

PhD Vlog Week 2: Samira Parhizkar Transcript

TIME	SPEAKER	AUDIO
00:00:05	Samira Parhizkar	So I just got back from the meeting this morning and I thought before I start my experiments, I'll just briefly mention what it's like. So this one is a paper of the week and progress report meeting every week, as I said! And this one is particularly within our group. These are normally held in English as are all the other presentations and kin of formal reports, writing, everything is in English because
00:00:35		that's how it normally is in the scientific community – especially in Europe although I do attend German courses just to learn the language – I'm here for four years at least so I might as well, it looks really good on your CV and it does make things easier overall so it's definitely an advantage to learn the language of the country you are in but it's definitely not an absolute requirement – so nothing to be stressed about. It's whether you want to or not.
00:01:05		So most of the time you'll be hearing about me doing experiments, setting up for experiments but that doesn't necessarily mean that all of these experiments actually end up in the PHD research thesis. One of the things that they highly recommend to the grad students in the [inaudible 00:01:19] programme is not only do you – in the beginning of your PHD – outline your project so you know exactly what you were there and what you're going to do in the following years but also a fall back project. So in case something doesn't work out
00:01:35		in case I find out in six months from now that all of the experiments I've been doing now to set up the experimental work – that's great – but when I actually carry out the main things, it might still not work and then I don't want to be in a situation where I'm going to start all over again or I don't have any other project to think about so, you know, I would either have to quit my PHD or wander around. I mean this is not the case, so this is nothing to worry about. Setting up your PHD right at the beginning is

		actually compulsory
00:02:05		for the grad school programme because after the first six months of your PHD, there's a thesis advisory committee meeting and that's basically a committee where you choose three professors of your own selection or it can be someone recommended by your supervisor – this may or may not include your collaborators – and then after the first six months, you have to present exactly what you're going to do for your PHD – preferably a year to year plan
00:02:35		on what you aim to finish by year two, year three, etc. Also if there are any side projects, that's fantastic, that's always good to have... collaborations are always good to have but obviously you have to prioritise on your main project. Also since I've just finished my first year, it's a little bit too early to start writing the thesis. Again I would say this is something that depends on your project. As for me, it's definitely too early. Right,
00:03:05		so now I need to take care of my tissue, so I'll see you. So I'm done for the day, it's about 19:15, I've done everything I aimed to do today which is really good although tomorrow and Friday are going to be quite long days because not only do I have to do several experiments, but I have to do several long experiments but that's
00:03:35		something for tomorrow. Now I'm going to go home and call it a night so I'll see you tomorrow. Good morning everyone, I've just arrived to the lab and according to my calendar I'm doing quite a big experiment today which has a follow-up tomorrow. There are ten western blots to do for antibodies screening and there are 36 antibodies to go through today in different conditions so it's going to be quite a lot! But I'm going to do it!
00:04:05		Other things I need to do is take images and I'm pretty sure that something's just going to creep up that I have probably forgot or someone needs. So let's do this!

00:04:35		I just finished day one of the really big experiment that I was talking about this morning. I'm exhausted and it's only... Okay, it's 17:00. Okay, it's not too bad! So I'm just taking a break from the lab now and what I intend to do during this break is check my emails, make sure everything is up to date in terms of replying people obviously. Also I get some reading done. What I did during the beginning of my PHD was
00:05:05		set up Google alerts for key words that are related to my PHD project. So if anything is recently published with these key words, then I immediately get an email and so I can keep track of my reading and make sure that I'm up to date with all the information. What I'm going to do for the rest of the day now is make sure I catch up on my reading and there have been a few papers out which I need to read which I have kind of postponed doing! But I'm going to do
00:05:35		that now. So it's 19:00, I have done what I need to do today. Something did come up so I had to do an additional experiment today on top which will have a follow-up tomorrow and on Saturday which is a shame, so I'll have to work this weekend but it is what it is – things happen, things like that happen all the time in the lab. Although I did achieve
00:06:05		everything that I wanted to do today which is really good. Things that I should have done include doing a little bit more setting up for tomorrow which would have... which will make my life easier tomorrow but I want to go home! So I'm going to go home now! This evening I'm just going to shut my brain off, go swimming and tomorrow's a new day and I'll see you there. Hello! So I haven't been able to record anything early in the morning today or during the day
00:06:35		because it's been a very busy day. It was the day two of those really big experiments and it turns out that yesterday evening, I found out that the experiments from the day before didn't work. So basically I had to carry over the workload from mid-week to today and there was already

		enough going on so there's just... Yes, it was just very tiring today! In the end it did work though so that's
00:07:05		good news although I didn't see what I wanted to see so I'm a bit disappointed but that's science! So now it's 18:00 and I'm just taking a break. It's literally been non-stop. Just finishing up from today by making sure that I record everything before I go so that I don't have to worry about it during the weekend or next week. I look forward to coming back to you next week. I will be mainly focusing on preparing for my progress report which is a week after
00:07:35		and the moving process to Germany and the transition to my PHD as well as the very special and very interesting Oktoberfest seminar. So I'll see you then!

END OF TRANSCRIPT