



Name: Phil Carpenter
Employer: Ikon Science
Role: Senior Business Development Manager

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What does your current job involve?

Ikon Science provides software technology and consulting services to the international oil and gas industry - focussing on reducing cost and operational uncertainty in exploration and drilling. Our core product RokDoc is the leading rock physics analysis software and our flagship technology (Ji-Fi) was recently awarded the Institute of Physics 2016 Innovation award. I am responsible for Ikon’s business in Africa and for our global relationship with the French oil company, TOTAL, and the Italian oil company, ENI. My success is measured by the revenue generated by selling software and the services provided by our technical teams.

What degree did you study and how did you get on?

University of Exeter BSc Physics. Following a rather torrid 2nd year I re-sat the summer exams and entered the 3rd year with no chance of an Honours.

What did you do next?

My first employment was with Geophysical Service Inc in Saudi Arabia under a contract with Saudi Aramco, the national oil and gas company. It was a low grade data-related technical job where most other new recruits were geologists. I soon realised my future lay more toward the application of computing technology and, after 10 years in work, I found my forte was understanding how technology helps solve business problems. I focus on finding experts and bringing them together to solve problems.

What is the best thing about your job?

The people – both customers and colleagues. The majority of my technical colleagues have academic qualifications way beyond mine. I learn something new almost every day.

What is a typical day like?

In my current job I have travelled to Brazil, Nigeria, Ghana, South Africa, Ivory Coast and many European countries. I sometimes get the train from Reading to Paddington for meetings in palatial offices in Mayfair or drive to a dingy industrial park. The only “typical” thing about my day is that I spend time talking to people – both clients and colleagues – understanding sticking points and attempting to move projects forward.

What career advice would you offer a physics student predicted to get a 2:2 or third?

Recognise that academic achievement is only one strand of success. Learning how to work with other people is perhaps even more important.