

Case Study: Alumni

Daniel, Petroleum Geoscience (MSc)

Graduation Year: 2005

Job Title: Geologist

Employer: Centrica

Department: Exploration & Development



What has been your career path up until now?

I left Imperial College in September 2005 and went to work for an oil and gas industry geology and geophysics consultancy in South London. After 18 months I thought that it was time for a change and I wanted to work for an operating Oil/Gas company. I applied to Centrica and was offered a place on their graduate program as a geologist. I will shortly complete my first two years in the role.

What does your job involve?

My day to day activity involves anything from building 3D geological models of gas fields to writing reports for government bodies. As a petroleum geologist the broad scope of work is to characterise the reservoir geology, calculate the volume of gas in place and highlight any risks and uncertainty with a prospect or field development.

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- Daniel

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

I use every aspect of the knowledge and skills gained from the Imperial course in my job and still occasionally go back to my notes to refresh my memory or look up a reference. My short term future lies with Centrica; it is a good place to work, the opportunities for Junior members of staff are great, and the company has an excellent attitude towards growing its upstream petroleum part of the business.

What are your future plans?

I hope to move up to a more senior level within the next 5 years.

Can you name three things you like about your job?

Three things I enjoy about my job include:

1. The variety of interesting tasks.
2. The technically challenging nature of the work.
3. The people I work with.



Is there anything you are less keen on?

The taxman, the commute and Monday mornings .

Did you choose your course with this particular occupation in mind?

From sixth form onwards I was aiming to work in the oil and gas industry and chose my undergraduate course of Exploration Geology at Cardiff to set me on the way. In my third year I applied for the MSc Petroleum Geoscience course at Imperial College based on its worldwide reputation in the oil and gas industry.

What part of your course did you particularly enjoy?

I particularly enjoyed the development geology part of the course and all of the field trips especially the one to Utah in the United States.

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

The MSc in Petroleum Geoscience completely immerses you in the terminology and workflows of the oil and gas industry. Since being in the industry I am yet to come across anything that I didn't at least broadly cover while doing my MSc. Exercises that I did while on the course such as prospect evaluation and field development scenarios prepared me perfectly for what to expect after joining the industry.

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

The last three months of the course are spent working for an oil and gas company and this really rounds off everything you need to learn in preparation for starting a career in the industry.

Were you involved in any extracurricular activities?

The MSc course is very different from an undergraduate course; the hours are 9:00 – 17:00, leaving little time for extracurricular activities... but the Royal School of Mines' bar is excellent!

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

While I was at Imperial there was a recruitment talk held in the department almost every week from one of the many oil & gas companies or service companies. It was probably the only time in my life when the jobs were looking for me rather than the other way round!

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

Start looking for jobs early (a year before you finish your course); don't wait until you've graduated. Don't be put off applying for big companies no matter where you place your ability compared to other students - there is a lot more taken into account by the employer than grades when they are handing out the jobs. Try and get relevant work experience while still at university. It's tough but will provide you with some genuine examples for interview questions and may give you the edge over other candidates. Oh and don't be late to the interview!