



A Young Academic's Perspective

Membership Development

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20th Annual General Meeting

Sydney, Australia

27th June – 5th July, 2009



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Potential of Young Academics



We have an impressive work power



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Potential of Young Academics



We are creative and enthusiastic

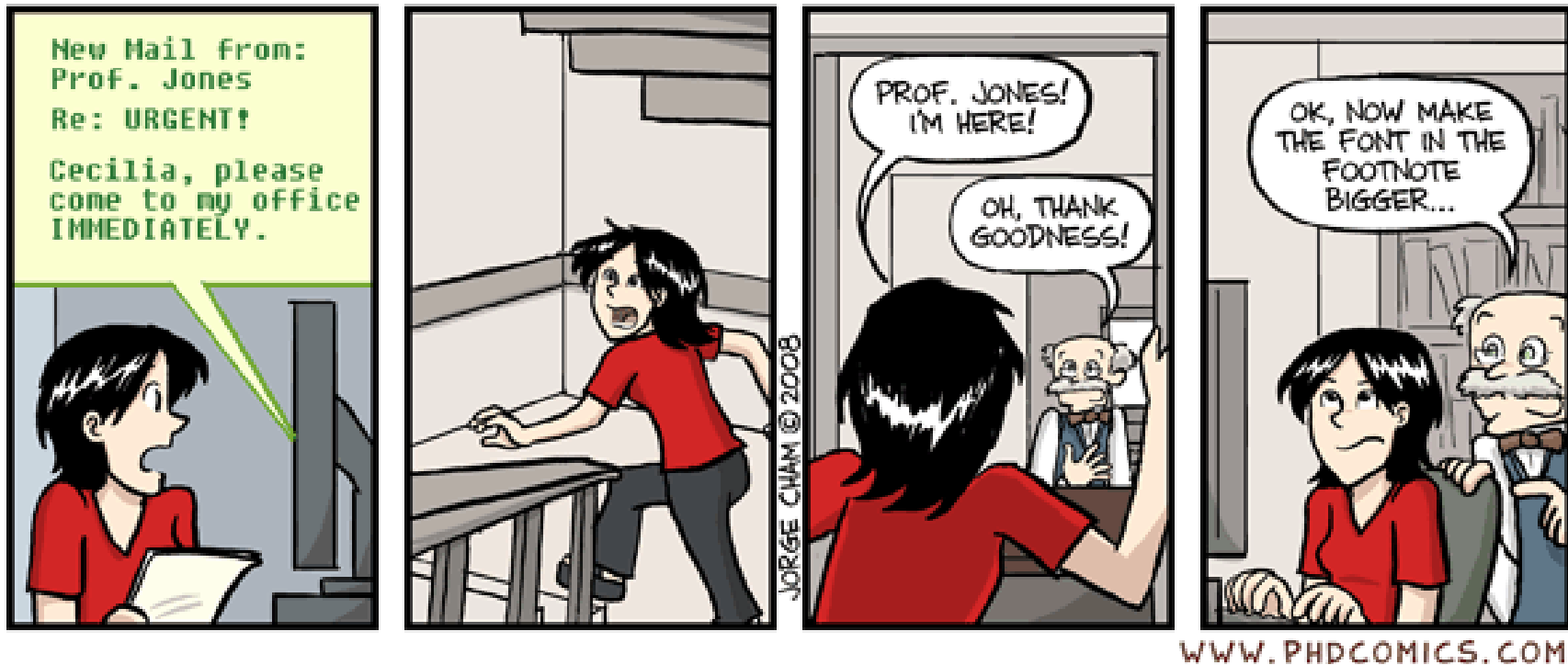


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Potential of Young Academics



We can easily adapt to new scientific challenges



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Potential of Young Academics



We are motivated through targets...
promotion, publications, research applications etc.



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Universities

- Universities are communities of researchers and teachers.
- Survival and success depends on the capability to attract, develop and retain highly qualified employees.
- 30 years ago, academic career would automatically provide staff members with prestige and exceptionally stimulating intellectual environment (Gilliot et al., 2002).



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War of talent

- However, time has changed.
- Global trends indicate that the path to an academic career is becoming more difficult and less attractive.
- Attracting and retaining highly qualified staff became an important issue for the universities especially for the mining schools.
- This pattern will definitely not help the recruitments of mining academics (young) worldwide into universities.



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Why?

- Research now is often conducted by small consultant companies and/or government institutions that provide intellectual challenge and ownership.
- Large consulting companies have become knowledge centres.
- Working at university is not always highly regarded among younger workers (Hardeman, 2000).



Possible Reasons

- Job security decreased?
“however still better than mining companies”
- Automatic promotion has become almost improbable
- Promotion relies on big challenges
“unrealistic” expectations on publications and grants



Traditional vs Modern Academics

- Traditional type of academics have spent their “working” life (whole) within universities, focusing research and teaching, without diverted by other occupational interests...
- ...which is not always ideal for mining academics
- Mining Academia is different
- We know the importance of value of industry experience



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Lack of Experience

- An academic position combines a high level of autonomy with a high level of expectation and competition.
- Inexperienced researchers may lack the competencies and background to cope with the challenges of the job, so turning it into a stressful situation.
- Mentoring process is very useful as well as orientation programs



what potential academics want out of a *Career*

Career Anchors of Universities (Schein, 1996)

- Autonomy
- Security or Stability
- Technical Competence
- Managerial Competence
- Entrepreneurial Creativity
- Service Orientation
- Pure Challenge
- Work/Life Balance



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...ongoing exercise

- Each anchors are important
- Dominant career anchor may change according to successive stages of life.
- *For An Early Career Academic*
 - Pure challenge and entrepreneurial creativity can be dominant career anchors while at a later life-stage the work/life balance can gain importance.



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GLITTERING PRIZES

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Young academics striving to fit in reveal high anxiety

7 August 2008

By [Rebecca Attwood](#)

Study highlights the trials of junior lecturers feeling the pressure to perform, writes Rebecca Attwood

The pressure to publish, chasing research grants, fears over job security and concerns about "fitting in" - the trials and tribulations of being a young academic are laid bare in a new research paper.

In a series of interviews with a sample of young academics, Louise Archer, reader in education policy studies at King's College London, found that they did not define success in "careerist or instrumental terms" but saw it as achieving self-fulfilment through their work.

However, they were "regularly compelled to engage in behaviours and practices that were unrelated to - or which could even counter - their own notions of authenticity and success".

Dr Archer found high levels of anxiety over their ability to "perform" by publishing papers and bringing in research grants.

Interviewees recounted instances of "non research-active" members of staff in their department



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Young academics striving to fit in reveal high anxiety...

- The pressure to publish, chasing research grants, fears over job security and concerns about “fitting in”
- Fears of “being non-research active”



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Young academics striving to fit in reveal high anxiety... (cont'd)

- One academic, who presented herself as a "passionate, innovative and committed" lecturer, found that the pressures in the run-up to the research assessment exercise were so intense that she began to look for work elsewhere.
- *"I felt I may as well jump before I was pushed", she said.*
- The process of bidding for research grants was often seen as "unfulfilling and soul-destroying".



Three Basic Tasks

- Teaching
- Research
- Service

However, we often say:

Teaching “loads”

but of research “opportunities”



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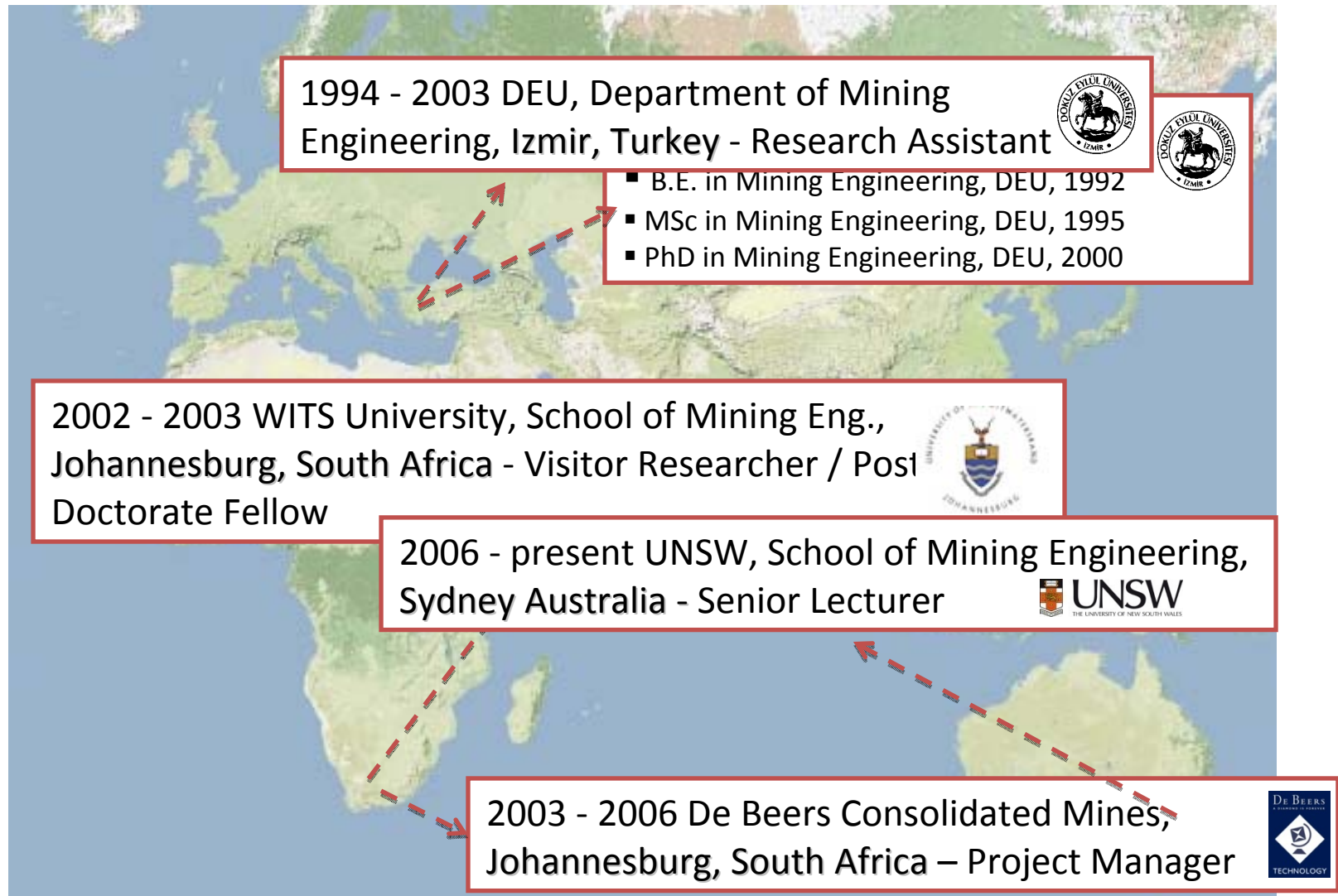
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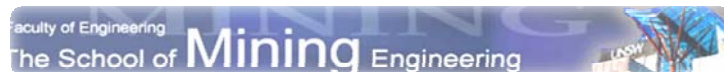
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So My Experience



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So My Experience (cont'd)



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- An academician said:
“without my perfectionism, I’d be just an inadequate and basically average person” (Boston Globe)
- The academicians gain perfectionism “skill” in highly competitive environment.



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University to Industry

- Perfectionism “skill” worked well in my industry experience.
- The quality of my work was highly regarded by my peers.
- Teaching skills helped as well.



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Industry to University

- Drawing practical experience to the subject in teaching and research
 - MEA Student Survey
 - The best features of the course were:
 - “His jokes”
- A good understanding of the overall mining process
- A good understanding of the expectations of new graduates by the employers (teaching)
- Good communication with industry people using the same “mining language”
- Better understanding of the expectations of the industry (research)



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Conclusions

- I am an academician
- I am an academician who serves to mining industry
 - I am still a mining engineer rather than a “traditional academician”
- So...
- I am *Looking Forward to the Future*



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