



**University of
Nottingham**

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From Practitioner to Practitioner- Researcher

Dr Nalayini Thambar

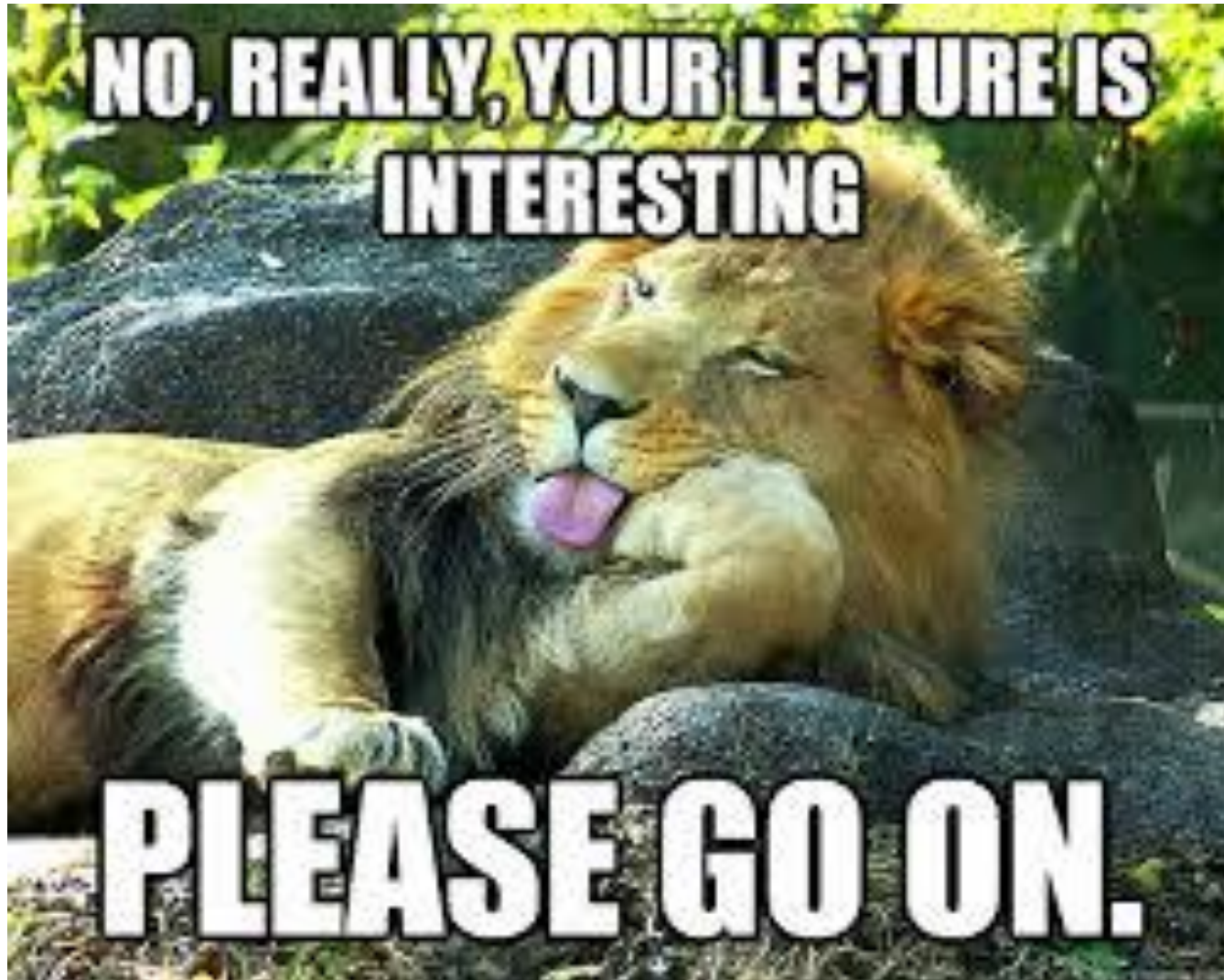
**Director of Careers and Employability,
Director of Quality, AGCAS**



@nalayinit

- BA(Hons) History and Economics with Politics and Statistics, Keele
- Diploma in Careers Guidance, Napier University
- **Qualified Careers Adviser; Schools, FE,**
- **Careers Adviser, HE**
- Fellow of the HEA
- **Regional Strategic Manager (GraduatesYorkshire)**
- MA (Project Management) Leeds University Business School
- **Assistant Director, Business Engagement, University of Leeds**
- MSc Business Research Methods, Bradford School of Management
- **Director of Careers and Employability, University of Nottingham**
- DBA, Bradford School of Management
- **Quality Director, AGCAS**
- 2 book chapters and 2 articles published
- Elected Fellow of NICEC

The Undergraduate Years





Lesson Learned:

I can learn and get good results - if it is applied to something that I want to do, and care about

★ Or at least enough



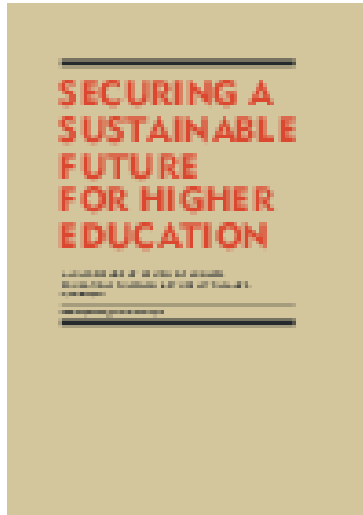
Lessons Learned:

1. I can study in an academic setting and get good results - if it is helping me to solve workplace challenges
2. Academic papers can be relevant to real life
3. (Qualitative) research is fun and useful!



Lessons Learned:

1. It is fine, and important, to take approaches to research and study that work for you; structure and deadlines helped me keep the show on the road
2. Time management is key; a project management approach helps.



Lessons Learned:

1. People do not understand what Careers Services do
2. Careers Services are not brilliant at helping people understand the difference we make and the problems we solve
3. Our theoretical frameworks and evidence bases have limitations which undermine our credibility
4. There are growing tensions between leaders, managers and careers advisers
5. In HE, our profession is at risk if we don't know why, and do something about this



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What is the professional identity of Careers Advisers in Higher Education? Challenges and Opportunities for Careers Service Leaders and Managers

Lessons Learned:

1. Many research skills are workplace skills e.g. writing, precision and focus of thought
2. Strong workplace skills facilitate good research
3. Good practitioner research enhances professional practice in real time
4. If we aren't an authority in our own field of practice, others will take on that role



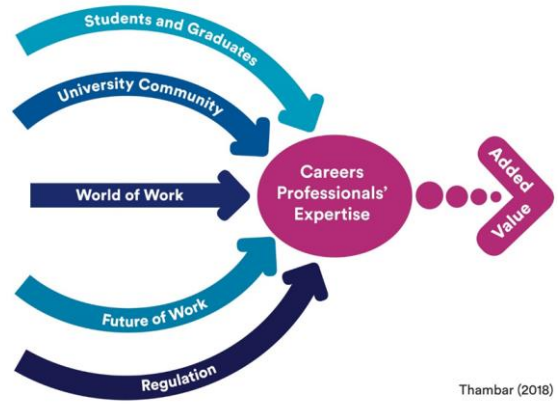
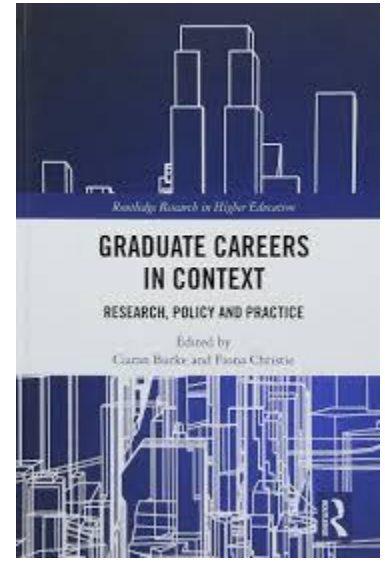
The impact of practitioner research



Global Top 100 University

University of the Year for Graduate Employment

- Ranked No. 1 for graduate employment - The Times and The Sunday Times Good University Guide
- Climbed from 25th to 20th in The Times 2017 UK ranking



Thambar (2018)



The 21st Century HE Careers Professional
Dr Rajesh Thambar, Dr Gillian Neave and Franka Eakin
October 2020
Funded by HEFCE



**Research is formalized
curiosity. It is poking and
prying with a purpose.**

Zora Neale Hurston

The power of practitioner resesarch





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You can do it!

Thank you for listening

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