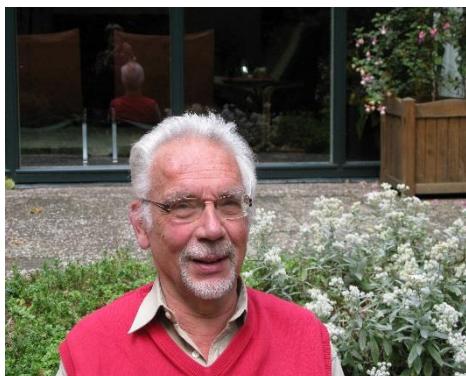


## **Dr Ir Pieter Schmidt**

*Specialty: Internationalisation, international career.*



After studying forestry at Wageningen University (WU) I moved in 1970 to Freiburg im Breisgau (Germany) for a PhD in tree physiology, which I obtained in 1978. Part of that job was teaching wood anatomy and tree physiology to forestry students at the University of Freiburg. In 1978 I returned to WU to study energy streams in trees.

This university detached me in 1980 to the Centre for Agricultural Research in Suriname (CELOS) in Paramaribo, partly to study nutrients in sustainable timber production systems for the tropical rainforests there, partly to manage a team of researchers to develop such systems. From 1985 to 1999 I combined at the WU research (planting distances, restauration after acidification) with teaching (silvicultural systems) with the management of the forestry group(s) at that university. Moreover, I founded a great European Network of university forestry education institutions, aimed at the exchange of students and the improvement of forestry education.

From 1999 to 2002 I managed a large team of Cameroonian and European scientists in Kribi (Cameroon), working at the development of a sustainable management of again the tropical rain forest aimed at sustainable production of timber and other forest services.

In 2002 I retired and since I am volunteering at board level in a number of NGO'S aimed at nature conservation en people education in the Netherlands and as an editor of proceedings and of a professional forestry journal.

### **Lesson:**

What I learned – and what I told my children - is that the world is your playing field. Don't be afraid to experience something new, it is not a threat , it is a change and a challenge!

## **Ward van Beek**

My name is Ward van Beek and I graduated, in 1986 in Wageningen as an MSc in Land & water Management.

Already in the final phase of my studies I focused on communication and marketing, and have been active in communication and PR from day one. I started in the agri business at Nutreco, then moved on to financial services and then into tech and IT. In 2000 I founded the PR agency Whizpr, which has become one of the leading tech PR agencies in the Benelux, with regular customers such as Google, Sony, PayPal, Expedia and HTC. In 2010 I sold the agency to two colleagues to continue as an independent communication consultant. As off January 2016 I have a new company, called ItsaRep, focusing on reputation management. I strongly believe in content, in the power of a good story, well told, to the right audience, at the right time and the right place. For it to work, listening is just as important as talking.



When looking for my first job I started with approaching my "dream candidates'. It would have been great to work as a communications professional in the Environmental sector. After several unsuccessful (open) applications for 2a number of NGO's in this field, I was scouted by Nutreco, just before graduation during an AIESEC meeting. They offered me spontaneously a communications job. In agribusiness, so in fact at the other side of the spectrum as the environmental organisations. That didn't hold me back...

### **Lesson:**

Keep doing what you like and follow your passion. For me it turned out to be communication. Another lesson: only become a specialist if you're really in the top of your field. If you're not really at the top in your field, it may be good to have some extra skills in your luggage. With an open mind and the ability to bridge the gap between technology and the more soft, social sector. And stay curious. Keep learning.

## **Gab van Winkel**

A short introduction: I am Dutch, live in Utrecht and work in Wageningen.

I have two sons, 24 and 23 years old, who entered the job market two years ago.



I studied soil science in Wageningen, with field work in the Swiss Alps and in the Danube delta, Romania. I also did a minor in science philosophy and I found that so interesting that it determined my further career.

Since 1986, I work in research policy at Wageningen University.

**If you are thinking about doing a PhD after your Master study, I am the guy to talk with.**

I was coordinator of a graduate school in Wageningen for sixteen years and what I enjoyed most were the contacts with PhD candidates. Also, I am doing a PhD study myself, on the development of the modern doctorate in Europe. I like to share with you what it takes to pursue a doctorate, what jobs to expect after your PhD, and what pitfalls to avoid before and during a doctorate.

## **Simon Middelkamp**



Simon Middelkamp, retired, 66 years old

Study: agricultural engineering/land sciences 1969-1976

Experience: Military service; reserve officer artillery; 40 years of government experience from student assistant to director, at state, province and municipality; 10 years water authority director and 12 years city council member; 5 years Ministry of Transport and Water as regional representative of transport in Overijssel; 33 years province Noord Brabant from manager to director on the terrains of traffic and transport, nature and landscape and ecology. 2 years municipality secretary in Sint Anthonis.

Nowadays, I enjoy my retirement, golfing, hiking and grandchildren.

I am also active as manager, advisor and volunteer. Chair of a national EU committee, member of a Supervisory Board of a healthcare institution, member of the Management Committee of a nature organisation, member of a Regional Committee of a water authority, chair of a Church Council. Volunteer at a national hiking organisation. In short, still very active.

At the start of my career, the job market was tough. Despite that, I have chosen a job that gave me satisfaction. That has been my leading motto after that as well. Positions aimed at managing, seeking solutions and at the crossroads between governance and civil service.

### **Lesson:**

For current students, I would say: choose what you're good at and what you think will give you pleasure. Use your quality and time will tell how your development/career will unfold.

## **Ton van Dortmont**

I am Ton van Dortmont, 53 years old, married. I have a son, aged 20 years, who studies at Groningen State University and a daughter aged 19 years who is a student at Wageningen University.

### *Specialty:*

I specialize in making students aware of what they need in order to enlarge their chance of being selected for their first job at a company, apart from an MSc degree.



I studied Landscape Architecture and Physical Planning at Wageningen University, graduated in 1988. During the last two years as a student, I had a job as Lecturer's assistant and, later as Researcher at the department of Physical Planning at Wageningen University. My field of educating students and research was applications of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) in Physical Planning. Because that field was interesting for companies in those days, I was asked to apply for a position as Advisor for a major Dutch Engineering company named Grontmij (today: part of Sweco). I got the position and stayed with this company for 14 years, in which I learned a lot and developed my skills in Project and Team Management during work and during a Management Development programme. After that, I decided I wanted to work a bit closer to home and at "the other side of the table" for a local government, which became the municipality of Wageningen. After 4,5 years I wanted to return to the business world and got my current job for Nuon Energy company.

Nowadays, I work as Development Manager of Onshore Wind Energy at Nuon Energy company, which is part of the Swedish State owned energy company named Vattenfall.

When looking for my first job, I asked myself: for what is the demand high right now and the coming years in my field of expertise? How can I make a difference, in other words: what skills do I have or can I develop that few others have?

### **Lesson:**

Make a difference from others. Discover your best skills, develop them and do what you are good at / what feels good to do, within the fields of expertise that are demanded in the market.

Develop your skills within a well-defined, recognizable field of expertise. Skills not only include scientific knowledge, but also personal skills like cooperation, negotiation, sales skills, management skills. You may develop them outside the university walls, like a Students' Association.

### **Silvia Blok**

I am Dutch, 47 years old, live and also work in Wageningen.

I have four sons, 2, 9, 15 and 17 years old, and 2 girls, 7 and 13 years old.

I studied Home Economics in Wageningen, graduated in 1998, with a specialization in Environmental Psychology. I started my career in 1998 at KLV, and moved to Wageningen University, Alterra onwards, doing research on Environmental Psychology, after that I moved to the Environmental Science group, and started a PhD at the Applied Philosophy Group (still busy). Since 2006 I am involved in research on labour market positions from our graduates, first at KLV and from 2015 onwards, at Wageningen University.



**Thinking about how to combine family life with a career? Wondering which competences are necessary for getting onto the jobmarket? Wondering about job perspectives and how to create good chances for the jobmarket for yourself? Then I am someone worthwhile talking with.**

I am involved in the career monitor, National Alumni Enquiry etc, and I spoke to men and women chairholders about their career. So I am familiar with the latest data of the job market for WU alumni (MSc and PhD). Also I am combining a big family and work, which gave me lots of personal experience.

