

Life, and employment, after a PhD

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My career to date

- 2003-2007: PhD @ UNSW
 - 2004: 6 month internship at IBM Research
- 2007-2010: PostDoc @ ETH Zurich
- Now: Researcher @ MSR Redmond

Doing a PostDoc

- Why?
 - I had several good offers in industry
 - Wasn't sure what career I really wanted
 - Opportunity to spend a few years in Europe, try something different, keep my options open
- Best career decision I made!
 - Gives you breadth, experience
 - More attractive to employers: 3-year PhD + 2-year PostDoc competitive with 5-6-year (US) PhD graduates
 - Chance to think about your career options

Looking for jobs

- The “hiring season” is real, for academic and industrial research jobs
 - Apply November-December, or even earlier
 - Interviews in March-April
 - Plan ahead: don’t start looking for a job in May!
- Internships have real value
 - On-the-job experience for you, and the employer
 - Source of reference letters

Getting a job: key ingredients

1. Apply online, but also in person
 - Direct contacts with researchers, or an email from your advisor, can help your application get noticed
2. Get invited to the interview
 - Publications and reference letters help
3. Give a good job talk
 - What have you done, why does it matter
 - What do you want to do next
4. One-on-one interviews
 - Incredible opportunity to meet people