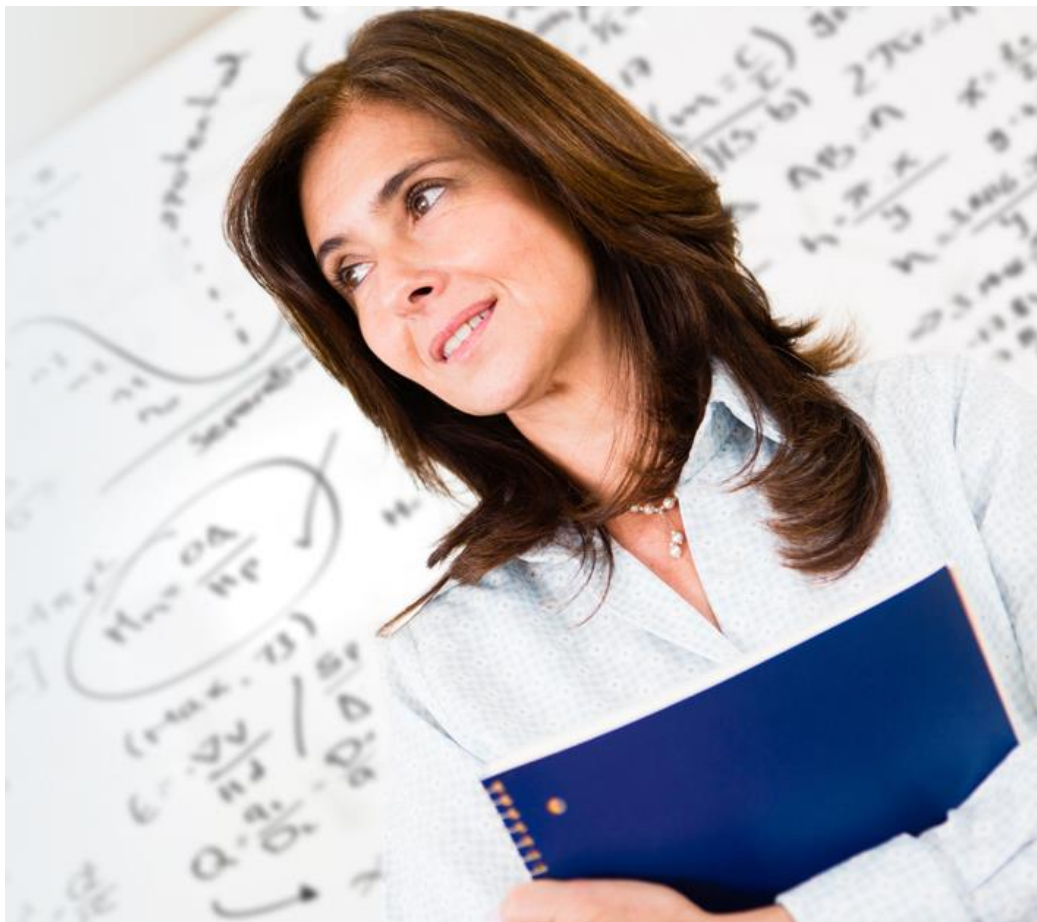


WORKSHOP

How to pursue an academic career How to become a professor

Prof. Sven Hendrix

VIB, 08-02-2021



Program VIB Workshop *How to pursue an academic career*

09:30	Log-in (waiting room) You must register (see email) to get the log-in details. Please log in before 10 am. The workshop starts at 10 am.
10:00 – 11:00	Introduction How to convince a selection committee and your future colleagues How to plan an academic career
11:00 – 12:00	The best strategy to get funding for my profile
12:00 – 12:30	<i>Lunch break</i>
12:30 – 13:15	The best publication strategy for my profile
13:15– 14:15	Teaching – Do I really need teaching skills? Technical skills – When are technical skills relevant to become a professor? Three types of professors – Which type am I?
14:15-14:45	International mobility – Do I really have to work abroad? Intersectoral mobility – Should I have industry experience, and can I easily come back?
14:45-15:00	<i>Break</i>
15:00 – 16:00	Network & international reputation & positioning Define your niche – communicate your USP – Vision + leadership – How to develop scientific independence What are my chances to become a professor?
16:00 – 17:30	Testimonials by young professors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lars Vereecke, Assistant Professor at Ghent University since October 2016 • Polina Novikova, Group Lead at MPIPZ - Max Planck Institute for Plant Breeding Research since September 2020 • Vanessa Vermeirssen, Professor at Ghent University since October 2019 • Heather Rice, Assistant Professor at University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center since Aug 2019

Organisational info:

The workshop ends at 5:30pm.

There is a lunch break at ~12pm and a coffee break at ~2:45pm.



You profit more from the course if you work together with a colleague – ideally from the same field. Set up an online connection before the course starts (for example in ZOOM, GoogleMeet, Skype, MS TEAMS).

If there is any problem, send me an email at smartsciencecareer@gmail.com (or just reply to my last email).

Assignment 1 - Funding

Write down all possibilities to raise money in your field:

Intramural funding (your institution)	
State	
Region	
European (→ Consortia Marie Curie etc.)	
International Societies and funding bodies	
Foundations	
Prizes (even small ones!)	

Check fundamental + applied!

Discuss with your colleagues in the room who work in the same field.

Homework

Check the acknowledgments in publications + lab websites of your competitors!

Make a to-do list of which strategies to investigate further.

Assignment 2 – Publication strategy

Which parameters define scientific excellence <u>in your field</u> ? (Impact factor of 1 st /last author, number of papers, citations, 1 big book, meeting proceedings, patents, press releases, big grants, or many grants ...)
What is your current publication strategy? Which parameters do you chose as markers of success (see previous question) – e. g. for life sciences: 1 high impact factor paper per year OR 10 papers per year OR 1 patent OR 1 invited talk OR?
Where does your current publication strategy come from? (Your previous or current supervisor(s)? Did you make it up yourself? Based on which parameters and decisions?)
Why has your supervisor chosen for his/her publication strategy? What does he/she expect from you as ‘excellent results’

Discuss with your colleagues.

Homework

Ask your supervisor what his/her publication strategy is

but be prepared that there may not be a well-designed strategy!

Assignment 3 – Teaching

What are your options to improve your teachings skills? (didactical training, student feedback, teaching experiences, curriculum development...)
Which courses can (and should) you follow? (for example: making excellent PowerPoint presentations + creating professional exams, giving great lectures, vocal training etc.)
How do you document your teaching activities for future employers? Can you get certificates? Can you get student evaluations?

Discuss with your colleagues.

Homework

Make a plan how to get a documentation of your teaching activities.

Make a plan how to develop your teaching skills via books, courses, feedback by colleagues...

Assignment 4 – Technical skills + Type of professor

Which type of professor would you be and *how you are qualified?*

High impact factor professor type

- *great publication list*
- *big grants*
- *mobility*

Niche professor type

- *moderate publication list*
- *some grants*
- *special expertise in a technology*

Teaching professor type

- *Documented teaching qualifications (requirements differ between institutions)*

What do you have to do to increase your market value?

Are there technical skills you need to learn?

Discuss with your colleagues.

Assignment 5: Define your current niche:

I am a _____

[job title such as immunologist, neuroscientist, cardiovascular researcher]

who focusses on _____

[most interesting subject where you have already track records such as brain repair, treating diabetes ...]

using _____

[technology/model such as optogenetics, immune interventions ...].

E.g., “I am a neuroscientist who focusses on brain repair by combining optogenetics and iPSCs.”

Write down:

Do I want to stay in this field? Or do I want to move into a different field?
Why?

The aim:

You know precisely in which field you want to work in during the next years.

You can explain it well to others.

List 2-3 good arguments why you have consciously chosen your niche such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a life-threatening disease. • There is a huge demand in the market. • A person in my family has this disease. • ...
1.
2.
3.

→ Be honest, pure marketing is not enough!

Assignment 6/ Homework – Vision + leadership, scientific independence

Where do you see yourself in 5 and 10 years?

Useful questions to get a more detailed view of your future as a professor:

What will you do during the next 5 years at this institution?

Which research line will you establish?

Who will be your (potential) collaborators within the institution, nationally and internationally?

Which technologies and models will you use, establish, or develop? Added value and costs?

What are your publication aims (IFs, number of papers)?

What are your funding aims?

How many proposals will you write?

What are your potential funding sources? National? International? Foundations? Industry?

How much funding will you raise?

For staff, consumables, instruments, infrastructure?

How many staff members will you hire? PhD, postdoc, technician, administrative staff?

Which qualifications should they have?

How will you select the best staff members?

How will you lead them?

How will you position yourself as an expert - in your field and in the general public
(publication strategy, funding strategy, scientific meetings, website, social media, press releases)

Homework: Future Vision – Development of your field

Find a detailed answer to most of the questions above and fine-tune it later based on your experiences.

Read reviews and discuss with more experienced colleagues:

- How will your field develop in the next 5 to 10 years?
- How will you adapt to the expected developments?
- How will you correct your course if your presumptions are wrong?

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