

# **Should I stay or should I go? – Pros and Cons of alternative career options**

Magdalena Presto Åkerfeldt, SLU, Dept. of Animal Nutrition and Management

# Should I stay or should I go?

## **Aim:**

To inspire!

## **Hypothesis:**

Audience should reflect, get some new ideas, get inspired



# My career pathway





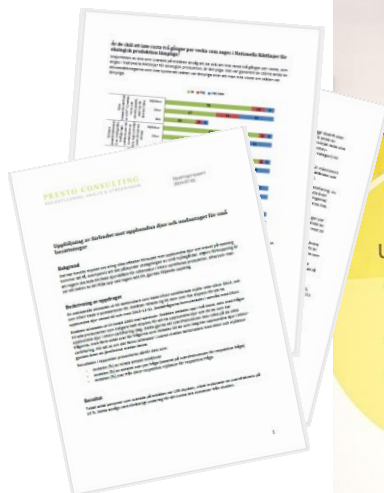
**1998**  
Higher education  
Agronomist - Animal Science

**2002**  
MSc  
Biology - Animal Science

**2008**  
PhD  
Animal Science  
Nutrition and Management

**2008-2010**  
Post Doc  
Dept. of Animal  
Nutrition and Management

**2010-2011**  
Researcher  
Dept. of Animal  
Nutrition and Management



**PRESTO CONSULTING**

**Marknadsundersökning**

- Tar fram underlag, utför behovsanalyser och intervjustudier
- Kartläggning och utvärdering
- Samordning och projekthantering

**Föreläsningar & Inspiration**

- Presentationsteknik
- Konsten att tala, engagera och övertyga
- Entreprenörskap och eget företagande

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Developing the political conditions – internationally, nationally and regionally

**Department of Animal Nutrition and Management**

The Department conducts research and teaching about nutrition and management of several animal species such as cattle, pigs, poultry, reindeer, fish, horses and dogs.

**Research**

**2011-2013**  
The Federation of Swedish Farmers, LRF  
Expert & Project leading

**2013-2017**  
Presto Consulting  
Self-employed consulting business  
Project leading coordination, interviews, mapping, analysing, assignment reports, expert in points at issues etc.

**2017**  
Researcher at SLU  
+ Consulting business

**2018-2019**  
Researcher and Director of studies, SLU  
Research, Teaching  
Aiming for a late academic career – Ass. Prof.

# Motivations to change positions



## Academia

### Motivation:

- Scientific and research questions
- Running/leading projects
- Working with pigs (making a change)
- Data (handling, analysing etc.)
- Dissemination of results etc.
- Flexible working conditions



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## Industry

### Motivation:

- Work with project leading & coordination
- Organisational issues and business management
- "Make a change in real life"
- Needed to experience something else

## Academia

### Motivation:

- Economic security
- Scientific and research questions
- Running/leading projects
- Flexible working conditions
- Variation (project, teaching, practical work, pigs, dissemination etc.)

**2011-2013**

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Expert & Project leading

**2013-2017**

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Self-employed consulting business

Project leading coordination, assignment reports, expert in points at issues etc.

**2017**

Researcher at SLU

+  
Consulting business

**2018-2019**

Researcher SLU

Research, Teaching  
Aiming for a late academic career – Ass. Prof.





# WANTED

**Expert with deep (and broad) knowledge**

**Qualifications:**

- **Developing ideas, business- and product development**
- **Critical thinking – science based**
- **Statistics, data handling, mapping, planning**
- **Researcher, officer for qualified investigations, expertise and support in policy decisions, advisory, consulting, modelling**
- **Engineers – IT technology within the agricultural sector**

# REWARD

# Award of Excellence

- **Expert in your working field** - highly motivated for relevant topic questions
- Well experienced skills in **scientific and non-scientific writing**
- **Pedagogic skills** – teaching, lecture
- **Project leader** – excellent experience of running your own project
- Well developed ability for work both **independently** and **team work**
- Expert in mapping and compiling knowledge - **based on science**
- **Open minded** but with a **critical thinking**

# Pros and cons of academia and industry positions

## - Industry

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- Flexible (depending on employment)
- Close to contact to reality/networking in sector
- Organisational/business development
- Effective working strategies
- Individual and/or team work
- Higher salaries (in private sector)

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- Un-flexible
  - Fixed working hours, fixed working tasks
- Hard to work with research
  - Research only at University, Institutes and Public Authorities
- Self-employed
  - Focus on business/administrative tasks
  - Hard to get assignments (in desired working field)
  - Economic un-security

# Pros and cons of academia and industry positions

## - Academia

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- Flexible
- Personal motivation
  - Research questions, project leading, dissemination of results
  - Teaching
- Individual and/or team work
- Varying working tasks
  - Good possibilities for personal development
- Economic security

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- Organisational un-efficient
  - Long time for decision/changes
- Disconnected from reality
- Dependence of financial support
  - Economic un-security

## Experiences to bring from industry - academia

- Insight of personal motivation!
- Better understanding - bridging the gap between research and "real life"
- Expand your horizons within your area of expertise
  - perspective and "eye-opener"
- Network – contacts with industry
- Personal and professional experience - self confidence!
- "New" ideas and thoughts for progression
- Awareness of that everything not always based in science
  - Lack of critical thinking or done in profit-making purpose



# CONCLUSIONS

## **Important factors when to decide:**

- Personal motivation and interest!
- Can you cope with the working conditions and working tasks?
- Economic stability

## **Important to remember:**

- List all your merits – not only those related to science!
- Positive experience from working in industry – valuable for academia!
  - Can be hard to get back for a academic career
- University offers more options!
  - Not necessarily have to strive for academic career

## **Important to consider:**

- Use a career coach to identify your personal motivation and goals
- Follow your heart!



## Questions or thoughts

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