WHAT DO PHDS FROM HEALTH SCIENCES DO?

Career Portraits 2017




AARHUS UNIVERSITY

HEALTH

AU CAREER
PHD & JR

AARHUS UNIVERSITY

INTRODUCTION

This is a collection of career portraits of former PhD students from the health sciences at Aarhus University. Some of the big questions for PhD students are often “what do PhDs actually do?” as well as ‘’Where do they find work and what are their job positions?’’ This collection of career portraits seeks to answer that question by giving 16 examples of different career paths and the considerations behind the career choices.

The collection of career portraits is the outcome of interviews conducted by PhD-students during a PhD course on Career Management Skills (CMS) held for PhD students from primarily Health in the autumn of 2017.
The focus of the course was primarily on careers outside of academia, so the majority of the portraits are of PhDs working in the industry.

Enjoy the reading and we hope you will gain interesting insights as well as inspiration.

From the course organizers:
Kamille Smidt Rasmussen (AU HE), Anja P. Einholm (AU HE) and Vibeke Broe (AU Career PhD & JR)
Aarhus University 2018

Career Portraits 2017

PhDs in PRIVATE SECTOR jobs

Monika Mortensen, Medical Science Liaison at Novartis Healthcare A/S, DK

Education:
2010: PhD, WIMM, Nuffield Dept Clin Med, University of Oxford
2006: MSc in Integrated Immunology, University of Oxford

Jobs:
2015-: Medical Science Liaison, Novartis Healthcare A/S, DK.
2015: Postdoc at Finsen Laboratory, BRIC, Copenhagen DK.
2011-2015: Postdoc at DCRC, Copenhagen DK.
2010: Postdoc at WIMM, University of Oxford.

How early did you plan your next career step after the PhD?

During the final two years of her postdoc position at the Danish Cancer Society Research Centre (DCRC), Monika Mortensen (MM) started applying for jobs outside academia – primarily for Medical Science Liaison positions. She applied for 7-8 positions but due to her "heavy" carrier in academia, the companies found her background too "academic" for these positions. Fortunately, three months into her third postdoc positions she finally got a Medical Science Liaison position at Novartis Healthcare A/S.

What kind of position do you have today?

Medical Science Liaison at Novartis Healthcare A/S.

Why did you decide to go in the direction you chose?

Monika reached a point in her academic carrier where she needed new inspiration and where she wanted to find a job with more obvious carrier opportunities and a "brighter" future.

Have you had other jobs prior to your current job – if yes, which? And how did they lead to your current job?
Monika went from academia (postdoc) directly into her current position.

How did you find your first job/current job?
Monika applied through job ads for most of the positions; however, she found the position at Novartis via a friend, who suggested that she should contact her neighbor, who worked at Novartis, in order to discuss career opportunities. Monika did that and she was presented with the opportunity to apply for her current position (so through an indirect contact in the company).

What contacts – if any, did you have at the company/university before you started?
Monika had some former colleagues from academia who went into private company positions before she did, but she did not use these contacts to get her current position.

Describe a typical day/week?
Monika travels at least 40% of her work time both to visit Danish hospital departments and collaborators (mainly on request), to attend congresses, and to various internal meetings. She is in charge of internal scientific training/on-boarding for her local commercial colleagues, scientific/medical review of all materials produced by the local team, sharing of insights from the local external environment with her colleagues, running advisory boards to get feedback on latest results related to the product she is responsible for. She presents the findings from new clinical trials for her colleagues and keeps them updated on the newest science. In addition, she oversees and evaluates investigator-initiated clinical trials.
Finally, she is one of the main advisors regarding which research projects that are to be supported by the local team in terms of project grants.

What skills and experiences from your PhD studies do you have the most benefit of today?
The ability to understand, present and conduct research has been extremely valuable in her current position. However, the main skills that her current employer was looking for were primarily that she during her PhD studies arranged congresses, was president of a student society, supervised bachelor and master projects, and obtained extensive communication skills.

What skills would you say you did not develop during your PhD that you have developed afterwards?
The close collaboration and team involvement that is essential in a company setting is very different from the

self-governing and independent work in the academic research environment.

What specific career advice would you like to share with someone who is just about to finish his/her PhD studies?

Start to apply for positions outside academia during the final year(s) of your PhD. Participate in social events and help set up symposia, congresses or other events, which will point out your organisational skills, social engagement and passion.

Maja Skov Kragsnæs

Christina Lund Kragh, Group Manager at DuPont

Education
2009: PhD in Neuroscience at Aarhus University, Health
MSc from SDU, Denmark

Jobs:
2012- present: Group Manager at DuPont
2009-2012: Postdoc at Aarhus University and UC San Diego, USA
2005-2009: PhD in Neuroscience at Aarhus University

The following career portrait is an interview with Group Manager at DuPont, Christine Lund Kragh, conducted on December 4th. Christine finished a PhD in Health before continuing in a Postdoc position in the same research group, but with a year abroad included. Now she is using her competencies in the industry at DuPont where she leads a group of researchers in the enzyme-department, developing new enzymes for the use in e.g. the food industry.

How early did you plan your next career step after the PhD?

After my PhD I was offered a 2.5 year Postdoc position in the same group where I just graduated from which gave me some leverage in regard to planning my next career step. By the end of this Postdoc fellowship, I started to speculate on my future and then choose to apply for a job a DuPont. If nothing else, then to get some practice in applying for jobs outside academia. Luckily, I ended up getting this job, so the whole planning of a career path almost ended before it began.

What kind of position do you have today?

My position is Group manager. The career path at DuPont is that you start as scientist 1 and then progress to scientist 2 and so on. I have chosen to follow a career path in management, partly by coincidence and partly because it was something, I would like to try. Around 1.5 years ago, I was offered the position as Group manager, and I now work in the enzymes department, which is only a small part of DuPont. We are around 60 employees in this department and work primarily with developing enzymes for industrial purposes and food products. The department consists of two groups where I am Group Manager for one of them. This group has 14-15 employees.

Why did you decide to go in the direction you chose?

I liked the commercial and innovative aspect in the industry, not only in DuPont but also in most private industrial companies. I really like the fact that you have to create and sell a product, although the development phase of such product can last maybe 10 years. In addition, I did not picture myself following the academia trail

with numerous positions - Postdoc positions followed by jobs as Assistant and Associate professor. The job security also played a role, in the sense that you do not have to apply for funding all the time. With my new role as Group Manager that opened up for me, I have moved slightly away from the specialist role which is something I appreciate.

Have you had other jobs prior to your current job – if yes, which? And how did they lead to your current job?
I was offered a 2.5-year Postdoc position after my PhD in the same group from where I just graduated. I spent one of these years in a lab in San Diego.

How did you find your first job/current job?
It was simply through a job add on Jobindex. Therefore, for me it was rather simple, easy and by coincidence. Sometimes you are lucky.

What contacts – if any, did you have at the company/university before you started?
I did not know anybody at the company when I applied. There was a another person from Aarhus University, Christian Vægter, who had been at DuPont for a shorter period, but at the time I applied for the job, I did not know that.

Describe a typical day/week?
There is no such thing as a typical day as it varies quite a lot. I have many meetings and a lot of correspondence through emails. In the division of which I am situated, we coordinate with people around the world. In the beginning, I had more lab work, but now I spend more time doing project management.

What skills and experiences from your PhD studies do you have the most benefit of today?
You learn a lot during a PhD. Besides lab skills, you really learn to work independently but also how to collaborate with others both locally and internationally. You also improve your problem solving skills. I also use the scientific writing and presenting skills I acquired during my PhD. Not to mention the communication skills I got through teaching. In reality, I therefore use a many different skill sets in my current job, which I acquired during my PhD study.

What skills would you say you did not develop during your PhD, which you have developed afterwards?
In my case, leadership skills. General business understanding and economy was also something I had to learn.

How is a big company like DuPont build and how does it function? That was definitely something I needed to learn. In addition, what you work with during your PhD is so specific, so I had to learn a completely new world of science about enzymes.

What specific career advice would you like to share with someone who is just about to finish his/her PhD studies?

Do not be afraid to apply even though your background does not match the company. So apply broad. Nevertheless, figure out whether you can see yourself in the position you apply for as well as the company.

Problem with other background?

Needless to say, it would have been ideal if my PhD education centered on enzymes, but in reality, it was not a big problem. Only in the first few month where you have to learn a lot and where you feel behind. However, you also acquire the ability to learn new things fast during your PhD and the company hiring you knows that.

Lasse Reimer

Anders Mellemgaard, Senior Medical Advisor at Zealth Consultancy

Education:
Specialist training, internal medicine
1994: Ph.D. (oncology and cancer biology), University of Copenhagen
1986: M.D. (medical doctor), University of Copenhagen

Jobs:
Presently: Senior medical advisor at Zealth Consultancy (Sep. 1st 2017-ongoing)
2014-ongoing: Ass. professor, University of Copenhagen
2005-2017: Consultant, Dept. of Oncology, Herlev Hospital
2000-2005: Consultant, Hillerød Hospital

At what time point in your career, according to you specialist training, did you achieve your PhD Degree? How early did you plan your next career step after the PhD?

I defended my PhD thesis in 1994 prior to finishing my clinical training in internal medicine. Hence, my first job after the PhD I got ahead as I continued as a specialist registrar and then a consultant at the hospital.

What kind of position do you have today?

As of Sept. 1st 2017 I hold a full time position as Senior Medical Advisor with Zealth Consultancy. Over the past many years, alongside with my job as a consultant at the hospital, I have done different kinds of medical consultancy work with the pharmaceutical industry and government ministries. Among other things, I have done medical writing, developed digital solutions and tools for the health care sector (including patient support) and both teaching and taking part in developing teaching materials. Overall, I do the same kind of assignments now, only someone else (Zealth Consultancy) keeps track of each assignment/contact as well as the financial issues, whereas I focus on completing the actual assignment.

Why did you choose to do the latest radical change in career path?

Until a few years ago, I thought that I would work as a consultant at the hospital for the rest of my career. However, as of the summer 2017 I asked myself how I would like to spend the last 10 years of my career – and I figured I wanted to do something else; I liked my time to be spent better, to be prioritized in a different way. Over time, demands to productivity in the clinical setting have increased; new digital solutions demand more

time resulting in less time spent with the patients, thus making it more difficult to deliver a satisfactory clinical performance; mistakes arise here and there and clinicians spend too much time doing un-important work. I experienced that deadlines were continuously postponed ahead, and I would like to prioritize actually meeting these deadlines/assignments. Those were important drivers in pushing me forward in a different direction.

What do you do during a week, and how is it different from your previous job?

My days of work are generally shorter, as a day at the hospital would typically be 10 hours including preparing my program; I thus organize my own time. I spend approximately one day a week with pure research related work (of course that is my "spare time"). I run several projects: Currently I supervise one PhD student, I run different projects on immunotherapy and risk factors, and then collaborate with different research groups. The rest of the time, I spend doing the consultancy work as already described.

It has been quite a change to leave the teamwork inherent in a clinical setting, that I miss, and in addition to this the satisfaction of "getting the job done" as a team. A major difference is the shift from regular collaborators to assignment related collaborators – however as a physician one is trained at being adaptable! It is more fun as it is today.

To which extend did network play a role in finding your job?

My network was of paramount importance for me to take the leap from a full time consultant (hospital) with a part time job as a medical advisor and into a job as a full time senior medical advisor (with a company that delivers consultancy to the pharmaceutical industry, red.). I probably would not have done it had I not already settled many of my contacts and assignments ahead of time. Plus my experience in the field from my part time jobs has made it a lot easier for me to handle the incoming assignments.

What skills and experiences do you utilize in your current job?

First, I use my medical expertise as an oncologist and as a medical doctor. Additionally experience form collaboration with health care takers across different fields, capability of meeting deadlines, problem solving, teaching and communication. If one is good at teaching i.e. lung cancer, one is most likely capable of delivering proper teaching within a different field – as long as one studies the subject properly ahead of time. Many people (medical doctors) are unaware that these competencies are developed ongoing and that many doctoral skills are requested in many different contexts. These skills are developed both from research and from clinical experience.

Any specific career advice you would like to share with someone who is just about to finish his/her PhD studies?

The job situation of today is generally much more dynamic than it has been in the past, when everyone (medical doctors) went along the same road. Remember that your skills are transferable to many different contexts; and if unhappy with what you are doing, do something else! I believe that the horizontal career path moving from different types of jobs in different fields will become much more common in the future, compared to the traditional vertical career path where advancements were settled ahead and one would more or less automatically maneuver from being a junior doctor to a consultant.

I have myself done several different major changes in my career path; apart from the jobs that we discussed I also worked with epidemiology; I worked in the United States and as a clinician in several different areas.

Mette Hjortkjær

Allan Jensen, Director, Head of Biologics at Lundbeck

Education:
1998: PhD in Molecular Biology, Aarhus Univeristy

Jobs:
2016- present: Director, Head of Biologics, Lundbeck
2014-16: CSO, HiFiBiO
2014: Director, Science & Technology, Pfizer
2011-14: Director, Head of Endo. Human BioResponses, Pfizer
2009-11: Director of Research, Pfizer
2006-09: Director, Antibody Discovery, Symphogen
2003-06: Senior Scientist, Symphogen
2001-03: Principal Scientist, Inoxell
1998-01: Research Scientist, Pharmexa

How early did you plan your next career step after the PhD?

Already when I started at University, it was on my mind to end up in the industry. However, when I got into the "university-world" so to speak, the career path from Master to PhD to Associate professor attracted me. I went to the industry just after finishing my PhD, but I might as well have continued with a Post Doc and stayed in academia for longer than I did.

How did you find your first job?

I did my PhD in Finn Schou's group at AU and during that time, a small biotech company from Copenhagen started collaborating with our group. At the end of my PhD, the company opened a position that fitted very well to my scientific profile. I applied for it and I got the job just before I finished the PhD. The timing was perfect as it was in line with my ambitions of getting into the industry, and the job was a great opportunity for me to develop my skills in a scientific field that I liked.

What was your first and current job?

My first job was a Research Scientist position in a small biotech company that worked in the same scientific field as I did in my PhD project. This made me a great candidate; I already had most of the technical qualifications and

broad knowledge of the scientific field. Furthermore, it was an interesting project where I could develop as a scientist and as an industrial researcher.
Now I work at Lundbeck as the leader of a Biotechnology research group with the focus on development of antibodies for medical treatment. It is a group of 16 people; 6 technicians and the rest are scientists incl. students and research scientists with PhD's.

Can you describe a typical workday in your current position?
At a typical day I meet at 7-8 am and leave around 18-19 pm. It contains several meetings incl. preparation for meetings. I manage external projects, but as group leader my most important task is to guide and prioritize the work and projects performed in my own group. I have the responsibility of bringing/developing the right competencies to the group, acquiring proper training of the staff, and of course, I am responsible for the quality of the output of the group.

How is the transition from research in the university to research at a company like Lundbeck?
Teamwork is essential so you will learn to work in groups on more focused tasks. You will learn to prioritize the most important tasks of the project, so focus on that, finish it, and get it communicated to the people in the company that can benefit from your data.

What skills and experiences from your PhD studies did you have the most benefit of during your career in the industry?
As a researcher in the medical industry, you need much of the same skillset as a researcher in academia. The overall perspective and goal is drug discovery, but the workflow of the research is not very different. You need to be extremely thorough and have a great scientific base.

What do you look for in potential candidates for a "Research Scientist" position?
It depends on the type of position. For senior positions, we look for people with experience from the industry, and people with drug discovery and hands-on experience. For the young group with limited experience from the industry, we look for people with technological experience relevant for the position, one with the right biological approach and then we will have a brief look at the publication record. However, the publication record is not the principal driver. We look for relevant articles from respectable journals, but it is not necessarily an advantage to have published in the top journals. Finally, it is an advantage to have experience from an International research environment, i.e. from a PhD or Post doc period on a great university abroad.

What would you recommend me, as a PhD student, to do to be in the best position for getting a Research Scientist position at Lundbeck?

Believe in it! If you want to go to industry, go for it. Maybe it will take a post doc or two to get there. Go abroad for a Post Doc to a great university to get the global perspective. We are competing in the global marked. You will get some technical qualifications and a great network that will be able to help you further on. You could also try to get an internship during or after your PhD. The few we had in our department have surprised me very positively. It gives you the reference within the company, which is very important in the application process.

What specific career advice would you like to share with someone who is just about to finish his/her PhD studies?

Continue working hard and keep searching for the job that you like. If you are rejected once, do not be too disappointed, since there are many good PhD candidates applying for the same job, especially for the research positions in the industry.

Peter Lund Ovesen

Klaus Loft Højbjerre, Co-founder and Senior Specialist at Adimant

Education:
2009: PhD in Science and Technology, AU
2006: MSc in Physics, AU

Jobs:
2015- present: Adimant, Co-founder and Senior Specialist, Copenhagen
2000-2015: Technological Institute, Aarhus
2009-2010: Department of Medical Physics, Aarhus University Hospital

How early did you plan your next career step after the PhD?

The Department of Medical Physics at Aarhus University announced job openings around the time I had to hand in my thesis. For personal reasons I wished to stay in Aarhus and I therefore applied. I started at the department before I had defended my thesis.

How did you find your first job?

The first job at the Department of Medical Physics I found in a job ad database. The job at the Technological Institute I heard of via my network but the application process was as usual.

What kind of position do you have today?

Together with two other PhDs from DTU, I co-founded the company Adimant. Depending on the situation, I describe my position as CEO, specialist, or consultant.

Why did you decide to go in the direction you chose?

3D printing had fascinated me for a long time. One of my former colleagues at the university had a job in the area of 3D printing at the Technological Institute in Aarhus. However, they had no openings around the time I handed in my thesis. Approximately six months after I started at the Department of Medical Physics, my former colleague informed me that she had quit her job. I applied as soon as possible and switched to the Technological Institute

within one year. I would describe the Technological Institute as part university and part company with a lot of development projects and grand applications, but in a company setting. Starting a company was appealing to me, because it provided a combination of independence and scientific challenges.

Have you had other jobs prior to your current job - if yes, which? And how did they lead to you current jobs?

I worked with one of the co-founders of Adimant as part of a cooperation between the Technological Institute and DTU. The other co-founder I knew from college, but while we had lost contact, this cofounder studied at DTU as well within the same research area. So all three of us knew each other two-by-two. The possibility to found Adimant provided exciting professional challenges. Apart from the professional aspect, this came at a convenient time for me, as I was looking for a local employment. I had moved to Copenhagen three years into the employment at the Technological Institute in relation to my wife's job and commuting to Aarhus required a lot of time.

Describe a typical day/week?

Adimant provides consultancy services in relation to 3D printing. To improve these services, we developed a software solution for structural optimization of large 3D-printing objects. Our clients expressed much interest in purchasing this software, and we currently are in the process of developing the software further for sale. The first two years have been very exciting, and we have spent our time on writing applications for grants, looking for customers, providing consultant services and developing software. We have just signed a more long-term contract that will enable us to focus more on further developing our software. I am able to work every second day from home, but collaborations and assignments in the US and China frequently require meetings at odd times.

What skills and experiences from your PhD studies do you have the most benefit of today?

Of most use are the problem-solving skills I developed during my PhD. I would describe it as a way to divide a large problem or challenge into many small, solvable problems and have the interest and curiosity to tackle them. Of the scientific content from my PhD studies, I gain a lot from my knowledge about solid-state physics.

What skills would you say you did not develop during your PhD that you developed afterwards?

During my time at the Technological Institute, for example, I practiced writing grand applications as well as networking skills. I had to develop these further when we started the company. From every job, I gained a lot of knowledge, for example on 3D printing, materials, etc. Even from my short time at the Department of Medical Physics I gained knowledge on CT scanning (frequently used in quality assurances), programming and radiation physics which I still frequently make use of.

What specific career advice would you like to share with someone who is just about to finish his/her PhD studies?

Push yourself and start somewhere. The chance that the first job is going to be your dream job that you will keep for the next 30 years is minimal. Moreover, there is still so much time to find it. The end of your PhD is not the end of everything and you are not finished learning. From each of the jobs I have had I can still use some aspects. Finally, keep your eyes open, let some people know what you are interested in and take the possibilities that reveal themselves along the way.

Christina Maria Lutz

Mette Ryun Drasbek, Group manager & Senior scientist, DuPont Nutrition Biosciences ApS

Education:	Jobs:
2007: PhD in Microbiology at Aarhus University 1998: MSc in Chemistry and Biotechnology at Aarhus University	2015-present: Group manager and Senior scientist, DuPont Nutrition Biosciences ApS;

Brief introduction of Mette

Mette has a master in Chemistry and Biotechnology from Aarhus University. Following her degree, she went to work at Loke Diagnostics ApS for 4 years, developing diagnostic tools such as ELISA-based serodiagnostic assays. Then, she got a PhD position in Microbiology at the Health School of Aarhus University, where she worked with a disease called Mycoplasma Pneumonia. After handing in her PhD thesis, she started to look for a job. A company called Danisco, which later became part of DuPont Nutritions, hired her. She started from the 'scientist' position, working in the lab, running projects, and doing a lot of research. After 3 years, Mette was promoted and became group manager. Now she works both as a scientist running projects and as group manager that have the responsibility of managing people.

What kind of position do you have today?

The title is called group manager and senior scientist at DuPont. At this position, I work both as a scientist, running projects, and doing research, but also managing people at the same time.

Does your previous working experience help in deciding what career path you would like to have after the PhD?

I think it helps. I had four years' working experience prior to my PhD, which was also in a private company. Therefore, I knew how it was and I liked the way it works in a private company. This was the primary reason I was looking more into jobs in the private sector than in the public sector.

How did you find your first job/current job?

I applied for my current job just before I handed in my PhD thesis. I applied for that specific job, because it fitted very well with my interests and experience with microbiology. In the beginning of my job search, I was mostly considering positions in the microbiology field. My profile fitted well with the profile that DuPont was looking for, so I started working for the company just after I had handed in my PhD thesis.

I think that if I had not gotten a job within reasonable time after my PhD, I would have been less selective and applied for jobs in other fields.

Describe a typical day/week?

A typical day for me would start with me checking emails that had come in during the night from some of my colleagues from other parts of the world. From time to time, I would also go to the lab and help with some of the work there, setting up experiments and making plans for that.

A lot of my work is within the project management, making sure that the project is running according to the plan, making plans, updating timelines etc. I also use part of my day on people management. It is my responsibility to make sure that those working in my group perform, are happy, and develop their skills. Since I have many colleagues from e.g. the United States, my afternoons are often booked with different types of meetings. These meetings are e.g. project meetings or leadership team meetings.

What is the difference between academic job and a non-academic job?

The work I did at the university during my PhD had more to do with basic science, while the work I do in DuPont is applied science, where we develop ingredients for different types of food products.

What about time management/time flexibility in industry job?

We have colleagues all over the world, so sometimes it is not possible to keep a working day between 8 and 16, which means that sometimes I need to stay longer or come earlier. On the other hand, I also have some flexibility.

What skills and experiences from your PhD studies do you have the most benefit of today?

Going through the PhD and writing the PhD thesis was a great learning experience as you learn to be your own manager as well as how to plan your project work by yourself. When you run into a situation where things do not come out as you had hoped, then you need to restructure and make a new plan. I learned a lot from that.

I obtained a lot of good learning from the process of writing publications, the thesis and going to conferences

and presenting the work. I have used all the skills obtained through these experiences throughout my career and I still use them today. My PhD was within microbiology and since I am still working within the field, I am still using some of the practical lab skills such as method development and troubleshooting in my current job. Another thing is all the contacts you get while you are writing up thesis, taking courses, and doing collaboration across e.g. different Universities. I have used many of these contacts later. Building up a network is of big value also after finalizing the PhD.

What skills would you say you did not develop during your PhD that you have developed afterwards?
Managing people is not the skill I gained through my PhD. It is something I have gained afterwards.

What specific career advice would you like to share with someone who is just about to finish his/her PhD studies?
I think it is always good if you get publications. Be open and do not be too narrow when you go out and search for jobs. Also, use your network, often what you see is that people get jobs through their networks. Therefore, keeping a good network and keeping that alive is very important. When you apply for a position, it is always a good idea to call in, make a short presentation about yourself, and tell the hiring person why you applied for the position. It also gives you an idea of what the job is about and what they expect from the hired person.

How do you evaluate their motivation or enthusiastic when you are hiring people?
When you come to the interview, you need to be prepared. It is important to have a look at the company's website or talk to the hiring person in advance to not only know about the company, but also know what they are looking for in the specific position. In addition, I know that people can get nervous, but it is important that you know what you have done. Besides, do not make obvious mistakes in the written application and do not be late. This is how you show that you have interest in the job.

Tingting Gu

Kim L. Jensen, Research & Development Chemist, LEO Pharma

Education:
2012: PhD in Chemistry, Aarhus University
2007: BSc in Chemistry, Aarhus University

Jobs:
2015- present: Research & Development Chemist, LEO Pharma
2013-2015: Postdoc, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Cambridge, USA
2012-2013: Postdoc, Aarhus University

How early did you plan your next career step after the PhD?

Already early in my studies I was convinced that I wanted to pursue a career in industry and mainly within pharmaceuticals. However, about half way through my studies I felt some sort of urge to challenge myself on a new subject at an international top university. Along with a professor, I arranged to join his research group at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in the US and started applying for funding. Thankfully, I was rewarded a research fellowship from the Lundbeck Foundation to support my studies abroad. I have to admit that it was probably one of the best decisions in my relatively short career. The stay in the US was not only a great scientific experience; it was also incredibly rewarding from a personal perspective. Although it was a lot of hard work, it was also a lot of fun and I can only recommend other young scientist to seek out similar experiences.

What kind of position do you have today?

I work as a chemist in Research and Development at LEO Pharma. In my department, we manage projects that are progressed from research to clinical development. My job covers many aspects of development and requires many and comprehensive collaborations with both internal and external partners. Our primary task is to scale-up the synthesis of the clinical candidates for toxicological and clinical studies, but also to identify the most efficient, robust and economically viable synthesis route for potential future commercial manufacturing.

Why did you decide to go in the direction you chose?

I guess I have always had an interest in applied research. During my PhD and postdoctoral studies, I took part in the development in a number of new reactions. Today I get to evaluate various parts of the synthetic organic chemist's comprehensive toolbox in order to design an efficient and robust synthesis of the targeted molecule.

Have you had other jobs prior to your current job – if yes, which? And how did they lead to your current job?

Not besides my postdoctoral studies at Aarhus University and MIT.

How did you find your first job/current job?

I found my current job via a job posting on JobIndex.

What contacts – if any, did you have at the company/university before you started?

I did not have any contact with the company before I started. In fact, I only knew one person working for the company doing medicinal chemistry.

Describe a typical day/week?

The job involves a lot of planning and setting up timelines for the various activities. Some days are dedicated to planning and execution of laboratory experiments and careful analysis of the obtained data so we can decide what to do next. Other days involve meetings and coordination with various internal and external partners. Occasionally we also assist in authoring documents for patents and various filings to regulatory authorities. Periodically, meetings can take up big parts of a day. The job also involves some travelling to meet external partners.

What skills and experiences from your PhD studies do you have the most benefit of today?

I think some of the most important skills I acquired during my studies were project planning and maintaining the focus on the most critical parameters for success e.g. how to ensure that we meet the deliverables and the right product quality for clinical studies.

What skills would you say you did not develop during your PhD that you have developed afterwards?

I remember as a student my research mindset was focused on developing new methodologies and understanding the reactions in such detail that we could achieve the best possible outcome. This mindset has not changed with the transition to industry as it is still of utmost importance to understand the fundamentals of the applied chemistry to ensure product quality. One of the most important goals of process development is to develop a synthesis with a high output and a high quality profile. However, due to strict time lines for delivery of material for clinical studies, we occasionally work with a 'fit for purpose' strategy. This means that we sometimes accept mediocre outputs of steps of the synthesis as long as we generate a sufficient amount of material with acceptable quality.

What specific career advice would you like to share with someone who is just about to finish his/her PhD studies?

Motivation is the key driver for personal development and success. Be open to the various possibilities that lie ahead and find out what you will need in your daily job to stay motivated and thrive.

Anders Valdemar Edhager

Mikkel Kongsfelt, CEO, RadiSurf

Education:
2014: PhD in NanoScience / Surface Chemistry
2009: MSc in NanoScience

Jobs:
2015- present: CEO, RadiSurf
2014-15: Post Doc. AU
2010- present: Self-employed IT consultant

How early did you plan your next career step after the PhD?

I did not plan much. I got the offer to continue my research work at AU as a post doc and decided to do that while figuring out what to do. The following step, however, was something I have always wanted; to start my own company with a larger potential than my IT consultant business. So I did not plan it, but when the chance came to start a company based on something related to my education, I took it.

What kind of position do you have today?

CEO in my own company, RadiSurf ApS.

Why did you decide to go in the direction you chose?

I have always preferred to be in a position with influence, and always been seeking to make an impact. To build your own company is the perfect way to get ultimate influence on how your daily work look. The other thing is that I thrive in positions, where uncertainty is part of the job.

Creating something and seeing it develop is also something that gets me out of the bed in the morning. Seeing how the company I have started develops and how the great people we have hired are developing together with the company.

Have you had other jobs prior to your current job – if yes, which? And how did they lead to your current job?

I have been a self-employed IT consultant since 2000 and been working with a range of customers alongside my studies at AU. That definitely spiked the desire to build something bigger. With my job as a post-doc, I got the

chance to be a project manager in a large research collaboration. That definitely help building some important skills for my next steps.

How did you find your first job/current job?

My first job was just an offer from my supervisor during my PhD. The opportunity to start RadiSurf on the other hand was something I actively aimed at. First, I talked much about my ambitions with people around me, which helped me create the opportunity to work together with my co-founders on starting RadiSurf. In addition, the opportunity to apply for funding from the Innovation Fund helped sparkled the opportunity.

What contacts – if any, did you have at the company/university before you started?

At the University, it was mainly my supervisors. However, before starting RadiSurf there was an important big network of people working in companies who collaborated with the university. In addition, contacts in the entrepreneurial community proved important in the startup process.

Describe a typical day/week?

There are no typical days. My job is a great mix of management, HR, project management, sales and administration.

Mondays: Usually starts with two hours of project follow-up, and brainstorms on specific issues in our development and production. The rest of the day is e-mails and phone calls to setup sales meetings etc. Small meetings internally and maybe some work on our marketing materials.

Other weekdays: 1-2 days are fully booked with external meetings, usually sales and project meetings with customers. Rest of the days there is a lot of work with follow-up's on customer projects, development of marketing material, HR work and general administration and usually we have 1 or 2 internal work/brainstorm meetings.

What skills and experiences from your PhD studies do you have the most benefit of today?

My chemical knowledge and general problem solving skills are essential. As well as the ability to handle uncertainty in whatever we are working with. The ability to think about new methods, understand complex problems, and working structured is also of great importance today.

What skills would you say you did not develop during your PhD that you have developed afterwards?

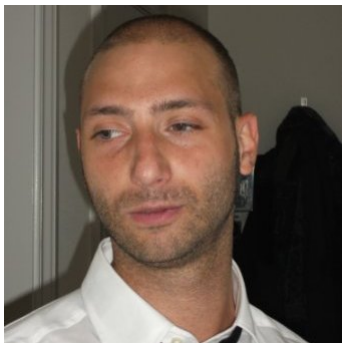
Everything concerning business development. A skill that I believe actually should be more in focus during your

PhD, as it will help you no matter if you pursue an academic or industrial career.

What specific career advice would you like to share with someone who is just about to finish his/her PhD studies?

Seek opportunities outside your comfort zone. Be open and build your network outside the university. Again, not matter if you pursue and academic or industrial career, a strong and active network outside the university will be a big help. Seek a network with people who have the skills you would like to learn – and if you do not know how to approach them, remember that most people do not say no to a cup of coffee and love to share their knowledge with people who are truly interested in what they have to say.

Rasmus Kold-Christensen



Antonello Calcutta, Project Manager & QC assistant, Parco Tecnologico Padano

Education:	Jobs:
PhD in Molecular biology, Nuclear Magnetic resonance and other spectroscopic techniques , *iNano*, Aarhus University MSc in Biotechnology, La Sapienza, Università degli Studi, Roma	2015-present Project Manager and QC assistant at Parco Tecnologico Padano 2014- 2015: Junior Project Manager at PTP 2012: *Dupont,* Researcher 2011-2013: researcher and product specialist (IFood Diagnostic Apps)

How early did you plan your next career step after the PhD?

After my PhD midterm evaluation, I attend an event organized at iNano from the Aarhus Career Center.

What kind of position do you have today?

Project manager and Quality Control assistant at Parco Tecnologico Padano, which is a technology transfer center in the field of nutrition and genomics.

Why did you decide to go in the direction you chose?

Because of the impossibility to develop a university career in the facilities, I was interested in, and because of too much travel required. I decided to get involved in the non-academic world right after the end of my PhD. I wish I could have stayed in Demark but it was not possible at that time. Another reason to pursue a career in industry was a successful experience spent at Dupont, in Aarhus.

Have you had other jobs prior to your current job – if yes, which? And how did they lead to your current job?

I tried several small and long-term job after my PhD (Researcher and Product Specialist in Food Diagnostics App in Grenaa and Dupont). I also started a personal start up-company. Before getting my current job, I worked in the same institution (Parco Tecnologico Padano) as Junior Project Menager. The current job represents an evolution of the previous one. In the meanwhile, I attended a post-graduate course about Technological

Transfer (21 months) which was helpful to get information on the current job market.

How did you find your first job/current job?

By searching on available open positions. I started during the attendance to the post-graduate course.

What contacts – if any, did you have at the company/university before you started?

In this case, I had no contacts with my current company, as my job search was purely individual.

Describe a typical day/week?

My working day is quite labor intensive (10-12 hours / day) as my job in Quality Control requires many responsibilities.

What skills and experiences from your PhD studies do you have the most benefit of today?

The way to organize my work and my plans with a great focus on details and precisions. In addition, the development of critical spirit was very useful during my next years in industry. Working in a team with my colleagues was also critically important to develop respect and care for co-workers.

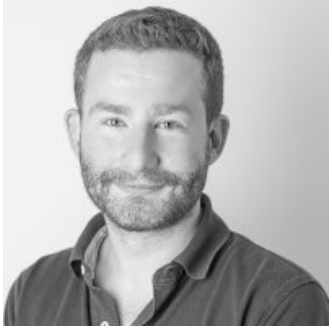
What skills would you say you did not develop during your PhD that you have developed afterwards?

I wish I had more time to invest in proper scientific writing, manuscript productions, and sharing of scientific information. More experience with interactions with companies and industries during my PhD would likewise have had its benefits.

What specific career advice would you like to share with someone who is just about to finish his/her PhD studies?

Find the country you mostly like to work in and have a clear focus on which job you want to do. Attitudinal tests may be of great help in this case. Additionally, it is crucial to talk to people who have been in the industry for many years and to ask them directly how they perceive their own work and the company they work at.

Luca Bordoni



Erik Funder, Senior Scientist at Roche Innovation Center Copenhagen

Education:
2013: PhD in Chemistry, AU
2012: The Scripps Research Institute, La Jolla, San Diego, USA
2010: M.Sc. in Medicinal Chemistry, AU
2008: B.Sc. in Medicinal Chemistry, AU

Jobs:
2015- present: Scientist at Roche Innovation Center Copenhagen
2014-15: Post Doc, ETH Zürich, Switzerland
2013-2014: Post Doc, AU

How early did you plan your next career step after the PhD? Why did you decide to go in the direction you chose?

Towards the end of my PhD studies (approximately with 1 year left), I began to consider which career path I wanted to take. I chose to keep my options open since I thought both academia and the industry offered very interesting career options.

I applied for funding through the Danish Council for Independent Research in order to start as a Post Doc at the ETH Zürich in Switzerland. Here I spent 16 months focusing my research on the chemistry and biology of bile acids. Even though you are quite independent as a PhD student, the Post Doc position really gave me a lot of freedom to follow my own ideas on the topic and to develop myself as a scientist.

The setting around basic research and the generation of new ideas was indeed very stimulating and challenging. At the end of my stay at ETH Zürich, I chose to start applying for a job within industry, especially with focus on developing new medicines by taking advantage of the newest innovative technologies available within the industry. An academic career could also have been very appealing: However, the uncertainties regarding funding and a constant pressure to publish new papers in the end made me choose industry. Today I am very happy with this decision as we do great new and exciting science within Roche.

What kind of position do you have today?

I have a position as a Senior Scientist at the R&D department at Roche Innovation Center Copenhagen where we focus on developing our drug discovery platform based on oligonucleotides. It is a research position where I improve established methods and drugs and continuously look into new ideas, which can improve the way we develop new medicines. The only real limit for working with new ideas is that is has to help us develop better and safer new drugs. I really value this perspective as it gives me a sense of accomplishment to work on something that will be used (in the near future) and be beneficial for patients in the end.

I routinely use my knowledge in organic chemistry in the optimization of the methods we employ. I follow the entire process from idea, synthesizing molecules and oligonucleotides, and setting up the biological tests where the new technology can be validated. A lot of my time is used on planning new experiments and keeping up to date with new technologies. I spend approximately 50% of my time in the lab and the rest I spend on various tasks such as communication work, meetings, conferences, literature searches, PowerPoint summaries, and writing patents and articles.

How did you find your first job/current job? What contacts – if any, did you have at the company/ university before you started?

I found my current job through an advertisement. I had a contact at the company before I started – actually it was a former colleague from the research group I did my PhD studies in at Aarhus University. I spoke with my contact prior to the job interview to get an initial feel for the company and the people working there. For me, the job interview goes both ways – here you can match your expectations and find out if the company fits you. If not, it will probably be an unsuccessful experience for both you and the company. Basically, I think it is important to use the job interview as a tool to understand if the job is a good match for you as well as to get a feel for the atmosphere and the people working there.

Which skills and experiences from your PhD studies do you have the most benefit of today?

First and foremost, I have a strong scientific background from my PhD together with a set of good communication skills, which are highly important in industry. Furthermore, I developed a great network during my PhD by interacting with a lot with people from different professions (biology, medicine, and physics) or other research groups within the chemistry department. The collaboration with experts outside of the chemistry field is something I use daily in my current position. Importantly, during my PhD, I got a lot of experience with acquiring new knowledge. Although the scientific skills are the ones that position you for a research job, I think my

involvement in organizations such as the Friday Bar (Alkymia), TKM (Tutorforeningen for Kemi og Molekylærbiologi) and arranging student conferences etc. has given me competences that are appreciated in a workplace. Moreover, it has given me a strong network that I still use to this day both socially and in my daily work.

In general, I think it's great if one can manage the daily work tasks as well as contribute to a good work environment by e.g. participating in social events and in general be a colleague who also invests his/her time in both the daily work and the people.

Are there any particular skills you wish you could have focused more on during your PhD studies?

During a PhD you do a lot of management of your own research. To further improve this process it would be beneficial to get an insight into project management skills on an even higher level: This is something you will need and continuously develop and improve in industry. What I find essential to realize during your PhD studies is that you should not only be an expert in the scientific topic you work with: Most of my PhD work dealt with organic chemistry in the lab, which I really enjoyed a lot! However, it is important constantly to build your skill-set with skills from other disciplines as well. This could for instance be concerned with the set-up of biological assays or other techniques not only focused on chemistry. However, I also remember that my PhD project took a long time in the lab and that it sometimes can be hard to squeeze in these "extra" learnings. Luckily, now being in industry this allows for a constant development of all kind of exciting and important skills. Continuously I am learning new things and improving my skills, which by the way I also think is a lot of fun!

What specific career advice would you like to share with someone who is just about to finish his/her PhD studies?

My advice is to be ambitious. Aim high. Some tend to stick to what they know especially since the PhD study is very focused on a specific topic. However, it is important to try new techniques and get out of your own comfort zone – keep moving. In addition, I would recommend to strengthen your network and to go abroad as a Postdoc and/or PhD student if possible. It is really healthy to experience different cultures both in and outside the lab. In general, I think one should constantly aspire to widen and develop the repertoire of skills that you have both as a person and as a researcher in science. And if the right position appears, then go for it!

Thuy Jane Dinh Nguyen

Kasper Hald, Consultant at Cryptomathic

Education:	Jobs:
2002: PhD in Theoretical Chemistry at Aarhus University	2017- present: Consultant at Cryptomathic, Aarhus.
MSc in Chemistry at Aarhus University, Aarhus	2002-2017: Developer & Software Architect at Danske

How early did you plan your next career step after the PhD?

I was aware that I did not want to continue in Academia after handing in my PhD thesis about a year before I finished my PhD.

What kind of position do you have today?

I work as a consultant at a company called Cryptomathic located in Aarhus.

Why did you decide to go in the direction you chose?

I remember thinking that it was too bureaucratic in Academia. I watched people who had finished their PhD, who were now working as Post Doc, as Associate Professor or even as professor and thinking, that they spend most of their time working on funding applications and not on the research they found interesting. In addition, the salary was and is much better when working in the private sector. However, the money was not the primary reason that I decided to leave Academia.

Have you had other jobs prior to your current job – if yes, which? And how did they lead to your current job?

Before my current job (that I started working in this August), I worked for 15 years at Danske Bank as a Developer & Software Architect. Like in my current job, I worked with IT-security in my prior job. After 15 years in the same company, I needed to try something new, and I decided to look for a new job.

How did you find your first job/current job?

I did some research and found some interesting companies that I would like to work in. Then I sent out multiple unsolicited applications.

What contacts – if any, did you have at the company/university before you started?

None.

Describe a typical day/week?

I develop IT-security software to our clients. Therefore, I spend most of my time in front of the computer designing and coding systems. Nevertheless, I also facilitate meetings with clients where we discuss the different needs they have regarding IT-security software. The meetings often take place in my office, but sometimes I also visit the clients out in their companies.

What skills and experiences from your PhD studies do you have the most benefit of today?

As a PhD student, you examine theories and associations that no one has ever done before. You have great support from your supervisors, but in many aspects, you are on your own. You need to figure things out for yourself. Because of this, I developed skills to handle complex issues and I learned to immerse myself in new knowledge.

What skills would you say you did not develop during your PhD that you have developed afterwards?

When I got my first job in the private sector, I had no business understanding. I did not know anything about how things were done in a private company.

What specific career advice would you like to share with someone who is just about to finish his/her PhD studies?

The most important thing you need to ask yourself is ''what do I want to do with my life and my career?'' What could be fun to wake up and do every day? If you just do that and stay true to your dreams then everything else will work out.

Kathrine Hald

Anonymous, Research Scientist

Education:
2010: PhD in Biomedicine, Aarhus University
2006: MSc in Biology, Aarhus University

Jobs:
2016- present: Research Scientist
2014-16: Postdoc. Dept of Biomedical Sciences, Copenhagen University
2012-2014: Postdoc. in United States
2010-2012: Postdoc. Dept of Biomedicine, Aarhus University

How early did you plan your next career step after the PhD?
I started applying for grants for a postdoc position in the last year of my PhD.

What kind of position do you have today?

I work as a Research Scientist in a small biotech company.

Why did you decide to go in the direction you chose?

I like working in small teams and I always wanted to work with preclinical drug development in an industrial setting.

Have you had other jobs prior to your current job – if yes, which? And how did they lead to your current job?

I worked as an academic postdoc for several years to generate enough experience to transition into industry.

Do you feel that it was necessary to have those extra years in academia in order to get/do the job you have now?

That is a two-sided question. No, I do not feel it is necessary to have those extra years in academia to DO my current job, but it was necessary to GET my current job, because there are so many applicants for every single job posting.

How did you find your first job/current job?

I found my current job through my network.

What contacts – if any, did you have at the company/university before you started?

None, but my previous employer established the contact.

Describe a typical day/week?

In a typical week, I have a couple of days lab work, where I generate data, a couple of days, where I analyze data, write reports, update databases, etc. I spend the final day on project team meetings and communication with collaborators and CROs.

What skills and experiences from your PhD studies do you have the most benefit of today?

I have an in-depth understanding of several physiological systems, e.g. heart and circulatory system. I use this knowledge every day, when I discuss the effects potential new drugs have on the body. Furthermore, I know which assays are usable for evaluating the potency and efficacy of potential new drugs.

What skills would you say you did not develop during your PhD that you have developed afterwards?

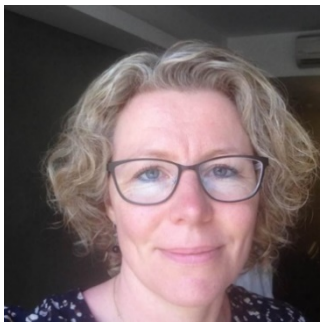
Hands-on experience with workflow in biotech and pharmaceutical industry.

What specific career advice would you like to share with someone who is just about to finish his/her PhD studies?

It is a bit of a cliché, but you are more likely to land the next job if you have someone in your network that knows your potential future employer and can recommend you, when you apply for the job.

Anna Winther

PhDs in PUBLIC SECTOR jobs



Dorthe Ørnskov, Molecular Biologist at Vejle Hospital

Education:
2005: PhD from Health, Aarhus University
1999: MSc in Biotechnology, Odense University

Jobs:
2013-present: Molecular Biologist, Clinical Pathology, Vejle Hospital
2005-2013: Molecular Biologist, Clinical Microbiology and Clinical Biochemistry, Vejle Hospital
2005: Postdoc, Aarhus University

How early did you plan your next career step after the PhD?

Dorthe started considering her next career step approximately 1½ year before finishing her PhD. She knew she would not pursue an academic career and considered both the hospital and the industry as interesting places to work.

What kind of position do you have today?

Dorthe is currently working as a molecular biologist at the Department of Clinical Pathology at Vejle Hospital. When employed as a molecular biologist Dorthe has many different tasks. Among others, she is responsible for the process of performing molecular analyses on patient material (tissue, blood, etc.) to search for relevant molecular alterations relevant for e.g. diagnosis or treatment. The analyses are in practical carried out by medical laboratory scientists, but as a molecular biologist, Dorthe is responsible for the implementation, validation, quality assurance and troubleshooting if problems arise. Other important tasks deals with analyzing the results of the molecular analyses and providing the doctors with the correct answer to the analysis they have ordered. In this kind of position, Dorthe has the possibility to do research if she has the interest and the time.

Why did you decide to go in the direction you chose?

Dorthe knew that an academic career was not the right career path for her, so she hoped to find employment either at a hospital or in the industry. The job as a molecular biologist was a job that she was very interested in so she used her network to learn more about this kind of job and actually get a job as a molecular biologist.

Have you had other jobs prior to your current job – if yes, which? And how did they lead to your current job?

Before working at a molecular biologist at Clinical Pathology, Dorthe worked as a molecular biologist at another department in the same hospital. By already working at the hospital, it was easier for her to get the position she really wanted at Clinical Pathology.

How did you find your first job?

Her network was a very important factor in finding the first job. Her main supervisor knew a person working at Vejle Hospital and this enabled her to establish a contact internally at the hospital. Subsequently, she kept in touch with the department by herself for half a year until she got a temporary position as a molecular biologist. This way Dorthe used her network while carrying out the process herself.

Describe a typical day/week?

The job as a molecular biologist is very varied so there is not such a thing as a typical day. The job includes many different tasks such as handling unpredicted situation in the process of performing the molecular analyses of the patient material. This could be machines that has technical problems, odd looking results, and making decisions about how patient material of bad quality should be handled. The job also requires that you stay updated about the scientific background of the molecular analyses you are using at the department but also what new analyzes is relevant to implement and how. A workday of course also includes analyzing the results obtained from the molecular analyzes and providing a useful answer for the doctors.

What skills and experiences from your PhD studies do you have the most benefit of today?

None in particular, but many of the general qualifications you achieve doing a PhD help you when you get a job. She felt she learned a lot from her supervisor and got many good pieces of advise about both scientific stuff but also about the experiences she had gained during her working life.

What skills would you say you did not develop during your PhD which you have developed afterwards?

Because Dorthe is now working at a hospital, there are different things she would have appreciated if she had

learned during her PhD. This is knowledge about areas such as quality assurance, organizational skills and accreditation. If you know, you are interested in a job at a hospital department it could be a good idea to participate in courses focusing on these areas.

What specific career advice would you like to share with someone who is just about to finish his/her PhD studies?

Always remember to use your network.

Ann-Katrine Jakobsen

Charlotte Christie Petersen, Head of the FACS Core Facility, Aarhus University

Education:
2010: PhD in Medicine, Aarhus University
2002: MSc in Molecular Biology, Aarhus University

Jobs:
2010- present: Manager of the FACS Core Facility, AU
2002-05: Research assistant, Department of Biomedicine, AU, in collaboration with the private biotech company T-cellic A/S

How early did you plan your next career step after the PhD?

During my PhD, I did not think much about the next career step, however, I knew after having done both my master and PhD in the same lab that I was open and ready for new opportunities. When I wrote my dissertation, I started looking for job ads.

What kind of position do you have today?

Today I work as a manager of the FACS (Fluorescence Activated Cell Sorting) Core Facility located in the Bartholin Building at Aarhus University.

Why did you decide to go in the direction you chose?

I ended up here by a mix of coincidence and my network. After finishing my PhD I went without work for a brief period when a position at the newly funded FACS Core Facility was advertised.

Have you had other jobs prior to your current job – if yes, which? And how did they lead to your current job?

Between my master and my PhD, I worked as a research assistant in the lab of my main supervisor. The project was carried out in collaboration with a private biotech company. Here I got more experience with flow cytometry, large scale experiments and coordinating activities. In addition, I expanded my network and got insight into the structure of a private company.

What contacts – if any, did you have at the company/university before you started?

My supervisors during my master and PhD were among the initiators of establishing the FACS facility to provide more optimal cell and particle sorting and advanced flow cytometry for scientists. After I got the job they have acted as sparring partners and they are in the facility's executive board.

Describe a typical day/week?

Every day is different and that is part of the fun. However, during the day I often have to sort cells for a researcher or help at an ordinary flow cytometer. The day is often full of different questions regarding new experiments, protocols or helping with data analysis.

What skills and experiences from your PhD studies do you benefit the most from today?

During my master and PhD, I did a lot of flow cytometry that of course has been the most beneficial practical skill. My PhD work taught me how to efficiently obtain new knowledge and work independently and organized which are vital skills in my current job position.

What skills would you say you did not develop during your PhD that you have developed afterwards?

During my PhD, I only did flow cytometry, and therefore I had to learn sorting cells when I started at the FACS Core Facility. When I started, I had to create the facility together with my two part-time technicians. I had to learn everything about management, financials, web page development, human resources, and establishment of user databases and protocols.

What specific career advice would you like to share with someone who is just about to finish his/her PhD studies?

1. Being open to all possibilities.
2. Find something you like doing.

Why do you think this is a great job?

This is my dream job. I work with something I find very interesting, I like the interaction with many different researchers, and I am still challenged with new applications. Researchers at Aarhus University work in many different areas and flow cytometry can be used in many diverse ways. The work/life balance is in addition great.

Didde Haslund

Francesco Trepiccione, Assistant Professor

Education:	Jobs:
PhD Health Science	2015- present: Assistant Professor
MSc in Medicine and Surgery	2014-15: Post-doc
Medical School	2011-2013: Nephrologist
	1998-2011: Student

How early did you plan your next career step after the PhD?

I started planning the day after I received my PhD degree.

What kind of position do you have today?

I have an academic position as an Assistant Professor.

Why did you decide to go in the direction you chose?

The motivation of taking on a PhD degree motivated me to go the Academic way, and I am happy that the PhD-program and the scientific work did not decrease this motivation.

Have you had other jobs prior to your current job – if yes, which? And how did they lead to your current job?

Yes, I did work as physician and then as post-doc. The jobs were in the same field I am working in now and contributed to my education.

How did you find your first job/current job?

I was waiting for the opening of such a position at the University, and in the meantime, I tried to build my CV for it.

What contacts – if any, did you have at the company/university before you started?

I had some at the University from where I graduated. My current boss is the same person with who I started approaching the scientific world.

Describe a typical day/week?

My position currently covers half time of the week devoted to clinical activity and half to research activity or teaching, so I do not have much free time in general.

What skills and experiences from your PhD studies do you have the most benefit of today?

I arrived in Aarhus as a student and I left as a scientist! I learned the fundamentals of the scientific way of addressing a question and the know how in terms of organizing and the way of thinking. You can say I learned the "method".

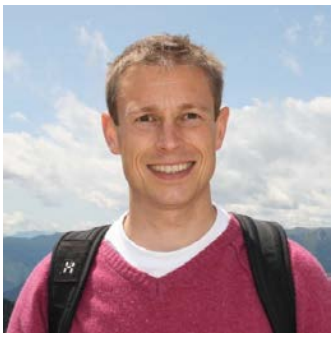
What skills would you say you did not develop during your PhD that you have developed afterwards?

The courage to decide what is interesting and what is not. Taking the risk to fail is a first step. When I was PhD, I wanted to do everything because I could not discriminate among projects, questions and tracks to follow.

What specific career advice would you like to share with someone who is just about to finish his/her PhD studies?

To be super determinate and follow what they like and build this systematically.

Luca Bordoni



Jesper Melchjorsen, High School Teacher at Egaa Gymnasium

Education:
2014: DMSc, Aarhus University
2013: Diploma of Education, SDU
2005: PhD in Viral Immunology, Aarhus University
2002: MSc in Molecular Biology, Aarhus University

Jobs:
2012-present: High School teacher, Egaa Gymnasium, Denmark
2007-2012: Postdoc and Associate Professor, Dept. Infectious Diseases, AUH and Dept. Clinical Medicine, Aarhus University
2005-2007: Postdoc, Science and Technology, Aarhus University

How early did you plan your next career step after the PhD?

I hardly did any planning, really. My overall plan was to continue doing research. About 6 months before finishing my PhD, I started thinking about my next career step. However, I considered several options including teaching, academia, industry etc.

What kind of position do you have today?

I am a high-school teacher at Egaa Gymnasium, teaching the subjects of chemistry, biotechnology, and biology. Concurrently, I study a Master in Science education at Copenhagen and Aarhus Universities.

Why did you decide to go in the direction you chose?

The decision process was rather long. I had some great years in academia, but the working conditions at the University became less optimal for me due to, among other things, the lack of a senior track at Health. I liked to teach and observed teaching by former study colleagues at gymnasiums in Aarhus. I found the classes, as well as the way of teaching the students, very interesting. So, the decision of applying for a job as a high-school teacher was based on a combination of many things, including my interest in teaching, job with permanent employment, and the desire to trying something new.

Have you had other jobs prior to your current job – if yes, which? And how did they lead to your

current job?

Yes. Postdoc positions and job as Associate Professor.

How did you find your first job/current job?

Through my network. I was encouraged to apply for the job. I did apply for jobs at other high schools, however.

What contacts – if any, did you have at the company/university before you started?

In general, I had many contacts from the university study, sports, university clubs, etc. At my current job, I had contacts from the studies and from basketball.

Describe a typical day/week?

My weeks/days are different. Typically, I have 15-18 hours of classroom teachings, and then I spend the rest of the hours of the week on preparing for classes including testing and setting up experimental work, and many other different things like project work, evaluating assignments, student supervision, literature studies, research elements, meetings etc.

What skills and experiences from your PhD studies do you have the most benefit of today?

E.g., project work, experimental skills (vs. theoretical), not being afraid of trying something new, working under pressure and with deadlines, high literacy, and writing assignments.

What skills would you say you did not develop during your PhD, which you have developed afterwards?

Project management on a higher level and psychological aspects.

What specific career advice would you like to share with someone who is just about to finish his/her PhD studies?

Pursue a job you find interesting, and that gives you energy. Keep your eyes open for opportunities and be open-minded. Start thinking about what is possible to do after your PhD (alternative job opportunities). Gain relevant qualifications during you PhD, and remember that you need to learn throughout your life. Talk to people and nurture your network. Be a good colleague, do your best in your job and privately, and remember also to take good care of yourself.

Camilla Darum Sørensen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