



2.4.3 What abilities are you developing during your PhD?

Under half of PhD graduates secure research-teaching positions in the academy. So, even if you hope for a research-teaching position after graduating, it is worthwhile considering public/private sector opportunities as well. This means re-thinking your PhD experiences in the context of job requirements in the public/private sector. Such requirements are generally expressed as a set of skills or abilities rather than a record of publications, research grants, and teaching experience. Below is a list of abilities PhD graduates have named as pertinent for themselves and their employers outside the academy. Reflect on your own experience to create examples of each of these abilities.

Intellectual abilities	Your examples
Thinking systematically/ analytically/ problem solving	
Using methodological knowledge and skills	
Dealing with complex questions/ ethics	
Doing multi-disciplinary work/ thinking creatively	
Networking abilities	Your examples
Communicating with the public	
Connecting with foreign colleagues	
Developing (inter)cultural understanding	
Negotiating with external partners	
Institutional abilities	Your examples
Project administration	
Management and leadership	

Can you add other abilities (and examples) to the list? We recommend reading typical job descriptions in your field to see how the required skills fit with experience you have already gained or could develop.



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