From academia to industry

A physicist case study
(statistical significance might be low)

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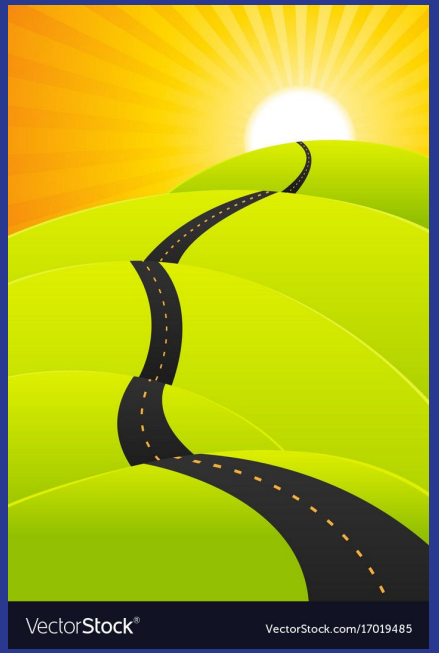
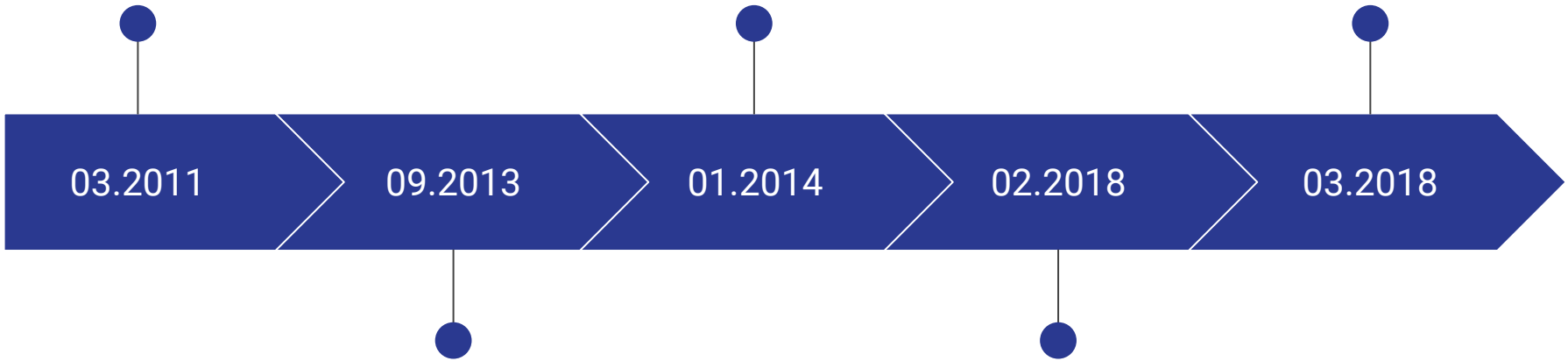
PhD Theoretical Physics,
Data scientist @Fansunite Entertainment Inc.




BSc in Physics (U. of Trento, Italy)
03.2011
MSc in Theoretical and Computational Physics (U. of Trento, Italy)
09.2013
Started PhD @ UBC in Theoretical Physics
01.2014
Officially graduated @ UBC
02.2018
Hired as a data scientist @ Fansunite Entertainment Inc.
03.2018

What academia is...

The objective

- **Transparent and pure objective. Enrich human knowledge. Very complex problems**

The community

- **Great collaborations, we all want everyone to succeed since the objective is mutual.**

Timing

- **Things must be done just right. Sure, you need to publish, but rigour comes first.**

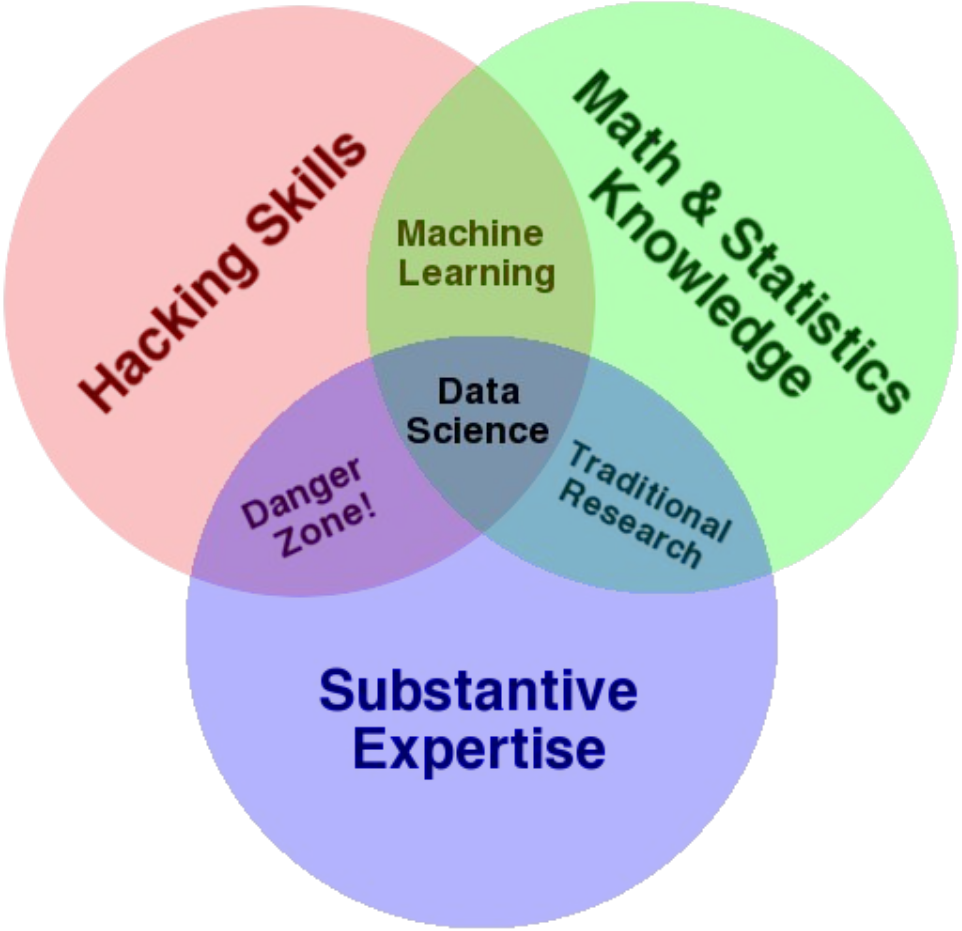
What academia is...

The objective	The community	Timing
• Transparent and pure objective. Enrich human knowledge. Very complex problems	• Great collaborations, we all want everyone to succeed since the objective is mutual.	• Things must be done just right. Sure, you need to publish, but rigour comes first.

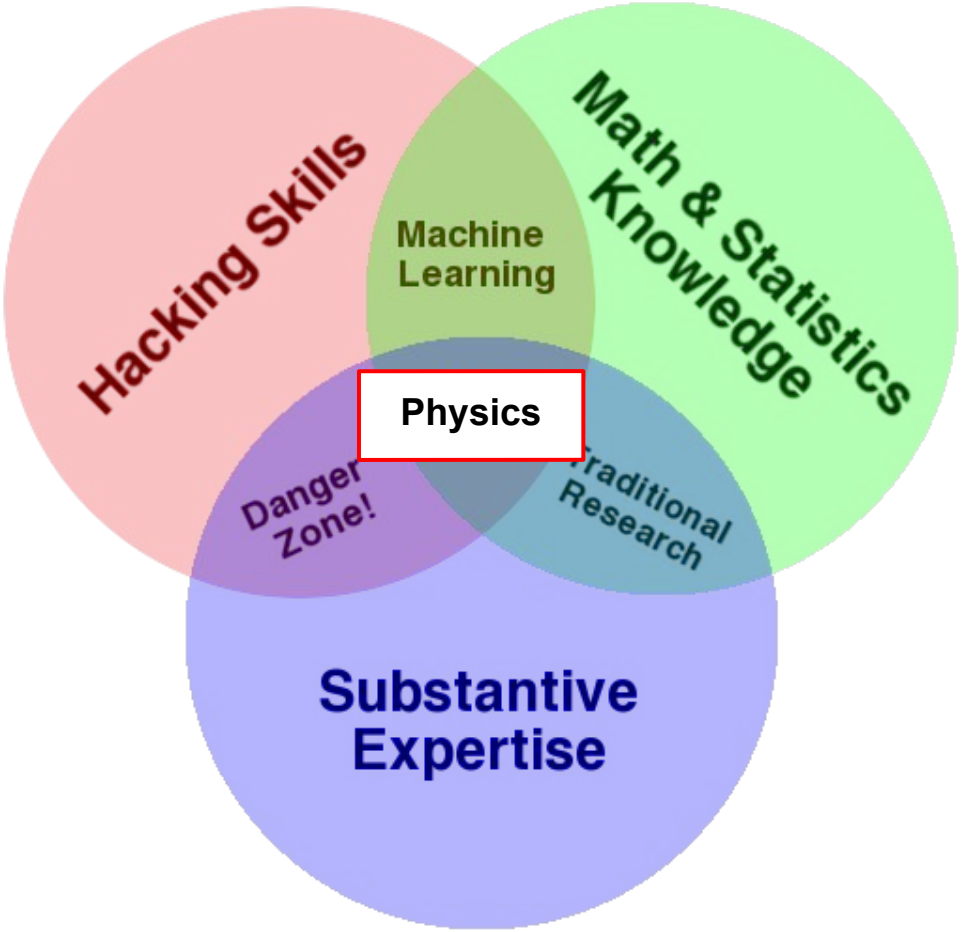
...and what industry is (not)

- Business problems not very challenging. In industry is all about money. Enrich yourself or perish.
- Ideas are kept private and you do not share breakthroughs. After all, you have to be selfish to make money.
- You need to deploy a MVP asap. Time is money. Faster is richer.

What working as a data scientist in industry really is about...



What working as a data scientist in industry really is about...



- Collect, clean and build infrastructure to store data
- Explore data to look for trends and correlations
- Read research papers and implement new methods/algorithms
- Lots of math, coding and thinking! Real data is dirty, messy and noisy!

So… where to start?

- TIMING
- LEARNING
- NETWORKING

To go or not to go...

The doubts of a physicist...

- I am physicist, what else can I do other than physics?
- I don't feel that smart, will I succeed in the outside world?
- I have no idea how it works out there…
- What if I don't find a job?

Some help from:

- UBC/University career services (use them!!!)
- People who already switched from academia to industry
- No risk, no fun

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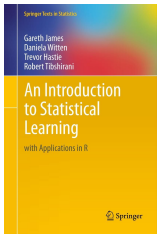
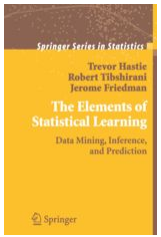
Start learning

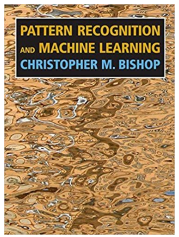
- Online courses

Udemy coursera UDACITY DATAQUEST fast.ai

- Books







- Workshops/hackathons

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Program Info Session (Today 6pm @ Sauder School of Business, UBC, room HA292)

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Networking is the key

- LinkedIn
- Go to networking events (meetups for example)
- Informational interviews
- UBC ten thousand coffees (https://www.tenthousandcoffees.com/)

- UBC/SFU career days and events (https://students.ubc.ca/career/career-events)
- Prepare your resume (not the academic one!) -- (https://students.ubc.ca/career/career-resources/resumes-cover-letters-curricula-vitae)
- Research about the companies, scope for open positions
- Talk to recruiters, get their contact and follow up after the event

Interviews time!

- Phone screening interview (can be technical)
- First in-person interview with tech team leads
- Second in-person interview with HR/other departments people
- Hopefully an offer!!

Don’t despair if no one calls you! Keep hammering them, keep trying, keep learning and don’t give up!

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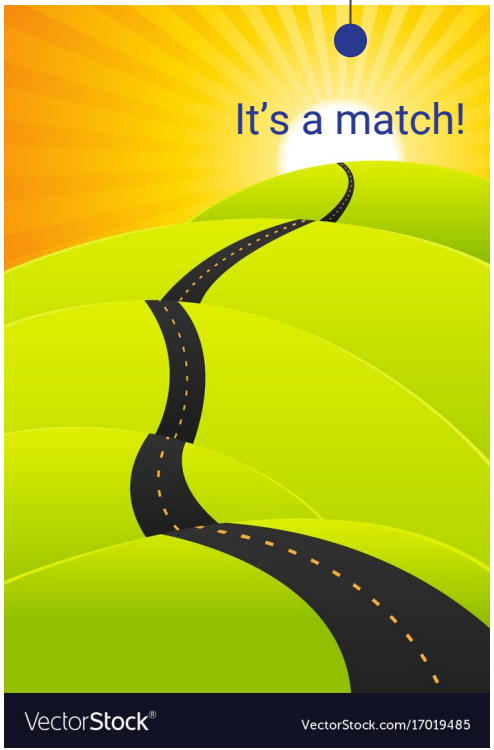
- 1.5 years of preparation
- Countless hrs of free time spent on coding and experimenting
- Considerable energy spent to socialize (eeeeew!!!)

- Applied for roughly 20 jobs
- 4 phone interviews
- 2 in-person interviews
- 2 job offers



What I learned...

- Companies are looking for smart people (you are physicists, you are smart!)
- Projects experience could land you a job
- Sell yourself. Be confident.
- It is worth paying for certain things (LinkedIn Premium, AQM, career fairs tickets)
- All the opportunities I had were because of networking

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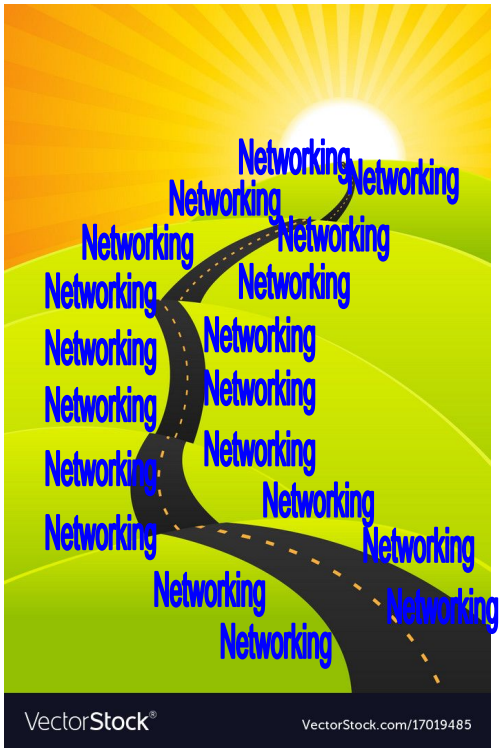
kaggle

INSIGHT



Thank you!

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(connect with me on LinkedIn!)

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