



Great jobs for bright people

## 'How to secure a job after your PhD' Google+ Hangout on Air Transcript

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**Panellists:** Aimee Bateman, Dr Chris Humphrey, Clare Jones, Dr Ioanna Iordanou and Dr Nadine Muller

**Aimee:** Google+ Hangout – so we are live today with jobs.ac.uk, and we're actually going to be talking about a topic 'How to secure a job after your PhD' Now we are live today and joined by 5 lovely people here with me for the next 45 minutes and we're going to be covering loads of your questions. You can join in, this is live, this is interactive so I want you to throw in some stuff, if you're on twitter, or google+, use the #jobsQ but we already have been asking people over the last couple of weeks and have been overwhelmed with the response, we've had so many people emailing with questions, so we're going to try and cover the majority of topics today so let me introduce myself, I'm not just some random woman talking to you on google+, my name is Aimee Bateman, and for the last 12 years I've been a commercial recruiter. I specialise in finding opportunities for jobseekers and helping people sell themselves or promote themselves and I run a website called careercake.com, my two favourite things, careers and cake, and I'm joined by some fabulous panellists today. Firstly I'm with Chris Humphrey; Chris actually runs Jobs on toast, a website which specialises in finding fulfilling careers for people that have masters and PhD's, postgrads, so hi Chris

**Chris:** Hello

**Aimee:** Hi there, we're also with Clare Jones, Clare's from Nottingham University and works massively within careers, so delighted to have you here – hi

**Clare:** Hi Aimee

**Aimee:** And Ioanna, can you say your surname?

**Ioanna:** Yes it's Iordanou! Hi Aimee

**Aimee:** Hello, and you're from Warwick Business School, really excited, I've been following you on twitter so I'm really excited to have you with us, and we've got Nadine, Nadine Muller from one of my favourite universities, Liverpool John Moore's who I do loads of work with, I'm up there next week actually, and I know that you're a lecturer there aren't you? In English literature, yeah so can you guys just tell me, and all of the viewers, why you wanted to take part today, and why this is so important for you to add value, Chris?

**Chris:** Yeah sure, well I've got a PhD myself, and I also did a postdoctoral fellowship, and I've gone on to have a successful career in business after leaving academia I worked as a project manager in financial services, my passion really is to especially understand non-academic opportunities and options they can take *[no sound]* ... (I set up) Jobs on toast. I really want to help people and show them the full range of career options open to them. I write articles for

instance around such areas like identifying transferable skills, and how to market yourself to a non-academic employer.

**Aimee:** I'm so excited about you being involved today because you left academia in 2000, and you know what it's like to be that person who's going into the private sector, that commercial environment, so I know you're going to be able to help loads today so thank you Chris. And Clare where did you want to get involved today?

**Clare:** Ok Aimee well the easy answer would be that it's my job as a careers professional working with researchers but I'm more concerned with the belief that PhDs are a really talented group of people and they have a breadth of attributes qualities and skills to offer to a range of careers, and I'm involved with today's event because it's about assisting them to value that themselves, and then to be able to convince others that they've got so much to offer.

**Aimee:** Absolutely... hi Ioanna, what made you go 'right, I want to be involved with this today?'

**Ioanna:** I'm always excited about these sort of opportunities, because I think I'm sort of halfway between Chris and Clare, I left academia after my PhD in 2008, not wanting to hear anything about it, and about a year ago I joined academia again, and I love it. So I've been outside and back in, quite late I would say, so hopefully I will be able to add some value to this particular conversation.

**Aimee:** And Nadine I know you were very prolific on twitter always sharing the interesting stuff and it's something you're really passionate about.

**Nadine:** Yes it is and I think particularly because I'm an early career researcher, so I managed to get my job 6 months after I finished my PhD, but it's been one and a half years now that I've been in that post, and I think I still have these really vivid memories still of that anxious time when you finish your PhD and you need that job, you can't pay your bills without that job but what do you do? Where do you go? And I'm really conscious that not everyone gets this kind of advice, that hopefully we can help with here, for example from their supervisors, so I think that it's really important that we make this widely available.

[5:27]

**Aimee:** For those of you watching today we're going to cover quite a lot of areas today because you asked us to. You want to cover such things as what's important during your PhD, but we also want to talk about - I know a lot you have asked about interviews, how do you stand out from the crowd, how do you manage doing your PhD as well as all that job-hunting? So the first question, let's get straight in, the first question is actually from Laura Cocker who is on google+ so hello Laura, Laura's actually said - let's have a little look here; she'd like to know what concerns industry employers have about newly qualified PhD students in science, and how I can improve my employability to industry after academic training. Do you want to start with that Clare? As within a careers capacity, maybe it's something you can touch on firstly.

**Clare:** Yeah sure - hi Laura, I think the concerns that industry have about newly qualified PhDs, two things probably about perhaps being now extremely narrow because now the way the PhD is you look at something very specifically, so maybe it's about thinking of yourself as a broad scientist again and going back into the breadth and depth of your background in science and also probably the other area is commercial awareness, what are the differences in working practises, in pace of work, perhaps views in industry where - whether they're right or not -

you can take 3 yrs. or 4 yrs. to work on one project and their pace of work and the range of things that they want you to do is quite varied, so I think anything you can do that makes sure that you're showing that you're interested in commercialisation of science, that you get involved with activities, you're known to promote schemes, anything to do with things that are going to improve your commercial awareness, I think would put you in a good position.

**Aimee:** Do you have anything to add to that Chris?

**Chris:** Obviously I'd suggest that you could look to do some informational interviews with people who are already scientists who are working in industry or business, you could approach people and work through a range of questions, similar to what you've asked, to help give yourself some good answers that you can relay back to an employer, or if there's a gap between where you are and where you need to be then that gives you a chance to work on that before you actually go in front of people and start applying for jobs.

**Aimee:** What about you Nadine what are your thoughts?

**Nadine:** Obviously I don't really have a science background, but I do think that what Clare said really rings true from the students that I work with who want to branch out, so that idea of just awareness, I think, awareness of the other sectors, awareness of the kind of skills it takes and also of the commercial side of things.

**Aimee:** Would you have anything different to add to that Ioanna or is it kind of much the same?

**Ioanna:** Well just that one of the traps that we all fall into as PhD students try not to get lost in the solitude of the PhD, if you are interested in a career in the industry, it's very important that you are out there making connections speaking to people and that ultimately showing that 'I'm not the lonely scientist – I'm the industrial scientist'

**Aimee:** Absolutely, I think that it's really important and it's something that I talk to people when I'm working with people from all different sectors and industries is don't be defined by your qualifications and don't be defined by your job title, you need to focus on building relationships because ultimately people work with people, people hire people, I know that sounds really cheesy, but it's absolutely true, but I think it's really easy to forget that, you are more than your CV, you are more than your qualification and if you put the time into building relationships – wonderful beautiful quality relationships with professional people, you know really solid professional relationships, through online networking through offline networking then the opportunities will come. Surround yourself with people that are better than you, that's the best way to be better, and surround yourself with these relationships, focus on that, if you just get on the internet and think I've got to find a job today, that's a complete head mess, nothing will come from that, nothing good will come from that anyway, you have to focus on 'this week I'm going to build 5 quality relationships with an influencer within my realm career and if you build those relationships, guys, the opportunities will present themselves.

[10.21]

**Aimee:** We've got another question actually which I'm really interested to know this answer, it's from Thomas who was a PhD researcher, from London, How to secure a career in academia,

specifically whether to prioritise publishing articles versus books, what are employers looking for in addition to the PhD itself? Can I come to you on that Ioanna?

**Ioanna:** Yes, I would say that the important thing to know here is what is your discipline? And to know and understand what is the priority in your discipline? If for example you are doing something like arts and humanities, sociology, politics - books, monographs are really important, and the employer will want to see that if you don't have one published yet, because clearly you are PhD, that you are getting into that route, of securing that book contract. If you are in industry, in an area like I am, which is business, monographs don't count that much, articles are more important, so I would it's a combination of both but find out what the priority is in your field of expertise.

**Aimee:** Ok that's really interesting, what do you think about that Chris?

**Chris:** Publishing, I think especially with the research assessment... *[no sound]* ... the two things are really important, that you have the publications and that you have a research plan, not just what you're publishing now but a future vision, and how you're going to keep on with that level of output in the future.

**Aimee:** Ok – and Clare I know that you've done some surveys on this haven't you? Do you want to join in now?

**Clare:** Yeah, me and a group of fellow colleagues in the career services, we've asked academics what does it take to get your first lecturing job? Very small survey, but some interesting results and with this one around at least having some publication plans, if you're in postdoctoral careers and going in towards science that you are publishing regularly and then you're increasing from a consistent output to a quality output so they're seeing development into higher impact journals, so it's really about, for me, said PhD's think ahead, look to the future, don't be sat back in your PhD and not considering the next 2 or 3 years, and building and moving forward.

**Aimee:** Yeah absolutely and at the end of the day these guys are doing a PhD, and it's not because they're scared of hard work, it's not because they're scared of pushing the boundaries and making sure that they're doing a lot of things that other people aren't doing, and that's why they're doing this, and they're well up for that. Nadine, you got your role 6 months and you're a lecturer, 6 months after getting your doctorate, that's amazing, and do you have any thoughts on that?

**Nadine:** Yes definitely, I almost assuming this question comes from the social sciences or humanities, because the monograph was mentioned in there and for us the monograph carries a lot of prestige still, especially – I'm in English, particularly there, but for a lot of the humanities and social sciences it carries a lot of prestige, the important thing to know is that if you look in terms of REF terms then it's important to know that actually, a monograph is rated the same as a journal in the end, the same quality rating, it's worth the same amount of money to the university, you get the same money for this whether it's a 3 star 4 star journal, or if it's a 3 star 4 star monograph, so if you can publish in good quality journals, that's just worth as much, and probably easier to do during your PhD, without a question, than it is to publish a monograph, you will want to perhaps want to turn your thesis into a monograph afterwards, but you can get going with some quality journal articles beforehand, and the only thing I would say there is as far as possible, target your journals wisely, do aim high, you can still work your way down if you get rejected, it's perfectly normal, but this is really

what people are going to be looking for, because if your work has been peer reviewed in a very well-known journal, then that shows a certain amount of quality.

[14:48]

**Aimee:** Thank you, lots of nodding there from Ioanna, so thanks and Thomas I hope that helps, I've got another question, and this question came up from so many people, and it's a question that I hear all the time anyway in lots of different industries, but actually comes from Marwa, who's a PhD student from Southern England, and its 'How to identify the skills I learnt during my PhD that would appeal to employers' now this is always a tricky one, because we're not always great at looking at ourselves as a product, and we have to because recruitment is a sales process, both people are buying, both people are selling, we're buying into each other and it's a real task for people to sit down and think what am I good at, what is my value especially if you've been rejected in the past, your value doesn't decrease just because someone failed to see it, but I think that sometimes we can feel like that, certainly jobseekers and graduates that I work with, what tips would you give to people to think ' what have I got, what transferable skills, what can I offer to an employer? Chris I'm going to come to you with this because I know this is a huge passion for you and Chris I now you speak to lots of people about this so what would you say to marwa?

[16.08]

**Chris:** Yeah as you say this is something I'm really interested in especially as I find that people haven't always got the awareness of the skills that they've got, but one of the exercises I do when I go to campus and talk to students is do a little skills audit with them, actually take them through a process of identifying about 20 skills that a typical PhD has, so you can look into the area of project related skills, so PhD's have managed a project, which is their thesis, they've delivered that, or you could look at ICT skills that they've got, research skills, networking, organising events, so I'd work through a list of about 20 skills and you can really see a light bulb going off in their head as they think oh yeah I have got that and I have got that, and people are really sort of energised by thinking – I didn't realise I can actually do all those things! But that's a great list to go to an employer with and say look at all these things I can do for you.

**Aimee:** Yeah I also think as well – I really agree with that so much I think it's really important that you look outside, so sort of the networking stuff and events, that type of thing, but if there's anyone struggling with that ask your best friend, ask someone that you've worked with, ask for references, ask for testimonials from people, and if you are going to ask for references and testimonials or you are going to seek advice from people that you've worked with before, don't just say 'what are my best bits?' Because that's a very open ended question, go to people and say 'what problem did I solve for you? What would you say is my key (strength) if there was a situation that I needed to help you with what would that situation be? That's a great way for you to then gather information that you can also use on your LinkedIn, you know you can whack in a fabulous testimonial on your CV, rather than just put references available on request; you could put a reference there. But I think it's important that ultimately, employers are hiring why you get out of bed in the morning, they're hiring 'If you have a really bad day on a Monday are going to rock in on Tuesday? If you've got a deadline or a report that I need you to do, and you're late, are you going to sit there and deal with it or are you going to go and have a cigarette and get in a strop' you know there are so many things, I've recruited for nearly 5000 positions in so many different companies and the person with the most experience doesn't always get the job, it's the person that

believes what the employer believes. So think about what your motivators are, think about what your values are, honesty, integrity, passion, hard work, helping others be the best they can be, think about yourself in terms of those things rather than 'well I've done this I've done that...' think about your 'why' - why you do what you do not just what, because the best people don't buy into somebody just because of what you do, it's why you do it too, and Clare I know you've done a lot of stuff like this haven't you, behaviours and qualities, can you add on that?

**Clare:** Yeah sure Aimee, I think for me it's about really getting people to value the breadth of things that they do, the how they work, who they work with how they interact with them so I actually talk to PhDs about thinking about not the end product of their work, which in academia that is usually what we focus on and almost define our success by here, and the articles, like we talked about in the previous question, for many employers outside that they want to know the process, how you got there, (Aimee – how you dealt with a difficult situation) yeah, I was working with some PhDs yesterday at a skills conference here at Nottingham and they said 'we communicate', how do you communicate? What situations? What types of communications do you use? When you're working with your supervisor you're trying to influence and negotiate with them, and they all laughed, but that's true, they might not always win that argument, but those are the sort of skills and qualities and behaviours that you need - well actually you need as an academic as well - but a very much more obvious presentation of that for those people that are thinking of carers outside, and it also gives clues to the individual about what they really like doing, exactly what you said, what drives you, what motivates you, what do you like, what do you want to do in most of your working day? Because you spend a lot of time there.

**Aimee:** Yeah absolutely, Ioanna what do you think about ... I know that a lot of people came through and said look I'm doing a PhD it's a massive amount of work how do I balance the job hunt at the same time?

**Ioanna:** That is a difficult one and I think it's difficult because from my personal experience as a PhD student and from many of my friends and my colleagues you get lost in the PhD you get so intertwined in that bubble that it's very difficult to look beyond the boundaries of the PhD, so the important thing for me, and I know it sounds a cliché but to basically understand your priorities and to manage your time, why I'm saying that is if you understand that for example that the priority for you is to get, let's say a postdoctoral fellowship, then that PhD eventually will need to start to be considered as 'ok what are publication outcomes of it? When do I need to start planning, writing or disseminating or presenting? So I think the issue with managing and balancing the PhD with a job search is not the issue of time, it's the issue of 'I'm overwhelmed' so it's about breaking it down into smaller compartments and saying ok focus on this but I also need to set some time aside to start looking, to start networking, asking, finding what I need to do. So that's what I would say from my personal experience.

**Aimee:** I just want to bang the point in again, don't think so much about 'I'm doing this PhD I need to find a job' think about 'I'm doing a PhD and I'm going to focus on building relationships' because that's not so overwhelming, if you send someone an article that might be of interest to them or you're building a relationship with someone on twitter who could actually really influence your career you could send them an article and say 'saw this today and thought of you' give give give ask. That's what I always say – you give 3 touch points – give give give before you ask for an opportunity. Once you do that and if you manage that well and just focus on building those relationships and adding value to people and making people feel special then when it does come to that time when you need an opportunity there will be so

many more people who will be willing to help you. Nadine how did you find that? Because I know that you got your role really quickly did you focus on that when you were doing your PhD?

**Nadine:**

I was, I was doing all sorts of things next to my PhD, so in that sense my PhD was really just something I needed to do to get to the next step but I tried to see it like that because it takes the pressure off a little bit as well, I had to remind myself every day that no one was expecting me to write a Nobel prize winning speech or book or anything like this, but I think what's also important when we come back to the practicalities is depending on the career you're applying for, depending on the job, you may not be considered till you actually have your PhD, that doesn't mean though that it harms you to start trying, because one of the things you also need to get into the habit of is how to write applications. Because you don't want to do that once the pressure is on once you've finished and don't have a job, you want to start practising that ideally without pressure, just think to yourself ok this is a job that I would apply for, I may not stand a chance right now but I will actually get the application together because you will be surprised how long it takes to get all those narratives together to tidy up your CV to make it relevant for that particular job, to get into the habit of that beforehand, you know, when the pressure is not yet on just so you've got something to draw on, some experience to draw on when you actually get there when it counts.

**Aimee:**

That's such good advice, so guys get practising on those applications, that's really good advice. Chris can I come to you with this question, because again this is a really popular question, and I know that this is of relevance to lots of people. This comes from Ahmaid who is a postdoctoral researcher in the UK; "How to sell yourself to non-academic employers in cover letters and interviews (more specifically than 'emphasising transferrable skills') and how to convince them that you are not overqualified and only interested in the job until something better comes along."

And this is really interesting because my best friend has got her doctorate and I sat with her for a long time a few years ago and this was an issue with her, that you are not overqualified and this job is not a stepping stone until something better comes along. Now obviously, if it is a position that is very obviously just a stepping stone, that's a very different issue, but if this is a position that you really really want to get and you are not using this as a stepping stone but that person doesn't believe you, Chris what advice would you have for somebody going through that situation? Because that can be really frustrating.

**Chris:**

I think the first thing I'd say is that these kinds of fears can be in your own head, and not necessarily how the employer would look at you, but it is quite important to get over them, the piece of advice I'd give to everybody is not think of yourself as a PhD, but think of yourself as a professional ex – and within that ex in your own phrase are you an ex professional researcher, professional marketing expert, professional diversity consultant, professional translator and actually really sell yourself, present yourself as a professional. In that way everything else that you've got supports that professionalism. A PhD is just one example of that, so that's usually my advice to people who are thinking this way to change your thinking and communicate your value.

**Aimee:**

It could be in your head, yeah you're absolutely right, I think most of our limiting beliefs are in our head. Clare, over to you with this one.

**Clare:** Yeah I get this question all the time, two things I'd say, that I love Chris' view of the professionalism because that's what I say to people, if I ask a group of PhD's to go to uni or go to work every day uni being the more ... *[no sound]*

[27.25]

**Aimee:** I've got some really good ideas on this one actually, firstly I would say that you're not overqualified you are exactly qualified, and there is no problem telling someone 'it's interesting that you do think I'm overqualified but I would say and I genuinely believe I'm exactly qualified, perfectly qualified, not overqualified, and I think sometimes that it's so much more than the position, and I think you have to remember that, it's the organisation, the team you're going into, it's so much more than a job, and the job opportunities and the bullet points. In an application form you will often have the opportunity to talk to someone about why you are applying, it could be that you have built a relationship with them beforehand or you've got the opportunity to submit a cover letter, tell them why you want to work for them, don't make them feel, and this happens all the time, don't let them feel like you've just filled in five applications this week hoping that someone gives you an interview, that's a real problem because you want to feel special and valued and so do employers, so do recruiters, so do organisations. They want to give the opportunity to the person that wants it the most. So when you go to these networking events and you meet these people who just talk about themselves – we've all met people like that haven't we? Me me me me me – and you think they're going to ask me about me in a minute and they don't, that's very much what employers feel like when you send them cover letters and application forms and you don't mention anything about how much you want it, because it's THEM, make them feel like right now, you are the only person that I really really want to work for. They will know that's not true and it's completely cool, but if you want somebody to be genuinely interested in you and to overlook the thought that you might be overqualified you have to make them feel like you are genuinely interested in them too. I'm not saying you need to look desperate, by any means, but you need to make them feel special, so when you're writing a cover letter don't start with why somebody should pick you, start with why you picked them because if you really want to get somebody's attention you need to start with them, tell them why and give them an emotional emotive reason, not just regurgitating something you've seen on their website, or something that is in their mission statement, google them, 'I saw an article that you wrote' or something you've had published and it's been 'an inspiration to me since – it helped me through my PhD' make them feel special, and all of these other things like your overqualified or you're not experienced enough won't matter so much, and that's been my experience. What do you think about that loanna?

**loanna:** Yeah exactly the same, because I've been in this situation quite recently and for quite a prolonged amount of time I thought I'm not getting anywhere because I'm overqualified, and actually that's not it, it's about showing your passion for the role, showing how interested you are, and making sure you don't look desperate, making sure that the employer doesn't see that you are just one of the 5 applications I've sent out today. And I think this is where we get it wrong, us PhD graduates, we so desperately want a job that we end up applying to so many different places that the interest, the enthusiasm, the passion, it just doesn't come out...

**Aimee:** It's easy to lose that when you're doing application after application. How would you advise Nadine? That you keep all that positivity going because that is a question that came through



from Jennifer in USA, 'how to stay positive and motivated during your search' what would you say for that Nadine?

**Nadine:** I think especially when its academia it can be really tough and obviously in other sectors at the moment its really tough as well, I think the important thing is to remind you what you actually want to do and why and how much time you have to spend preparing for that and I think also, what I tend to tell people is learn to value yourself during your PhD, it's very easy for people to think you're just indulging, your just writing for 3 or 4 years and doing nothing of value, and what we don't do enough I think, especially in academia, is actually remind people that their work is valuable, they are valuable beyond what they do and you need to have that during your PhD, because otherwise it just gets tougher to value yourself once you're out there looking for a job. And I think that's really important just to add to what you said earlier about covering letters and it's not just about you it's also always about the other side especially in academia, when you write a covering letter there you're going to have to talk about the institution, the department, the people who already work there, why do you want to work with them why are you a good fit? And that also reminds you that it is about you and how you fit into that picture, sometimes it's really difficult to keep that in mind in academia but the right job is probably the one you get because it has to be a department where you fit in as a person, as a researcher, with your field and what you work on, so keep that in mind when you're looking and remember how many people are out there, it's not because you're rubbish, which is the often the first kind of conclusion we tend to draw when we get another rejection. That's really not the reason.

**Aimee:** Yes I love that, and what you said about remembering the value in yourself, and a quick thing that I always teach people to do is something that I actually do myself, because obviously I work by myself and keeping that self-esteem when you're on your own all the time, surround yourself with lighters, and lighters are people that make you feel incredible, people that make you feel that you can take over the world, that everything will be fine. I know it's quite an introvert thing to do a PhD and I think it's important that you spend time with people regularly that do make you feel good about yourself. What do you think Clare?

**Clare:** Absolutely, I think some of the time in academia ... I don't have a PhD but when I started to work with PhDs I thought they would be a super confident group of people and I would be almost pulling them down a little bit but actually it's the other way round and much of my job is boosting their confidence so that the more they're around people who do say 'yes you're good at this' and they say that to themselves and that's one of the benefits of Chris' skills exercises, just actually looking at what you've achieved, and what you do and say 'yeah I did that well'

**Aimee:** Clare we lost you earlier and I was desperately trying to get you back because I knew you'd be saying something really interesting so can I just go back to that point if that's ok, because I'm sure you would want to finish your point about being overqualified because that was a real issue, we didn't hear anything that you said, so you might have to repeat it all but I know that's a really big issue for people.

**Clare:** I'll do my best but I'm a senior moment type of person so I'll try to go back to it... in terms of employers viewing you as overqualified I actually think there is something where PhDs have to recognise that they are an unknown quantity, they're a career changer, so there might be some legitimacy to that feeling of 'are we getting the right person.. we don't quite know, they're coming from somewhere different' so it's about, again, that translation of your

experience into the language and vocabulary and the setting of that organisation, so the more you understand... *[loss of sound and picture]*

[36.34]

**Aimee:** I've got a question that I want to go to Chris actually, I want to ask everybody's thoughts on this, but this is something I hear a lot but I want to go with you on this one, it's from Eleni who's on google+ and she says that some people have actually told her to leave her PhD qualification off her CV when applying for non-academic jobs, she disagrees, but what do you think? Eleni thank you that's an amazing question, Chris what do you think?

**Chris:** Yes it's a question I've heard many times before and I think the key thing to me is to think about your PhD as employment, you can even think of yourself as a self-employed researcher, so what I encourage people to do is actually think of your period at university as being your undergraduate and maybe if you did a masters, but after that a PhD is a job, you know its 3 or 4 years you're working at that so what I suggest to people is to put that in the employment section but don't necessarily say just PhD itself, but actually talk a bit more about what you did like you ran a research project to deliver a patent or a particular output, or a piece of research so talk about it in terms of a job and not in terms of just studying or a qualification.

**Aimee:** I absolutely love that advice and I'm going to be borrowing that to give to people when they ask me that question. Absolutely put it into the employment section – what do you think about that Nadine? Has anybody ever said that to you? I suppose it's a bit different as you went into academia, but have heard any of your friends say that? Or thought about doing that?

**Nadine:** Yes definitely especially when we talk about any other options in terms of going into admin for example whilst we're looking for another job I have lots of friends who said I only go up to a level or maybe even GCSE'S and not even mention the degree the PhD or any kind of postgraduate qualification, obviously for my career trajectory, and I haven't done much else I have to confess, so I'm not of much help there, of course I would never leave the PhD off my CV because it's absolutely crucial.

**Aimee:** Does anyone else have any points to make on that?

**Clare:** I was just going to say that I really dislike the view that people would leave off such an important part of their life, it's like Chris said its sometimes about creative titling on your CV – current role.

**Aimee:** And that again goes back to what Chris was saying about the professionalism of it – my advice would be don't ever do that, don't ever devalue what you've done to make yourself smaller so that somebody else will accept you, and if that's the type of environment then you really need to think about whether you will be happy there, and I completely get that you need to earn money, I get that, trust me I've got friends and family that I spend every day with that are struggling to find employment and I still think that's the one thing that you don't negotiate on ever. We've got another question from Deb who's actually on google+ now watching, so Debs question – and I think Nadine can answer this first if that's ok it's a question on priorities 'what would you say the relative weight is for publications (in pipeline) versus teaching experience at interviews for lecturing posts/post-doc? What do you think, can I go to you first Nadine?

**Nadine:** I think if you're talking about lecturing posts people will be hiring you to take on a teaching load, that might be two modules per semester it might be 3 it might be 4 depending on the kind of university you apply for so there is an expectation especially in the competition that we're at at the moment with all the other applicants that you have shown that you can teach, so teaching is absolutely crucial. Get it in there whilst you can. the important thing to remember is that if you're offered 5 different seminar groups for one core module that's still only one line on your CV, so try and get the range in there try and demonstrate that you can teach different periods, things that maybe aren't in your research specialism because you're always going to have to do that when you get your first job, it's very unlikely that someone will offer you a lectureship where you only teach two specialist modules that fall exactly in what you want to do and what you have done in your PhD, and in terms of splitting your attention, I know that there is always the idea that 'oh my god if I pay too much attention to other things will I write a passable PhD?' and of course the PhD is at the centre of things because without that you're certainly not going to get the lectureship. But the other fact is that only your PhD is also not going to get you it so the teaching is definitely a factor, definitely publications in the pipeline or even out and I think the most important thing that people say on the one hand people are nice and say we have to show the potential for publication, but of course that has become slightly unrealistic if you look at the amount of people applying for the same job with you who have publications out who may even already have a monograph under contract, and if you're there saying 'one article accepted – I'm just making the revisions' - that's probably not going to cut it, so I would always say during your PhD don't publish everything you have, wait, discuss with your supervisor, is this good quality this particular chapter, might this make it into a journal, and send it off, and not least just for the career trajectory but also to get used to the sometimes ruthless feedback you can get. So I think look at the job specs for academic job posts and see what you can tick off during your PhD, don't just wait for afterwards because the pressures too great and the time too little.

**Aimee:** Thank you, I want to ask Clare, there isn't a massive amount of time and there is another question to I want to get in before we go but Clare is there anything you want to add to that?

**Clare:** Just that there are some discipline differences so some of the sciences, engineers, technologists may not have the same opportunity to teach in post doc and the expectation that they have done a lot of teaching before they apply for their first lectureship may be not quite as high as in the arts and social sciences, so I just wanted to put that perspective in so don't worry if you're a scientist but try and do some things

**Aimee:** Great point. So before I go to everyone with their final thoughts really I want to ask one more question this question has come from Stephanie who is a PhD student from the Midlands, and sent this through "When I graduate I will need paid employment straight away to continue to meet my financial commitments. I am concerned that if I don't find an academic job straight away, and have to take up temporary work elsewhere, this will be looked upon unfavourably by an interview panel'. What do you think Chris?

**Chris:** I agree that it's a tricky question but sometimes you just have to do what you have to do, it's something that I did when I finished my PhD, I handed it in on a Thursday and on the Monday went straight into a temp job, I had no (choice) in terms of finances I had to work so

I personally wasn't ashamed of that or didn't try and cover that thing up but it would be interesting to see what people thought on that.

**Aimee:** Yeah as a recruiter obviously I sell people to companies and organisations every day and I've yet ever to find somebody, somebody worth working with, that thinks going out in a temporary position is, that sitting at home would've been better. I think it goes back to what we said earlier, that you are so much more than your qualification, you are your values, you're motivated, being out there shows a lot about your character, you're prepared to do something that doesn't ultimately make you happy, but you're going to do it because you know you need to do it because it can help you, it's the reason why I'm in a position to be able to sit here with you today Mr Interviewer, Mr Group, because I did go out and do that, I was able to pay my bills so I can sit here with a company, with an organisation, with a university that I would love to work for and look them in the eye and be proud of it. So that's my little thoughts on that. We are going to have to wrap up I'm afraid. I know I want to say that there are lots of questions that we have that to get through and we don't have a massive amount of time, and we have absolutely loved having everyone with us today. There are going to be lots of additional posts and things through jobs.ac.uk on twitter and google+ so make sure you follow those guys there, and on the website as well, lots of amazing careers blogs, so lots of people that are advising and writing articles that will help you with certain situations and key topics and we're also going to be putting a lot of the links to the issues that have been raised today and further reading underneath the video as well. So guys I just want to ask you your final thoughts on today really, the one thing that you wanted to say that you didn't get the opportunity to say, the final words of wisdom I suppose and I'm going to come to you first Nadine on that, final tip and advice to those watching.

**Nadine:** I think the final tip, especially if you're early career, is don't think of yourself as inferior because you are early career, because you are just a postgraduate, try to show people what you have to offer, just because you haven't published that book yet, that means that potentially you have two books for the next ref cycle treat it as that, try to show the potential, that you have the enthusiasm that you have and what you can do, don't approach the situation as if you're begging for something you're not entitled to, you're perfectly qualified, so go for it and make sure you make the right decision in terms of what you think is right for you and then go after it no matter what people say.

**Aimee:** I love that – Ioanna?

**Ioanna:** Building from what Nadine said I would say exactly the same thing, a PhD is a wonderful asset to have, it's a great project that you've done on your own, and managed on your own, don't underestimate it, for me two important things, one, understand what it is, and learn how first of all to communicate the value of your PhD to yourself most importantly and then you will be able to communicate it to others. Most PhD students where they get it wrong is that they cannot communicate the value of what they are doing to themselves and that's where the all the wrong starts.

**Aimee:** So where its why you and not them?

**Ioanna:** Exactly and then you will be able to say this to others as well.

**Aimee:** Thank you. Clare?

**Clare:** Following very much on from Ioanna, believe in yourself, if you can't believe in yourself then you can't convince other people to believe in you and if there's support around for you, your university and careers service, not everyone has specialist support, but please use it and use your academic colleagues as well.

**Aimee:** Thank you, Chris?

**Chris:** Yeah just building on what everyone else has said, for me the most important thing is to have a story, for why you're making the transition out of academia. It's no good just getting to the end of a PhD and then saying 'oo I've run out of things to do' you've got to have a persuading path, a story that communicates 'yeah I've done this in my life, I fulfilled the challenge of getting a PhD and now I'm ready for the next challenge and that's why I want to come and work for you.

**Aimee:** Thank you. Nadine was there one thing that you wanted to add?

**Nadine:** Yes, it's very close to my heart, no matter what industry you want to go into, if it's academia, if it's another sector, please remember that we're all in the same boat when we come out of that PhD, don't think of each other as competitors, as enemies, think of it as a network that you can draw on for support please because you're only making things worse otherwise, playing into other people's hands, so remember that.

**Aimee:** And that leads onto my final thoughts which are relationships, relationships relationships, start building those relationships, and quality relationships, as soon as possible and the whole process of job hunting will be so much easier, so ok great, well I just want to say that a link to all the articles and issues raised today will be posted shortly after the end of this broadcast but guys it's been an absolute joy, thank you so much, and I hope for you watching that you've got a lot of value out of this, and I know that the guys at jobs.ac.uk were really keen to do this for you so thank you so much and have a lovely afternoon.

- ENDS -

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