and ambition

- Recognise what is important in developing job skills while you are working for your D Phil.
- Keep records of useful examples of skills or personal attributes for use during the recruitment process
- Be prepared to demonstrate your transferable skills and personal competency as well as your technical knowledge during the recruitment process