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**Prof. Dr. Stephan
Hohloch**

Career Perspectives

with a PhD in Natural & Life Sciences

Doctorate:

Inorganic Chemistry, Freie Universität Berlin, 2014

Current Position:

Associate Professor, Universität Innsbruck

What was the biggest challenge in starting a new job after your PhD studies?

The transition from doctorate to postdoc was unproblematic. Even though the topic changed considerably, the laboratory work remained largely the same. The transition to becoming a (Junior-)professor was more difficult. Despite surroundings at a university are familiar, it was hard to learn to suddenly have responsibility for personnel, budget and lab safety, to learn accounting (SAP), to acquire third-party funding and to design lectures without didactic training.

What do you enjoy most about your current job?

Flexibility. Today, more than ever, becoming a professor is a long-term commitment with many paths to “drop out” and many uncertainties. But being able to organize your time and research interests completely as you wish is a freedom I wouldn't give up for any other job.

What do you find most exciting about your current job?

The daily surprises of both human and chemical nature. It is fascinating to accompany young scientists and students on their journey and watch them grow, discover new horizons and develop their own research ideas. Besides, there's nothing like the feeling of having synthesized a molecule you've been fantasizing about for months/years or seeing a structure and wondering how to explain its formation.

What skills do you need now that you did not learn during your PhD studies?

Teaching skills. During the doctorate, you are mainly present as an assistant in practical courses. On the other hand, the complete design of a lecture with learning objectives, examinations etc. is learned very little or not at all during your studies or the doctorate.

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