

Career In Development? A Few Thoughts from MPhil Alumni

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Kevin Seely

What's the job for me? ...

- Roughly a quarter of Dev't Studies MPhil graduates from 2009 now work in the “development industry”
- A further fifth are doing PhDs in areas related to development
- Nearly two thirds are in government departments, business, law, media or research unrelated to development
- Field often more satisfying than headquarters strategising?
- PhD not guaranteed to make first job easy to find
- Don't get hung up on one organisation
- Large agencies tend to be harder to get into, but offer better salaries and job security in the mid to long-term
- Willingness to work in conflict-affected countries is potentially very good for your career

Tips and Surprises

- “Soft skills” are usually vital in your first job
- Knowledge of high-level policy debates is probably not
- Internships are perhaps the most common way in
- Networking is vital. If you’re doing a thesis, use it as an excuse
- Realistic but optimistic
- Haven’t got two years’ experience? Apply anyway
- Learn to deal with rejection, or work in another field
- Learn to deal with imperfection, or work in another field
- Far from everyone is “for the cause”. In some cases, development agencies simply pay more than businesses