

Career Options for PhD in Science

Student Session

Melanie Sinche, NCC, Director of Education at Jackson Laboratory for Genomic Medicine
Mon, 11/06/2017 - 3:00 pm

How can you maximize your time in graduate school and/or during postdoctoral training? What strategies can you use for landing a job that's right for you? This presentation will provide an up-to-date assessment of the current career landscape facing science PhDs across a range of sectors, including education, industry, and non-profits. Author Melanie Sinche will share proven strategies based on her research and profiles of science PhDs across a wide range of disciplines.

Summary of Student Session:

This session consisted of an analysis of the existing job market for PhDs directed towards graduate students and post-docs wondering where they can find a job.

- Showed current misconceptions such as:
 - PhD students only want to work as (faculty)
 - Only jobs out there are faculty jobs
 - There are no faculty jobs.
 - PhDs have no employable skills
 - PhDs are not using their research skills in non-faculty jobs.
 - PhDs outside tenure track are not happy about their job.
- Also showed actual facts of regarding PhD degrees such as:
 - Most PhDs are unsure of what jobs exist for them.
 - PhDs have many employable skills.
 - PhDs are using their research skills in most jobs.
 - PhDs in science are happy in their work.
- Finally showed the results of a study that surveyed PhD students and post-docs questions such as:
 - What was your career goal at the start of your PhD?
 - How many post-docs took you to achieve your current job position?
 - What skills did you acquire through your PhD and where they important to succeed on your job?
 - What were the main reasons (e.g. Intellectual challenge, salary, flexibility job security, etc.) that made you accept your current job?
- The study also assessed the rate of success of PhDs at getting tenure track faculty positions and found what jobs where chosen by PhDs without an interest on academy.
- All in all, the study showed that there are many jobs outside academia that require or prefer applicants that have a PhD due to the set of skills that they indirectly develop through their degree.