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What is a Postdoc

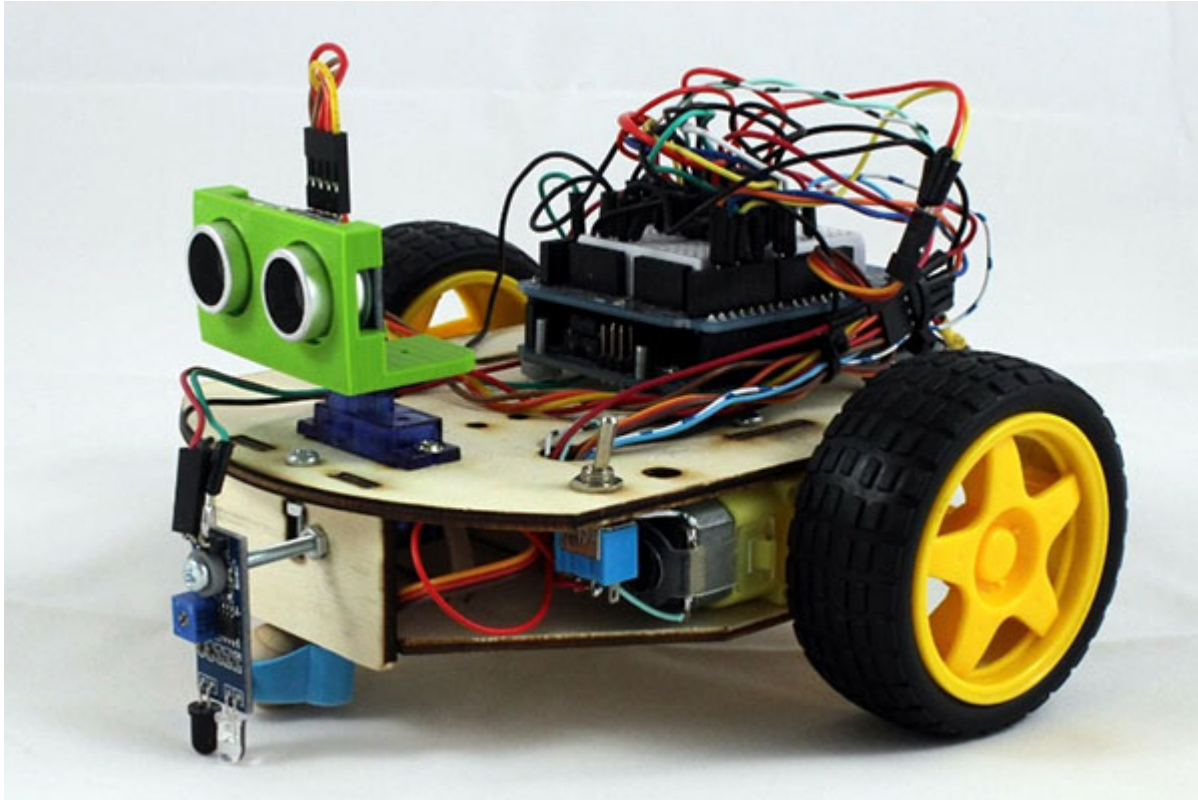
A postdoc researcher or postdoctoral fellow is traditionally defined as a person who do the research professionally after his or her PhD or doctoral study. The goal of a postdoc research position is to pursue research, training, or teaching to gain skills toward a career in academia or research. Postdocs often receive a higher salary than PhD candidates and less than an industrial engineer. From the human resource perspective, they are the better alternative to regular fixed researchers employed in industry, university or research centers.



Three Postdoc Types

A comparison of 3 types of Postdocs and their different functions. In particular, this article discusses career-oriented postdocs.

There are many benefits to gaining a tertiary education. It gives the students an opportunity to specialize in a specific area. Therefore, they may be very passionate about, or see it as an opportunity to excel within their relevant industry. Tertiary education also provides businesses, governments and organizations with access to highly-knowledgeable resources that suit their specific needs. The highest level of achievement in a tertiary education is the doctorate degree, or "PHD". A PHD student typically devotes an additional 3-7 years of their life on top of the 3-5 years they have already relinquished on an undergraduate degree. At the end of this lengthy period, the students-come-graduates are recognized as elite members of their faculty. However, they may want to leave the university they have known for so long and put their skills to use in the workforce. Hence, they may not always become a professor, rather they may continue to research and impart their knowledge on other industries.



But what is the first step for the student in putting their skills to use? Of what value can they be to a business, government or organization? For nearly a decade of their life, the student has known only research; a controlled environment where trial and error is the accepted method, and where failure is acceptable and welcomed as it presents the opportunity to discover something new. But a business who needs shareholders and board members to keep faith in them does not want trial and error or failure, they want a high rate of success at their chosen ventures for this is how they can continue to make money. The business may have a need for the skills and knowledge of a PHD graduate, but also needs that student to be able to manage their work to a high degree of success. Thus, there is a gap in the management skills that a business requires and the limited management skills that a PHD graduate usually possesses. How can this gap be bridged, and the PHD graduate become valuable to a business? The answer is a post-doctoral position.

As the name suggests, a post-doctoral position or “post-doc” (post ie. after, after doctoral studies) can be available to PHD graduates to help them bridge the workforce-related gaps in their skill-set, and prepare them better for entry to the workforce. Alternatively it can be considered as a pathway to tenure academic positions. There are 3 main types of postdoc positions available:



1. Academic Postdoc

The student/researcher continues at a university (possibly the one they completed their PHD in) and conducts research in a particular area that the university is interested in. This benefits the student/researcher in continuing to extend their research skills and is usually in an area they are passionate about. The benefit to the university is revenue from the publications, amongst other potential areas. The researcher is also tried to develop funding proposals and attract resources to the group, which will be shared in the group. The same practice can be done if the researcher prefers to move to another university.

2. Industrial Postdoc

The student/researcher works with a research center or a company to conduct research and development in a very specific area that the company is interested in. Typically, the company will engage a postdoc researcher with the end goal of being able to develop and release a new product, with the research of the postdoc student. A simple example would be a software company may be very interested in a postdoc student/researcher who has done a PHD on AI algorithms.

3. Career-oriented

This type of postdoc position focuses on the career of the student/researcher themselves, rather than the interests of a university or a company. While industry and academic post docs can take years, career-oriented post docs typically only take months. They allow the student/researcher to develop the management and technical skills they require to take their PHD to the workplace and nurture their career. The purpose of the career oriented postdocs are usually the destination or position targeted afterward. Cademix Institute of Technology and the Career Autopilot Program focus on this type of Postdoc, with the aim of moving into an industrial or academic position.

The Main question in all three types is the following: Who benefits from the Postdoc and who undertakes the cost?

In this way it could be argued that a career-oriented postdoc, or pathway programs such as [Career Autopilot](#) or [tech career acceleration programs](#) or Career Autopilot are the most important choices for a PhD student. However, as this type of postdoc has the least benefit to universities/companies, they are far less abundant. Often, a student even has to pay to participate in a career oriented post doc, however it is seen that the return on their investment [in their career] is high enough to justify this.

What about Career Oriented Internships?

Of course, just like PhD graduates who can do a career oriented postdocs, the Bachelor and Master Student may strategically choose a career oriented internship. Therefore in the same way, there are three types of internship available:

1. Academic Internships: The student gets involved in an ongoing project in a university, and conducts research in a particular area. This benefits the student in continuing to learn and apply their technical skills. The benefit to the university is revenue from the voluntary work or low cost work done by the intern.

2. Industrial Internships - The student/intern works with a non-university company to conduct research and development in a very specific area that the company is interested in. Typically, the company will engage an intern with the end goal of being able to develop and release a new product. A simple example would be a software company may be very interested in an intern after their graduation. The students may receive some money for the internship, however the company usually do not pay a salary compared to a normal engineer.

3. Career-oriented Internships - this type of Internship focuses on the career of the student/intern, rather than the interests of a university or a company. While industry and academic interns can be limited to topics, time or locations, the career-oriented internships typically only take a few months. They allow the student/intern to develop the management and technical skills they require to take them into an industrial position. The purpose of the career oriented internship are usually the destination or position targeted afterward. Cademix Institute of Technology and the Career Autopilot Program focus on this type of Internship, with the aim of moving into an industrial or academic position.

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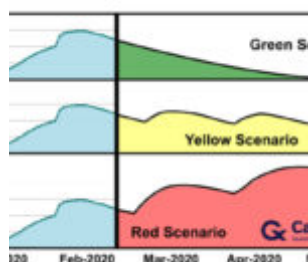
In this way it could be argued that a career-oriented internship or [tech career acceleration programs](#) are the most important choices for a fresh graduate. However, as this type of internship has the least benefit to universities/companies, they are far less abundant. Often, a student even has to pay to participate in a career oriented post doc, however it is seen that the return on their investment [in their career] is high enough to justify this.

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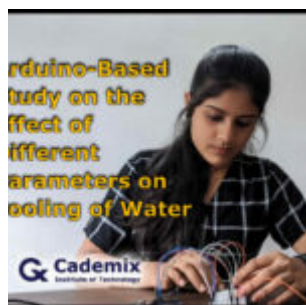
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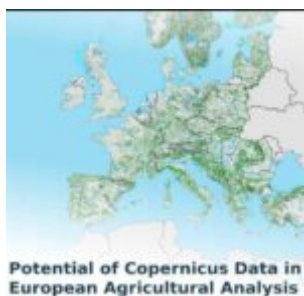
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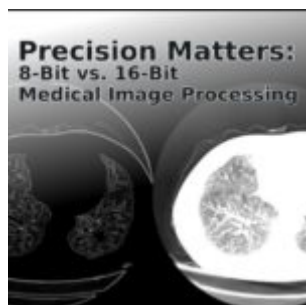
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