

Top 10 Industry Careers for PhD Graduates

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I recently completed my PhD in Molecular Biology. Although I thoroughly enjoyed my project and the laboratory environment, I knew academia was not for me. I could not picture myself supervising students and applying for grants, however, I enjoy doing research. For most PhD graduates who do dream about a life in academia, there are not enough academic posts for the increasing number of [PhDs graduating](#) each year. Whatever your reason, the question now is: what [career choices](#) do you have outside of academia?

Your PhD Skills are Transferable

Before you decide on a career, consider what you enjoyed doing during your PhD and [the skills you acquired](#). How can these skills be applied to [jobs outside of academia](#)? Some examples of transferable skills include:

- Analyzed and interpreted complex data: **data analysis skills**.
- Repeated experiments until they worked: **problem-solving**
- Presented your work at conferences: **public speaking**
- Wrote a thesis, published papers and/or books or chapters of a book: **writing**
- Completed a PhD: the ability to **complete an enormous project** with minimal supervision.
- Planned a conference: **event planning**.
- Worked with collaborators abroad: you can **work with people from diverse backgrounds**.

Career Options for STEM PhDs

Figuring out where to apply all your transferable skills can be a daunting task. Your options are never-ending. Here we list some [common industry careers for STEM PhD graduates](#), to give you some ideas:

1. **Research and development (R&D):** This will make use of your methodical approach to research and can be applied to many industries including pharmaceuticals, banking, and fast moving consumer goods (FMCG).
2. **Market Research Analyst:** Research and evaluate commercial opportunities to maximize revenues.
3. **Medical Communication Specialist:** Healthcare organizations need people to write and edit materials for patients, clients, and medical professionals.
4. **Business Development Manager:** Your analytical skills and scientific knowledge can be used to develop new business opportunities and manage existing ones.
5. **Management Consultant:** Use your problem-solving skills to design strategies with a team. The consulting industry is known for training employees, so you can fine tune your skills on the job.
6. **Competitive Intelligence Analyst:** Analyse large sets of data to determine threats and opportunities in the market.
7. **Product Manager:** Manage the life-cycle of a product.
8. **Quantitative Analyst:** Analyze quantitative data, do statistical modeling, and pattern recognition as well as financial research.
9. **Healthcare Information Technology Specialist:** Convert patients' medical records into an electronic format.
10. **Medical Science Liaison:** Build relationships with key opinion leaders in various therapeutic areas.

Other PhD Career Options

1. **Entrepreneurship:** PhD graduates have all the skills needed to be entrepreneurs. You have identified a problem, researched it, applied for funding, found a solution, and shared it with others about it in your thesis and/or publications.

2. **Finance:** Equity research and quantitative analysis in the financial sector. If you have computer programming skills, this may be a route for you.
3. **High School Teacher:** Teach a subject related to your field of expertise. The school will love the fact that its teachers are highly qualified.
4. **Writing:** Write content or editorials for newspapers, magazines, or blogs. Alternatively, write technical material for pharmaceutical or biotechnology companies.
5. **Sales:** Meet new people and travel while you sell a scientific or technical product for a company.
6. **Technology transfer:** Work in your university's technology transfer office for all those patentable products the students are developing.
7. **Law:** Use your knowledge to advise patent attorneys or complete a law degree and become a patent attorney.

We hope this has given you some ideas that you can pursue. Please share other non-academic career options with us in the comments section below.

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