Academic to Entrepreneur: Why and how to leave academia behind

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Research field: Biological Sciences - Cellular Biology
Adult Stem Cell Research, Bone Biology, Statistical Analysis, Cancer, single molecule analytical techniques

Publications

Journal Article (6)

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21...
Download PDF (1.35 MB)

http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/lpdocs/epi...

William Gunn (2009) THE ROLE OF HUMAN MESENCHYMAL STEM CELLS IN REPAIR OF BONE.
http://williamburgun.org/Dissertation W...

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17...
My story
In academia
The advice I got

• Good: Pick a stable, well-funded lab where people graduate on time

• Good: Diversify project risk

• Bad: Keep your head down, work hard, and it’ll all work out
Lessons

1. Seek advice from the people who can give it
The first transition:
Grad school to Biotech
I was part of something!
It was a little isolating
Csikszentmihalyi, M. *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience.* (1991)
Lessons

1. Seek advice from the people who can give it
2. Know Thyself
The second transition:

Biotech to tech startup
Early Adopter
Instrumenting the Research Workflow

- Import
- Search
- Write
- Read
- Annotate
- Organize
Mendeley...

...helps researchers work smarter

...makes science more collaborative and transparent

...has created an open research database

Tools of scientific discovery
Achievements

• OA policy advocacy successes

• a tool that doesn’t suck
Lessons

1. Seek advice from the people who can give it
2. Know Thyself
3. Look Beyond the Surface
Forget what you know about jobs outside of academia
BLOG!
SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO?

GOTO

TROUBLE

NOOP

2 * TROUBLE

! CODING ACCORDING TO THE CLASH

PROOF THAT THE SAFEST INSTRUCTION IS ALWAYS HALT
Stay

• What do you want to do?
• Will you find "Flow"?
• Realistic impression?
• Supportive network?
• Are you young?
Go

- Frustrated by lack of impact?
- Like to write?
- Want to influence policy?
- Are you too charismatic?
There are only two types of people in the world: those who think in false dichotomies, and penguins.
Not just standing around talking to people
Lessons

1. Seek advice from the people who can give it
2. Know Thyself
3. Look Beyond the Surface
4. Do Interesting Things
Such as blog
FINDING OPPORTUNITIES

http://blogs.nature.com/soapboxscience/tag/transitions
In your department

• Be a speaker, symposia, conference organizer or session chair
• Your local Biotech Club
• MassBio
• Your local Postdoc Association
MAKING THE TRANSITION

• Goals
• Mindset
• Time management
Grants vs. Sales
Teamwork vs. solo research
ENGINEERS

What my friends think I do
What my parents think I do
What society thinks I do

What girls think I do
What my boss thinks I do
What kids think I do

What I want to do
What I think I do
What I really do

www.douglasvanbossuyt.com
www.openpario.net
Marketers

What my friends think I do: OMG! WE HAVE **CUPCAKES** today! I <3 my job. yumyumyum marketing4ever

What my parents think I do: ? ? ?

What sales thinks I do:

What society thinks I do: What leads think I do: SPAM

What I think I do: What I think I do:
Lessons

1. Seek advice from the people who can give it
2. Know Thyself
3. Look Beyond the Surface
4. Do Interesting Things
5. Communication is Everything
GET EXCITED AND MAKE THINGS
Feedback

http://mnd.ly/SJdE3w

Text: 504-453-2109

“Y” or “N”