

## G. - PhD Biochemical Engineering, 2009

### UCL Faculty:

- Engineering

### Current role:

- Pipeline Manager

### Previous roles:

- Graduate Scheme (see roles below). Assistant Pipeline and Rail Terminal Manager

### Sector:

- Engineering & Technology

G. is currently Pipeline Manager at Total Lindsey Oil Refinery Ltd. with responsibilities for asset management, coordinating CAPEX and OPEX budgets and projects, land management, emergency response and financial and operational reporting. G. started his career at Total UK Ltd. through a graduate scheme, which encompassed the roles of Logistics Coordinator, H & S Executive and Retail Territory Manager. He then took on the position of Assistant Pipeline and Rail Terminal Manager at the same company. G's career choices have been motivated by what was available, by the prospect of career development, the level of responsibility and financial reward.

G's PhD thesis focused on tube-forming device design for the creation of cell-integrated alginate tubes. While G. believes that having a PhD has no particular advantage for securing or progressing in his role, he does think that his PhD training helped to develop the transferable skills he currently uses; these include leadership, project management, problem solving, team working, financial control, negotiation, report writing, presentation and contract management. G. describes how during interviews he presented his PhD and the skills it developed in much the same way he would if he was explaining how he had benefited from a job; thereby selling his experience and skills and enhancing his credibility as a candidate.

Insofar as competition for jobs is concerned, G. believes it is 'always fierce.' He recalls 'applying for around eighty engineering jobs and getting 8 interviews.' He secured his roles through methods like searching for adverts on online job sites, adverts on company websites and sending speculative applications. Since graduating G. has gained further qualifications with the IOSH Managing Safely Certificate and the NEBOSH Safety Certificate.

As a student at UCL, G. was able to access training and careers service activities. He attended careers adviser-led training and careers events open to all students. G. also took part in the UCL Graduate School's Interview skills course, and he completed an exchange module at London Business School.

If you are soon to be entering the jobs market as a PhD graduate, G. can assure you that 'there is life beyond academia.' If in the jobs market 'you find that your PhD isn't particularly useful for obtaining employment', G. advises you to use your graduate degree to broaden your options. 'Sell your PhD as a three year job role (and) focus on selling the transferable skills' or core competencies that you have acquired and developed. These will include aspects of project management and financial control, both of which 'most employers are looking for.' When making the decision to do a PhD G. believes that 'interest in a topic is important,' but that it is necessary to 'consider what career options you will have' by the time you have completed it. He adds that 'in some cases you may have to go abroad to find employment, so think carefully before embarking on a PhD.'

**Tags:**

■ Engineering, Engineering & Technology, Managerial, Non-Academic