Imperial College
London

Case Study: Alumni

Gary, Software Engineering (MEng)
Graduation Year: 1998
Job Title: Senior Development Lead
Employer: Microsoft

What does your job involve?

I have always wanted my career to be in the technology field, preferably on the cutting edge. A typical work day depends on the stage of the project from design, implementation, debugging and reviewing. People management occupies a large part of my time also. I use important skills that I developed at Imperial, notably how to think my way around a computer, how to learn languages, and how to break problems down.

Do you use skills that you obtained during your Imperial course?

I chose my course because I wanted to work in technology, software in particular. I loved some of the personality in a few courses (notably hardware and networking) and being taught by the best.

> "Extracurricular activities were very important to me, so I engaged in a number. It's really an individual thing, but the important part is to balance work with life."
>
> - Gary

Can you name three things you like about your job?

I plan to stay in this field, and love the company, particularly the smart people, interesting (cutting edge) technologies I get to work on and develop, and the fact that we solve real-world problems that reach and impact millions of people.

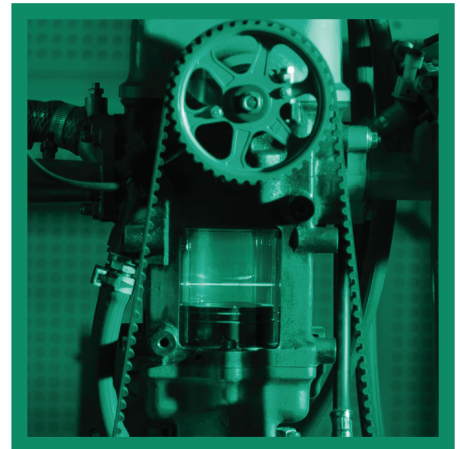### Is there anything you are less keen on?

Things I complain about vary from week-to-week but nothing worth worrying about.

What skills did you develop within your degree that you find useful in your present role?

Important skills I developed are thinking through problems (particularly in design), and working with teams, both critical in pretty much any industry.

Did you gain work experience or an internship whilst at Imperial?

For my internship I was able to reassure myself that I could add value to the real-world, even if I was dropped-in the deep-end (we were given an assignment in a language I had never heard of, and it went great).

Careers Service
www.imperial.ac.uk/careers

Were you involved in any extracurricular activities?

Extracurricular activities were very important to me, so I engaged in a number. It's really an individual thing, but the important part is to balance work with life, and meet other people from outside your field so you can be more rounded.

Did you use the Careers Service or go to Careers events (e.g. job fairs, employer talks)?

It was important in helping me figure out what types of job are out there, and what I am (and probably more importantly, am not) interested in.

Could you give us one or more career tips for Imperial graduates?

Find something you're passionate about - it will be obvious to any good interviewer. Also, preparation is less important than being genuine - most people aren't looking for the "right" answer, but how you get there. I'm very glad I didn't know what I know now that I interview people - I find many people get nervous or scripted because they're afraid to be themselves.