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Former Category Issues Manager, Unilever
PhD Chemistry (1976), BSc Chemistry (1972)

Don't be afraid of moving on from your subject if you want to

I joined *Unilever* in a Company Development role in Oct 1975. My first job was in process development where I learned to design handling equipment for dusty and sticky powders and spent 2 months on a Chemical Engineering conversion course, I spend about 10 years in processing, running pilot plant, factory trials and with a spell working in Holland. I returned to the UK to run a team developing analytical and on-line test methods for quality assurance and process control purposes. By the second half of the 80's I was working in product development looking at both 'greener' detergent formulations and supporting development units in Greece and Turkey. This was followed by a few years working with "the manufacturers of the things we cleaned" to help ensure mutual awareness of new developments and basic compatibility of technologies. This led to my moving into Corporate Relations for a spell Technical External Relations role working with Public Affairs and Regulatory colleagues, especially in promoting sustainability initiatives within the company and at industry level and dealing with many of the issues associated with the public concern about chemical and product safety.

What is the best thing about what you are doing now?
Retirement: Having time for myself and family and being able to enjoy travel and explore the places I visit rather than snatching the odd hour to see them between meetings. Last job: Feeling that I was making a real contribution to improving the industry's sustainability profile and helping shape practical and meaningful regulation. The devil is always in the detail of the implementation guidelines.

What was the best thing about your time as a PhD student here?
Learning to solve problems and be (constructively) critical of others work.

In what way did living and studying in Birmingham live up to your expectations?
I thoroughly enjoyed my time in Birmingham and particularly the excellent campus which somehow wasn't too cut off from the city.

What advice would you give to current PhD students?
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