

## Alumni Interview

### **1. How did you hear about DS when you were at Chalmers? What led you to join the DS board (what was your motivation to work for DS)?**

Answer: If I recall correctly, in an annual DS meeting, I heard that there was no DS representative for Signals and Systems and then learnt about what DS was and saw an opportunity that I can be a representative. I always believed that instead of complaining about the system, it is better to get into the system, understand it, and try to change if something is needed. So, by being in DS, I wanted to understand and represent PhD students at signals and systems.

### **2. What do you think has been the most interesting and surprising aspect of being DS Boardie (Or, any nice memories/stories/achievements you would like to share)?**

Answer: It was interesting to see perspectives and differences from different departments. Some aspects that I have taken for granted were not the same in other departments. So we all brought up such issues and discussed how we can improve the procedures at different departments.

Also, I was part of teams in supervisor of the year award and Chalmers foundation scholarships and both were really different and wonderful experiences with a lot of responsibility. Enjoyed both these roles.

### **3. What do you take back after being a DS Boardie? Do you think your time at DS board helped you to develop your skills? If yes, how?**

Answer: Yes definitely. Among many others, the first thing that comes to my mind is 'Understanding perspectives from different departments and questioning and not taking things for granted were some of the things that I learnt'. Also, one other important task that the DS board had was to select a new DOMB, which was really a challenging and learning experience.

### **4. How did you find your (first) job after Ph.D.? Did you follow any specific career plan? What would you suggest to Ph.D. Students who are approaching towards end of their studies and looking for jobs?**

Answer: Towards the end of my PhD, I decided that I want to switch gears and move to industry as I wanted to get first hand experience of the real-world problems. Also, I wanted to let the perfectionist mentality go so that I can deliver projects with good quality in good time.

I sent open applications to companies: even if there were no job ads, I would send email to my contacts in different companies and ask for an interview so that I know what the company has to offer and see if it is mutually beneficial. This proactive approach is something that current PhD students can do if needed. One other suggestion is to start applying for jobs in good time before the defence. Sometimes it can take few months for the job ad closing, interview, and offer. I know some friends who had almost 4 months for this whole process.

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**5. How is it like working at industry/non-academic institution/organization? What are the similarities/dissimilarities? Do you enjoy it? Do you miss academia/academic environment?**

Answer: I work at Ericsson research on 5 G standardization. Most of them at Ericsson research hold a PhD degree. In Gothenburg Ericsson research, there were some of my former colleagues from PhD time who are my current colleagues. That way it is similar. Work-wise, as I am working on setting new standards for telecom, I need to read what exists in 4G, develop new concepts for 5G, do some analytical pen-and-paper-calculations if needed, simulations to prove the concept, write reports, etc. Approach wise, I see that it is somewhat similar to research in academia. However, the biggest difference I see is the time-scale. The projects are very fast-paced. Over the last 2.5 years at Ericsson, I have already worked on 2 different projects. I enjoy this pace. I can learn from more experienced colleagues, get on-the-job training, take some courses available within Ericsson also.

I also joined Ericsson response as a volunteer. This was one of the reasons for me choosing Ericsson compared to other companies. I enjoy that role too.

**6. How do you determine or evaluate success? What do you think it takes to be successful in a company/organization like yours?**

Answer: If I know that I have delivered my best, every day is exciting and challenging, that I am making meaningful strong impact, company goals are in line with my life goals: are some of the factors that I can determine/evaluate success. Taking up new challenging, learning the problem at hand, being proactive in your approach for the solution and working cross-organization if needed to get job done, are some of what I think it takes to be successful.

**7. If you were hiring a (Chalmers) doctorate for any position at your institution/organization, what qualities would you look for?**

Answer: If the candidate has transferable skills, eager to learn and deliver, be proactive in taking initiatives, mingle well within the work culture, eager to share and spread information, take new challenges and rise up to the occasion, are something that I can think of from my mind.

**8. We assume the position you are working is challenging; so, how do you maintain work-life balance?**

Answer: Sometimes I have to work extra hours especially when there is a standardization deadline, but I can talk to my manager and take those extra hours as flexible days off. So that way, I can take extra vacation also. But usually it is very flexible work wise at Ericsson.

**9. What is the best advice/feedback you have received you think helped you a lot in your professional career/personal life?**

Answer: your first manager is a very key person in the company, 'pick a boss, not a job' kind of advice is something that I followed I guess during the interview process. And I definitely do not regret. When I applied for Ericsson, I did not know what exactly my group was working on. But after interviews, I really liked the people there, manager, team leader, and I saw that it is a place where I can grow personally and professionally. I do not regret my decision.

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***10. What are your future goals? Or, what are you looking forward to in the future? (if it is ok to answer, otherwise please skip this)***

Answer: As of now, I am getting new exciting challenges every day at work, which I enjoy learning and delivering the results. Aligning my life goals with company goals is something that I am working towards and I see it is going in that direction.