

We use cookies to make interactions with our website easy and meaningful, to better understand the use of our services, and to tailor advertising. For further information, including about cookie settings, please read our [Cookie Policy](#). By continuing to use this site, you consent to the use of cookies.

Got it

Join for free

Log in

# Why I hire scientists, and why you should, too

2nd January 2019

They add to your business, regardless of what industry you're in.

By [Ijad Madisch](#)

Before my friends and I started [ResearchGate](#), the professional network for scientists, I was a scientist myself. One of the best things about this was that by the time I started hiring, I already knew the benefits of hiring scientists. Scientists are passionate, excel at time management, are comfortable failing, can think critically, and are great at testing and iterating.

Our head of people, head of product, most of our product managers and a number of engineers were all scientists before joining ResearchGate. I didn't hire these people because they were scientists with limited business experience, but I didn't dismiss them either.

The thing is, the academic job market has been shrinking for years, which now offers other industries an opportunity to tap into a talent pool of amazing, creative and dedicated minds.

It would be a mistake to dismiss this opportunity.

**Reading:** Why I hire scientists, and why you ...



Rea

### SCIENTISTS ARE PASSIONATE

Passion is a big reason that PhDs are capable of focusing on one obscure question for so many years with relatively [low pay](#). On top of that, for most PhDs there is no promise of a high-paying job, or for that matter, any job, waiting for them at the end their studies. Compare this to MBA or computer science graduates who know that their hard work should pay off once they land a job.

This passion makes scientists the perfect fit for mission-driven businesses. In my experience, scientists, and PhDs especially, are passionate about whatever they apply their intellect to. If they believe in a company's mission, they will work hard on achieving it for years.

### SCIENTISTS INNOVATE

Making an original contribution to human knowledge is one of the few PhD requirements that remains consistent across all countries and scientific fields. To make this contribution, scientists must first master their chosen area and then find a gap in the knowledge (see a nice [graphic](#) by [Matt Might](#) on the process). Finding this gap requires wicked critical thinking skills. They need to be able to look at the work of previous scholars, some of whom are the best in their fields, and then take their research in a new direction or find things they missed in their analysis.

In our company, we are consistently trying to do things better, which requires that everyone think critically about how we're currently doing things. Scientists are trained to find areas for improvement and then get to work improving them.

### SCIENTISTS MANAGE THEIR TIME WELL

Graduate students work on a hard deadline. Handing in their dissertation on time requires incredible time and project management skills. They're making sure all their experiments are running properly, teaching and grading, all while simultaneously writing and editing a dissertation. It all has to be planned carefully to avoid delays.

Graduate students apply this skill to jobs outside of academia, too. When new scientists join ResearchGate, I know they will be able to set ambitious goals for their teams and get everyone working together efficiently.

### SCIENTISTS TEST AND ITERATE

Companies like [Facebook](#) grew using what's called the [lean startup approach](#). This requires businesses to start by thinking of some general questions that relate to their business, develop a testable hypothesis or minimum viable product that could address the question, generate data to test it, and then continually experiment and iterate as necessary. The thing is, the lean startup approach is built on the [scientific method](#) so who better to apply it than a scientist.

### SCIENTISTS ARE COMFORTABLE FAILING

From [my experience as a scientist](#), 99 percent of the work in research never makes it into the final, published article. But this didn't stop me from coming in tomorrow and trying again. Failing is a big part of the process of testing and iterating. This means that scientists fail a lot. It's just a part of the job.

In a business setting this ability to fail and carry on is invaluable. We are consistently testing and iterating, so people can't get too discouraged when something isn't working as intended. Scientists will just come in tomorrow and try again. ResearchGate is a science-oriented company, so it makes sense that we hire scientists, but you should consider hiring scientists even if yours isn't. Ten years' experience working with them in a business setting has proven to me that science and business aren't so far apart.

**Reading:** Why I hire scientists, and why you ...



Rea

Ijad Madisch is a co-founder and the CEO of [ResearchGate](#), a professional network for 15 million scientists. Scientists use the network to connect, share and discover science in real time, and use its [scientific recruitment solutions](#) to build their careers and hire experts. You can follow Ijad on Twitter [@IjadMadisch](#).

*This article originally appeared on [Scientific American](#).*

Share |

**NEWS** · Biotech · Drug development · Health · Life sciences · Opinion · Psychology · Space

**About & Contact**

**Republishing policy**

**Company news**

**Business updates**

Follow us:



**About**

[News](#)  
[Company](#)  
[Careers](#)

**Support**

[Help center](#)  
[FAQ](#)

**Business solutions**

[Recruiting](#)  
[Advertising](#)