

Apprise Timeline of SA

SA, a UK national, had earned BSc and Master's degrees prior to beginning the PhD in 2009 when she was 24. She chose doctoral work in order to advance in the field and pursue intellectual interests. SA joined this project in 2011, while focusing on the data collection and analysis phase of her research. She was part of a lab group, and taught master's and undergraduate students. SA completed the PhD at 26 years old, and then began working as a post-doctoral researcher at a private company. She envisioned herself in a research position, but also wanted to settle down with her partner, and thus ended up expanding her job search beyond academia. What struck us about SA's story was:

Changes in thinking over time about settling down and establishing a home base with partner (personal)

Choosing thesis by publication to advance initial goal of work in academia, and managing projects and publications as post-doctoral researcher in industry (work experience)

Change in career goals following the PhD, deciding that industry rather than academia would align with her life goals (career thinking)

Year	Personal	Work experience	Career Thinking
PhD Year 3	Spent time with partner and engaged in leisure activities. Enjoyed socializing with members of her research group.	Focused on data analysis and modelling, and sought help from academic staff upon encountering problems. Received feedback from supervisor on a paper; was helpful to check ideas and "be corrected/guided". Paper accepted with minor revisions which increased confidence: "felt like I was making progress towards a career in academia". Had a paper accepted, which made her feel like an academic. Taught master's and undergraduate students, which helped her to develop technical skills and view her work from another perspective.	Hoped for career in academia, as lecturer in research-intensive university. Immediate post-PhD goal to find post-doc position.
PhD Year 4	Began working part-time due to end of funding; experienced stress as job was far away. Partner looking for a job, which added additional stress. Partner found job in Europe and moved there short-term, which meant that she had to live on her own for the first time. Moved to another city for her post-doc position.	Continued to work on writing thesis, and received feedback from supervisor. Submitted thesis and began preparing for viva, which made her feel like an academic. Began to apply for post-doctoral positions, which was a stressful process. Passed viva with corrections. Accepted position at the company that partially funded her PhD as a post-doctoral researcher, which allowed her to continue her to write and conduct research.	Hoped to work in academia, ideally in a lectureship position.
Post-PhD Year 1	Enjoyed post-doc position but wished she had thought more about its location because of distance from family. Noted she and partner had decided to go wherever careers took them, and keep in touch via Skype.	Worked in post-doc position; flexible hours to manage projects, conduct research, and collaborate. Continued to publish papers and engaged in outreach work, which was "one way you can have a societal impact". Began searching for new job, as her contract would expire the following year; felt "quite stress[ed]... uncertain"	Hoped for research position in academia or private company, and expects to move several times before finding something permanent. Began to factor in finances when thinking about future jobs.
Post-PhD Year 2	Felt "absolutely exhausted" by ongoing job search. Partner planned to return to UK, and they decided to eventually settle down in SA's current location; no longer willing to move anywhere for work.	Engaged in computational work, writing, and meetings. Continued job search, applying for lectureships and positions in different fields.	Considered career change—possibly taking a graduate medicine course. Broadened career search to private sector and university administrator, viewing academic as "broken," focused on funding.
Post-PhD Year 3	----	Took job in a different industry that offered flexibility, as academia did not fit with her other life goals.	----
What struck us	Changes in thinking about settling down/establishing a home base.	Difficulties of job search in academia.	Change in career goals from academia to industry or other.



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