

Thom de Vries (28)

STUDY YEAR: 2008-2009

IS: Ph.D. student in HRM

HOME: 60s house in Groningen

HOUSEHOLD: Living with partner

SALARY: Standard

RIDE: '02 BMW



After receiving my bachelor degree in public administration, I sought to broaden my knowledge on business administration and enrolled for the master program strategy and innovation at the University of Groningen in 2008. Part of this program was constructing a master thesis on a topic related to strategy and innovation. Because I had worked as a temporary worker at various companies myself, I thought it would be interesting to examine the effect of hiring temporary staff on firms' capacity to generate innovative cost savings, novel products, and original services as a thesis project. I examined existing research on this topic and was amazed to find that most researchers had only considered hiring temps as a cheap and easy way to deal with changing market conditions and fluctuating demand. As a result, little was known about the potential additional benefits temps might have for firms' innovative capacity. To fill this gap, I empirically examined the effects of temps on innovation in a sample of work groups from various Dutch local government administrations. My thesis indicated that work groups that included about 20% temporary workers excelled in innovation, provided that the groups' temporary workers were motivated to voluntarily express creative ideas. It seemed that such temps contributed diverse backgrounds and perspectives to group discussions and were largely unaffected by ingrained company routines that typically restrain creative thoughts.

While finishing my master thesis, I became intrigued with examining practical topics with academic rigor and developed the ambition to become a scholar. Subsequently, I completed the research master and was hired as a Ph.D. student at the department of human resource management and organizational behavior at the University of Groningen. In my Ph.D. project I examined the factors that enable and motivate individuals and teams to coordinate their work with other teams and organizations. In this respect, I examined the cooperation between ProRail and NS during rail incidents such as derailments and collisions, as well as the cooperation between teams from government (e.g., the Dutch and German departments of foreign affairs), nongovernment organizations (e.g., the Red Cross, UNOCHA), and the Dutch and German military forces during four consecutive peace support training missions. In addition, I won a Fulbright scholarship for conducting academic research in the US and worked for three months at Michigan State University. At Michigan State, I examined coordination between US Air Force intelligence and operation teams during the deployment of fictitious remotely piloted aircraft. My first academic manuscript has been accepted for publication in the *Academy of Management Journal* and will appear this October in print. My second article is currently at a second round of revision at the same journal.

After finalizing my Ph.D. project, I will start as a part-time postdoctoral researcher at the University of Groningen and part-time researcher at TNO. I aim to continue examining topics that are important from both a practical and academic point of view.

Joost Rietveld (30)

STUDY YEAR: 2008-2009

IS: Ph.D. student in Strategic Management

HOME: Brooklyn, New York

HOUSEHOLD: Living alone

SALARY: \$3,000 net

RIDE: MTA Subway Q line



With a Little Help from my Friends

Fond memories I hold of my time spent in the Strategy & Innovation at Groningen University. And even though it has been almost five years since I received my master's degree, I still find myself falling back on the people and lessons learned from that very period. I would even argue that if it wasn't for my time at Groningen University, I wouldn't be where I am today. I write this piece on a train ride to Boston (MA) where I will present my research findings to delegates from top schools including Harvard, MIT and Boston University. My current home is New York City where I work as a visiting scholar at NYU's Stern School of business and as a lecturer of my own course in industry analysis at the renowned New York Film Academy.

After graduating cum laude I accepted a job as strategy & marketing manager at the Dutch video games developer Two Tribes where I had been active as an intern in my capacity as grad student. During my MSc. I had focused my efforts on studying strategic management in creative industries with particular interest for the video games industry. A \$70 billion industry in 2013, video games are constantly in transience, and a prevailing tension between creativity and rationalization make it a particularly fascinating setting to study. At Two Tribes I guided the transition from developing games commissioned by big publishers for traditional video game consoles to self-publishing smaller games for digital platforms such as Apple's iOS and Valve's Steam. After having successfully raised substantive working capital, hiring two marketing assistants, and releasing a handful of games I craved a greater challenge.

I successfully applied to a PhD. position at the London-based Cass Business School. Prior to being awarded a scholarship for my research I worked as a consultant exploiting my professional network in the Netherlands whilst steadily building a UK-based network. While mentally taxing, having one foot in the industry eventually granted me access to unique data and insights that still form the basis of my past and current research projects today. Meanwhile, I kept close ties –or, should I say “Thijs”?- with my supervisors in Groningen too. The publication of a co-authored research paper with Thijs Broekhuizen (Groningen) and Joseph Lampel (Cass) in *Research Policy* legitimated my position as an aspiring scholar and eventually granted me an invitation to come to New York for a few months to work with Professor Melissa Schilling – a key figure in the field of strategic management of technological innovations.

January 2013 I departed for New York and I have not moved back since. European visiting scholars are rather a common phenomenon at top US research school. Faculty generally tend to be weary of allocating time toward visitors –there exists a great range of variance in terms of skills and capabilities, and visitors are institutionally somewhat detached unlike, say, PhD students. Slowly but surely I managed to integrate with Stern's fantastic doctoral cohort and with selected faculty too. I am currently involved in two research projects with different Stern faculty, and I have been offered a job as lecturer of my own course named *Video Games: Culture & Industry*. I start teaching at NYU in September. This job complements my current appointment as lecturer in *Industry Analysis for Game Design Students* at the New York Film Academy of two semesters.

I would not be me if I wasn't already plotting my next move: A job as assistant professor at a respected business school in the US, Canada or Europe starting summer 2015. The kickoff to this search is at an annual conference in Philadelphia. At this conference I hope to again benefit from my ties with colleagues and friends from Groningen, London and New York. Ambition without a strong support system is just blind ambition. It is in the presence of such support that ambition can be tooled toward accomplishing seemingly unattainable goals and dreams. For more information: www.strategyguide.nl/gjrietveld