

Evaluation results: Plan B – how to find your career outside academia November 25-26, 2015

Course details

Dr. Matthias Schwarzkopf counsels students and scientists in all relevant questions concerning their careers. He has been responsible for supporting the appointing procedure of new professors at Jena University, has been head of LehreLernen – the training centre for university teachers – and has done recruitment for private businesses. He has founded www.karrierberatung-akademiker.de together with colleagues out of public administration and private businesses. Detailed information is provided on the following webpage: <http://www.imprs-gbgc.de/index.php/Courses/PlanB2015>

11 out of 13 participants filled in the survey by December 10, 2015.

Survey results

To which extend has the course improved/clarified your general notion of alternative career path ways?

- I have some ideas now what else I can do outside academia
- the course gave new ideas on the possibilities that we have. The most important part of the course was that the lecturer listed all the possible fields in which we should consider an application
- General understanding of carrier perspectives was improved. Essentials of good application was conveyed. Knowledge about how to find non mainstream job offers was given.
- very good
- a lot
- Moderate
- Very much. It was very helpful, especially the fact that the facilitator had a lot of experience and examples.
- It improved my knowledge about how the industrial job market works.
- Very much. Before I attended the course, I thought staying in science is kind of my only option. Now I understood that this is definitely not the case!
- Greatly extended.
- very much

Do you think the course was helpful for your decision to stay or leave the academic career path? Would you recommend this course to other doctoral candidates?

- No, Yes
- I would definitely recommend this course to other PhD students. Of course it can't give you a definite answer but it really helps you in doing so.
- The suggestions in the course about the career path was helpful. I would recommend the course to other doctoral candidates.
- yes yes
- yes it was very helpful to get more advise and information what and when several goals for a successful academic career should be reached and how to react yes I would recommend the course to others
- Yes
- Yes it was, and yes I would recommend it to other doctoral candidates
- Yes, it was helpful because it gets you started on thinking about your own profile. I'd highly recommend the course to others.
- Absolutely! It was very useful and I would recommend it to any doctoral candidates; for candidates in their first or second year to figure out, if doing a PhD is the right thing for them; for candidates in their third+ year to figure out what to do next
- Yes, it was helpful. Yes, I would recommend it.
- Yes, definitely and I got inspired by the variety of chances outside academia that I was not aware of before

Which parts of the course were especially good (and why)?

- individual feedbacks on the second day - because it's more specific to the questions of the person
- very good and useful statements on what is required in order to get a professorship. Also the tips for the application were really useful and well presented. Same is true for the part in which the different requirements for the industry were discussed, it was to the point and very helpful.
- The part that focus on the own competencies as well as the part how fit the application to certain offers was very good, because its applicable. The second day was also very helpful, because the lecturer could answer specific questions.
- learning to find/formulate your competences get ideas about possible jobs fitting these competencies
- personal discussions and the practical/team tasks during the lecture
- The individual counseling session was especially good to clarify questions that were specific to me
- The one-to-one section on the second day. I would say, his willingness to answer in a very clear and helpful way all my questions with concrete suggestions.

- The 30 min - personal discussion was extremely helpful to address my specific questions. There were interesting strategies about how to search for jobs.
- Learning what is important for the employers, because this is quite different from the science community. Thinking about my competencies and what I could do with it. This broadens the view of what kind of jobs are suitable. The private session was also very useful, as I could talk to Matthias confidentially about my career.
- Considering starting a business as a means to find ideas of already existing positions.
- the tasks asking myself about my competencies and in which different branches (I have never thought of) they are needed - application advices regarding the differences between economy and academia

Which parts of the workshop were not so good / not so fitting / not well enough presented?

- maybe also some general explanation for non-european people would be handy as well, in terms of residence permission or Visa and job-permissions in terms of occupations outside of academia
- I didn't really understand so much the part in which we should try to find a potential job based on our hobby. This is clearly not possible all the time or not the best way to go on I think, but maybe I just missed the point :)
- Nothing comes to my mind
- I would prepare better the last part: How to open your own business.
- I found the part about identifying industrial sectors we could work in too broad and un-specific.
- none
- non

Do you have other suggestions for a future course?

- nothing now
- even though this is not the core topic of the course, the hints on the application were really well done, so one could think about devoting a bit more time to it.
- The course could be extended to practice written application and job interviews.
- This one is perfect for career outside of academia in Germany. Perhaps one about career options in other countries. One about career in academia.
- A nice idea would also be to give an overview of how a career in academia should be (theoretically) and give some hints how you can increase your chance of getting a good scientist

- Thinking of and writing down personal competencies could have been given as "home-work" before the workshop started. Then we could have more time for discussing how to better structure them according to requirements for jobs.
- To have it as a regular course at the IMPRS. Once per year or every two years will be perfect.
- To address 4.), it might be more helpful to focus more on the set of competencies needed for certain job profiles instead of identifying sectors. This would also fit to the focus on personal/job related competencies throughout the seminar. Perhaps this works with a bunch of examples. There should be something that gives you a better idea about what people do if they don't do research.
- no
- To Steffi. In many previous IMPRS courses, the applicants were sorted according to their time into the PhD. In these cases, older PhD students were given preference. Not in this one – a course that would make most sense towards the END of the PhD. Some older PhD students were left on the waiting list and it is questionable whether a second instance of this course will be available in time for them. So, next time, please give older PhD students preference. Consider who might finish his or her PhD in the next 6–12 months.
- for me it was just perfect not too long or too short but getting concentrated information