MEPhI ALUMNI

SUCCESS STORIES

9

REAL LIFE STORIES
VIEWPOINTS
HANDY TIPS

ABOUT THE BOOKLET

This publication is the first collected edition dedicated to the success stories of MEPhI alumni. The booklet was created by the employees of the Students Center, and the Director of the Directorate of MEPhI Competitiveness Enhancement program - Ganchenkova Maria Gerasimovna.

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INTRODUCTION

World leading universities are proud of their Alumni Associations, rely on close ties between the Alumni Association members and jointly determine the development thrust of the university.

Current alumni team successfully creates new traditions and strengthens the old ones, maintaining the true MEPhI spirit. It is heartening to see that the Association is becoming an effective cooperation platform for the university graduates and students. On the part of the administrative body, we support this development.

This edition contains the collection of stories of the MEPhI alumni of different age and areas of activity - it illustrates the scale of talents and capabilities of our graduates. We hope that the edition will provide you with some new and useful information.

The Director of the Directorate of MEPhI Competitiveness Enhancement program
Ganchenkova Maria Gerasimovna

Whenever I hear about the success of people and their stories, I feel inspired to act.
When I learn that such people and I study under one roof, I feel inspired to achieve success.
I hope that once you get acquainted with our graduates you will feel inspired just as much.
In our turn, we'll try to make it a good tradition.

The Head of the MEPhI Alumni Association
Kuznetsov Konstantin

ABOUT MEPHI STUDENTS CENTER

Student Center

stud-center.mephi.ru

The Center was established in August, 2015 and aims to create achievement-oriented graduates of the University on academic and business market, motivate f students to improve their personal and professional qualities.

TO THIS END THE WORKERS OF THE STUDENTS CENTER PERFORM THE FOLLWONG TASKS:

Deliver trainings, programs and schools for the development of soft-skills of personal effectiveness, self-organization, communication, etc. with the help of professional coaches and invited experts from various fields of science and business **(«Career Support» thrust)**.

Upgrade the database of vacancies and internships in companies, as well as build connections with potential employers **(«Portal of vacancies and practices» thrust)**.

Place the information on foreign scholarships, grants and internships help students with the drawing up of documents and with the choice of practical training programs **(«Academic Mobility» thrust)**.

Carry out surveys on students' satisfaction with the educational process and everything that happens in the university **(«Feedback» thrust)**.

Interact with alumni to preserve ties with the University, in order to transfer experience and facilitate the employment of young graduates and students **(«Alumni Association» thrust)**.

Student Center is also involved in various aspects of university life, such as strategic development, design and architecture, media development, research on inter-university environment, etc.

ABOUT MEPHI ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

junior-alumni.mephi.ru

MEPhI Alumni Association was established as one of the thrusts of the Students Center (Association of graduates), the main target audience initially included senior students and graduates who had recently received their diplomas. Soon, the Association's activity has covered a wider range of graduates. Today, the main objectives of the Association are:

1. Creation and development of the environment for the interaction of MEPhI students and graduates
2. Arrangement and holding of meetings with MEPhI alumni
3. Creation of an information field for MEPhI alumni НИЯУ МИФИ
4. Creation and development of cooperation between the alumni and the University
5. Development of business environment between MEPhI alumni

EXAMPLES OF MEPHI ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PROJECTS:

1. **Conference «How I achieved success»**
   The conferences are a platform for communication of successful alumni and achievement-oriented students. Performance format is TED Talks type, the venue and 3 great speakers do not leave anyone indifferent. After the speeches, students have the opportunity to communicate with the graduates in an informal setting and ask questions.

2. **University-wide diploma delivering ceremony**
   The event comprises several steps. The official part includes the performance of the university administration representatives, who say parting words and remind that alma mater will always welcome its graduates to the University. In addition to the official part, the photo area, the video area «Message to your future self» and instant print of photo magnets are arranged. Graduates and guests can chat over a cup of coffee at the location area of the timeline of the MEPhI events over the past 5 years. The first university-wide diploma delivering ceremony was held on July 9, 2016, where 520 graduates launched balloons on the University main square.

3. **Project in progress: graduate map**
   The map will be a pass to the University for its graduates, as well as the personal discount and bonus programs card.

Sergey ZHURIN

Hometown: Moscow
Graduation year: 1997
Faculty: Cybernetics and Information Security
Name of present employer: «SNPO «Eleron»

About polygraph experience and MEPhI contribution to career

Hello everyone! My name is Sergey Zhurin, I'm the head of «Information systems development» laboratory at the State Atomic Energy Corporation «Rosatom» enterprise - Federal Center of Science and High Technology «SNPO «Eleron». In 1997 I graduated from department 29 (Management Intelligent Systems) at MEPhI, went on to postgraduate studies and passes PhD defense. In 2010 I made it to the list of 100 best scientists of «Rosatom» and in 2016 I was second in the Rosatom «Person of the Year» competition in nomination of «Researcher», which I'm very proud of. I've got about 100 articles and scientific works and 2 book on my account, and 3 more are being published.

Tell us about your achievements in more detail.

Well, as for my recent success, the data on my staff testing program has recently been posted on Rosatom website. Two of my articles were published in the «Rosatom Country» newspaper in 2016 – on time-management and motivation improvement techniques. It's nice to read about yourself when you've achieved success, and it's great to share the knowledge with others, especially because the transfer of the crucial knowledge is an essential aspect of the industry efficiency enhancement. One of my works is a computer system that combines a number of businesses in Russia into a data network. It's nice to have ties with many enterprises on the territory of our vast country.

I'm also working on the protection from the insider, on the development of specialized tests, and the development of computer programs, as well as the technique development. And one of my research activities in this area is the work with the polygraph. The testing itself means that there must be a well-trained specialist, because the polygraph does not exactly show whether person is lying or not, but simply indicates a person's response to questions. I'm trying to put all of my inventions into practice for the benefit of the industry, all the programs and technologies are never on the shelf.

I also conduct international work with the IAEA on the protection against the insider. As you know, the IAEA has been developing regulations in different fields of the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Experts from different countries are invited for the formulation of such documents in order to improve the document in terms of modern technologies. I have been invited to help improve the document in terms of personnel screening.

Why did you decide to connect your life with MEPhI?

I have always been interested in programming and wanted to get good knowledge in order to become a sought-after specialist. MEPhI gave me the knowledge of the information analysis and most importantly - the ability to apply the methods of data analysis and decision-making in any activity. Apart from studying, I wrote articles for the MEPhI newspaper «Physics Engineer», taught while doing my postgraduate course and worked as an engineer at the Central Bank of Russia. In fact, the desire to write first appeared back in high school, when I read «Young technician» journal. I wrote articles on different topics, once I even interviewed the Rector.

I sometimes publish science-fiction stories on the Internet, and I won a medal place in the science fiction competition called «White bishop's pectoral» a few years ago. I was lucky to have a very tight-knit group, we always get together at reunions and even go on vacation together either to the south of Russia or abroad, to Turkey, Andorra, etc.

I've been teaching at MEPhI since 2008, at department 41 (Cybersecurity) mostly, and at department 29. From 2001 till 2012 I taught at RSUH. Over 50 graduation theses have been defended under my supervision in these two Universities.

Do you have any special recipe for success?

For me, the main thing about success is that each of the mentioned facts is motivationally significant to me. Because it is such motivational components that keep the person's spark alive, and not the money that you will spend anyway. One of the main factors that have helped me succeed is basic education, received at MEPhI.

MEPhI gave me the basic understanding of the work field. I've been keen on coding since 6th grade and my love for programming has developed since then. At MEPhI, I took the same line and graduated from the department 29 - Management Intelligent Systems.

The knowledge should be underpinned by hard work and motivational interest, and it's very important to be responsible for your actions. Only then, you can reach certain levels of success. If you want to move forward, promote some technologies, you should have another vital leadership component – courage.

You have the courage if the period between the occurrence of the problem and the moment you say, «I'll do it this way» is as short as possible. Making decisions quickly is courage.

The Pareto principle is of great importance, too. 20% of effort give 80% of the effects, while the rest 80% give only 20% of the results. When doing some research work, such as an academic research project, you have to bear in mind, that 80% of the result come from 20% of effort. It's not at all like bodging. If you take a perfectly done work as 100%, it means that you don't need to brush it up to the last detail, because it's not worth it, you'd better spend this time on something more unseful.

Another important thing is to perceive the significance of maintaining close ties with people and to accomplish the tasks in hand.

Self-improvement. Each person has his own shortcomings. If you find your weak points, you should learn to work on them. You should improve yourself slowly but surely.

I wouldn't be where I am now if I didn't have the basis that MEPhI provides. Because all the technologies, all the courses and lectures I received were linked together and this basis helped me move forward. Of course, a lot depends on chance: when you change the tack at a certain moment and meet someone, learn something news, get some new job, make some decesions. But when you've got MEPhI basis you'll be better at decision-making, especially if you study hard.

Employers look closely at academic results. Moreover, you should not just study and pass exams, but you should love your qualification and future profession.

Summarizing the above, I'd point out the following success criteria:

1. You must like what you do;
2. You must realize that all you do (your studies, jobs, social life) will come in handy in the future;
3. You must study hard and choose challenging qualifications;
4. Constantly improve yourself.

I hope that my experience (my fundamental knowledge) I've tried to share will help you with your studies and finding a job to your liking and, of course, help you become a good expert! Good luck!


РОСАТОМ

Vladimir LAVRYK

Hometown: Gorodovikovsk, Kalmykia
Graduation year: 2011
Faculty: Physico-Technical
Name of present employer: The GSI Helmholtz Centre for Heavy Ion Research in Germany

About discoveries and postgraduate study in Germany

Hello, Vladimir! Tell us about yourself.

Hi! I was born in the Gorodovikovsk, the Republic of Kalmykia, and finished school there. After school I studied Mathematics at Moscow State University of Education for two years, but then I decided to enter MEPhI and successfully graduated in 2011 from department 24 (applied nuclear physics), Physico-Technical Faculty. I am currently involved in scientific work at The GSI Helmholtz Centre for Heavy Ion Research in Darmstadt in Germany and I am also a postgraduate student of the Physics department of the Goethe University of Frankfurt.

Have you always wanted to enter MEPhI?

I've loved everything associated with technology, engineering, machinery and electronics ever since I was a kid, so I grew up as a typical digithead. I took part in Physics and Maths Olympiads (both municipal and national ones). Of course, my parents encouraged me and supported all these hobbies (my father had graduated from Taganrog Radio Engineering Institute). When I was in 10th grade, it was time to decide on the university. Because my sister was already a student of the Moscow Linguistic University at that time, she had the chance to gather information about various technical universities such as MAI, MEPhI and MIPT. She brought dozens of different booklets and brochures, I scrutinized them all, and MEPhI appealed to me most. Perhaps, because of such words as «a physicist, an engineer, nuclear, atomic» etc. (Laughs), because we all grew up with Soviet scientific films, well, at least I did.

So, I decided to enter the Moscow Engineering Physics Institute. But I didn't succeed on my first try, I do not get enough points to get a place in the dormitory. Back then, we used to enroll at universities based not on the Russian State Exam results, but on the entrance exam results, and we had to score 10 points out of 10, but I scored 9. So, I had to opt for plan «B» and I entered the Moscow State Pedagogical University, the Faculty of Mathematics. I've always loved teaching and as a student of Moscow State Pedagogical University I started teaching, but I knew it right well that teaching did not necessarily require a pedagogical qualification.

I studied at MSPU for two years, some days I liked it, others I did not, but sometimes my thoughts were still preoccupied with MEPhI and engineering career. When I finished the second year, my brother came to Moscow to enter the university. He was enrolling at MEPhI, and I decided to get on a roll one more time – either just for fun or to keep him company, - and I succeeded. That's how my brother and I together graduated from MEPhI at the same time.

Why did you choose to go to Germany and not to stay at MEPhI?

I'm not sure how things are now, but back then MEPhI students in their 4th year went on to the pre-graduation internship and graduation internship in various specialized institutions. I went to do mine at the Institute of Theoretical and Experimental Physics (ITEP). I performed well, and my supervisor told me to apply for a summer student school at GSI, where I now work. So I submitted my application, it was approved, and I spent 2 months there in summer. I had a project related to accelerator physics, I liked it, and later I decided to try my hand in this field. I considered two options: either GSI - scientific research Institute, where I

now work, either the Center, called the German Electron Synchrotron in Hamburg (DESY). I received positive reply from both institutions, but the GSI's answer arrived a bit earlier, when I already was in Germany, at GSE I received a positive reply from DESY. I didn't consider postgraduate study at MEPhI, due to the fact that my scientific research was connected with ITEP, so I applied there. But in the end, I chose GSI.

So, it is better there than here at MEPhI, is it?

I can't compare it with MEPhI as I haven't done postgraduate study at MEPhI. Back then, it seemed to me that Germany was a better option, but things change as well as my attitude to work and my outlook, that is why now I'm not sure it was the best choice.

If you now had a chance to go back in time to the moment of enrollment, what would you choose?

That's a provocative question (Laughs), but in such cases I always say I'd do the same thing. I'd leave it the way it was. I think it was the right decision. Although now I can challenge it, those four years of experience – both scientific and wordly – is important.

What are you going to do next?

I think I'll get back to my motherland in a while. I do not commit myself to Germany or any other foreign country.

Tell us about your current research

The Institute, where I work, as I've already mentioned, is called The GSI Helmholtz Centre for Heavy Ion Research, we have 2 particle accelerators: a versatile linear accelerator and a heavy-ion synchrotron. This means we can actually accelerate everything from protons to uranium, that is, almost the entire periodic table. The Center has relevant pilot programs both for fundamental and applied physics. The fundamental program is mainly hinged on the research in nuclear and atomic physics, basically, in the structure of the nucleus and of the atom. Bio- and medical physics, hadron therapy in particular, can serve as an example of applied research . This means that a malignant tumor is treated with hadron beams with appropriate energy (protons, helium ions, carbon, oxygen). As a rule, including in our Cancer Center on Kashirskoye highway, tumors are treated mainly by X-rays or gamma rays, while GSI has developed a machine, irradiating the tumor with protons and heavy ions, which I've just told you about.

How is this method better than x-ray therapy?

The advantage of this method is that the energy is absorbed not on the surface of the irradiated body, as in the case of interaction of gamma radiation with matter, but at a certain depth. That is, a deep seated tumor can be reached. There is such effect, as the Bragg peak which is when all the energy is released not on the surface of the irradiated object, but at a certain depth, which depends on the beam energy and the irradiating particles.

This machine was created in our institute, and then a more advanced one was designed based on this machine in the German Center for the Study of Cancer in the city of Heidelberg, and that is where the studies are carried out now and people are treated at this facility.

What other research is under way?

We also discover new elements, among which there are Darmshtatty (Ds), Hessium Rentgenium (Rg), Copernicium (Cn). Moreover, the Facility for Antiproton and Ion Research (Centre for Research antiprotons and ions) is planned to be established on the basis of our institute. The existing accelerator complex will be supplemented with a new accelerator - synchrotron, which will possess a relatively high intensity and significantly higher energy than the existing one, this will help implement new experiments – in fundamental physics, mostly. One of the most important planned experiments is a Compressed baryonic matter experiment (CBM), which studies fundamental properties of the nucleus in the ion-ion collisions.

What does your job comprise?

Well, first things first. We have a source of ions, we place them in the linear accelerator, accelerate them to a certain energy and start a synchrotron. In the future, when the new synchrotron is built, we will have two options: either to withdraw the beam for the experiment, or run it on to a new synchrotron. But we live in the real world, and not an perfect one, so part of the beam will be lost, and my job is to define how and where the ions are lost on the way from the source to the experiment. To this end, a system of control and monitoring of the beam loss is designed, with a large number of people working on it.

My job is not connected directly to the synchrotron (although part of the experimental work was carried out there), but to the so-called high energy beam transfer line (HEBT) - line transporting the ion beam of high-energy (the energy for a uranium ion beam reaches from 300 to 900 MeV nucleon). These lines are used when you need to deliver the beam from the accelerator to the experiment, that is, the ion beam travels a distance accompanied by a large number of magnets that turn it in one direction or another, focus the beam and so on. It is necessary to control where and how many ions are lost, in order to preserve the most of them. Ideally, it is the amount injected into the

linear accelerator from the source. Of course, the results I receive, will then be used in the beam loss monitoring in FAIR synchrotrons.

What do you do in your free time?

I'm keen on reading and sports. Now, I mostly read books on social psychology. I'm interested in the way our society evolves and the way people interact with each other. Social psychology describes how individuals react upon one another in a certain environment. For instance, there was an amazing Stanford prison experiment, when Stanford professor divided students into two groups – prisoners and he prison guards, and studied their behavior. He wrote a book called "The Lucifer Effect", based on this experiment and numerous cases of abuse in the Abu-Ghraib prison. I would also recommend "The Individualized Society". Our society is evolving and people turn into little atoms unwilling to interact with one another. It's a very interesting effect studied by many scientists now. I once got interested in that and started to examine the issue.

What do you think MEPhI will look like in 20 years?

20 years is a very long time, everything is changing rapidly. I want MEPhI to represent an organic combination of modern concepts and the old Soviet school with all the traditions, which I hope we will retain and cherish. It is now very common in the West for children to go to school but not to study there. Classes are held in the form of a game. I do not like that, because a child should be «pushed» a little. In Germany, there is now the concept of anti-authoritative teaching, when the teacher is not allowed to put any pressure on children. For example, a child may not do his homework, of course, he will get bad marks, but you have no right to force him to do homework. This modern concept does not appeal to me. I support such modern concepts,

as interactive learning, for instance. There are lots of open mass online courses. And in this case, our country and our university, in particular, make good running. I've recently discovered a MEPhI course on Nuclear and Atomic Physics on «Coursera» platform and an electronics course at the «Universarium»! That's the way it should be. The tendency now is that students switch to individual training system, enabling the student to acquire knowledge himself, of course, with the help of professors and lectures, but to a greater extent – on their own.

How would you describe MEPhI in three words?

Spirit, success and pride. The spirit is the history of MEPhI, that we should be proud of, and we should be aware of when and for what purpose our university was founded and what it is today. Of course, one shall not neglect the teaching staff. My professors were very important people, I haven't met professors of such level abroad. The students are an integral part of the university life, some sort of little romping kids that professors are trying to teach something. The success comprises scientific discoveries and engineering solutions. For instance, a new nuclear power unit has recently been launched at Beloyarskaya NPP, and I assume this couldn't have been done without MEPhI graduates. As for the pride, I would put it this way – one must be proud of himself, his work and his contribution to Russian science and education, because if YOU don't value yourself, your family, your Motherland – no one will. And to sum up, I'd like to recall the words of the MEPhI Wanderer, that are perfectly relevant here – "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step".


KASPERSKY lab
BCG
The Boston Consulting Group
EY
Building a better working world

Stanislav GAFAROV

Hometown: Moscow
Graduation year: 2012
Faculty: Automatics and electronics
Name of current employer: «SNPO «Eleron»

Mediocre student turned leading engineer of «Elecron» company

Hello everyone! My name is Stanislav Gafarov. I must say that, first of all, I do not consider myself successful. Secondly, you should know that, to me, experience is getting bumps and bruises. Experience is a very personal and peculiar. I understand my own mistakes, which I learnt from, but I don't know as much about mistakes of others. Thirdly, this speech is not really serious-minded. And, finally, I'll be brutally honest with you.

I am a poster guy. The poster reads that I am working on some project, which is quite engaging. But at the same time I recall the article written by my groupmate and published earlier in May, the article was called «I wasn't sure I could graduate from MEPhI».
My elder brother posted the picture of this article and wrote: «Neither were we».

> University is like riding a bike, but with a subtly difference that your bike is on fire, everything's on fire and you're in hell.

It really was like that for me, I realized that over the first two years. I retook exams and by the end of the second year, I knew half more that the rest of my groupmates just because of resetting of exams. I retook exams because I didn't have a clue what I was doing. I had no idea what the point of mathematical physics equations and mathematical analysis was. For instance, you're being taught problem-solving techniques that will enable you to land a satellite on a comet. In my opinion, you will only get interested when you're told that mathematics you're taught is eternal and the techniques you study are applicable to scientific problem solving. I guess if I was told: «Hey, pal, Maths will come in handy in the future», I'd reply: «No waaay». But if I was told: «Buddy, if you learn Maths you can land a satellite on a comet», I'd say: «Wow, now you're talking!» Perhaps, I would attend classes more often and study harder.

Let me tell you about myself. I graduated from MEPhI in 2012. Over my university years, I changed jobs like a hundred times, I worked as a landscaper, I trimmed bushes, I was a packer of some pipes, I worked in customer support at «Beeline». It was there that I became acquainted with the concept of «network», how it works, what the protocol is, etc. In 2009 the distribution started and I was sent to the plant in Electrostal, where I was first a student, then a «greenhorn», and in 2011 I was transferred to the position of a measurement and control technician. I happened to have a conflict with a company in 2011, and the company abandoned me. Can you imagine what it's like to be abandoned by the company you were supposed to do a graduation work with? I had to look for another company. I didn't know what to do, my university department said they didn't know how to help me.

> I was given a list of companies where our graduates worked, and advised to call them hoping that someone would take me.

I started sending out my CV. It was quite interesting: there was a two-pages long list of all my activities including design engineering and programming. Apart from the CV, I enclosed the letter from the enterprise where I was described as «a very bad student».

I decided that I was the best way to show people up front who they were going to hire. «Eleron» was the first to respond and I am immensely grateful to them for that. They sent me to a

to a research laboratory, but I had to be interviewed first. As I learnt later on, I had been interviewed by MEPhI graduates. I remember my first day at «Eleron». I got a task at a great laboratory, where only MEPhI graduates worked. It was a team of top pranksters! They gave me the task and didn't expect me to do it.

They gave me two computers and said: «Install one OS on this computer and another one on that one. Then, write a program and read this 600 pages book by the end of the day, we'll check». I didn't know they were joking. By the end of the day I'd set the OS, written the program and looked through the book trying to memorize the basics. My research supervisor checked up on me at the end of the day and asked what I'd done. So, I told him. And he said something like «You're nuts, dude». Then I realized they had been joking.

After an intense first day they decided to employ me formally, so I started working there before I got a diploma. Right after graduation I became an engineer, a couple of months later I got to the category 1 engineer, and now I'm a leading engineer.

I develop software for security systems. Apart from that, I'm teaching security systems operation issues, I do this just because I can explain complicated things in hand-waving terms. Teaching appeals to me a lot, I'm a research supervisor. Students are cool, and being their supervisor is even better! As a postgraduate student, I write various scientific articles and maybe I'll even defend some research work in the foreseeable future. Actually, I've been lucky all this time.

I remember how I once came home and whined how sick of everything I was, my friend found some Rosatom career ladder and told me about the labour pool. Two weeks later I found a brochure on the labour pool and got in. I was lucky again because I was the only person from the enterprise who succeeded in all the tests. After that, Rosatom started to invite me to different projects, I wanted to take part in Rosatom's life – so I did! The last thing I do is all sort of paperwork such as writing technical regulations, coding, etc.

My professional achievements are as follows:

- **10 scientific articles;**
- **Certificate of «High production performance»;**
- **Award for the best idea in Rosatom labour pool.**

In reality, non of this really matters. My major achievement is my student who got an A for his graduation work! I'm so happy about that! He has recently defended his work, I supervised him for 2,5 years. I highly recommend you to supervise students to become well-versed at something. You'll need to explain everything to these greenhorns over and over and in the end you learn everything by heart. What can I say about achieving success? Guys, just choose what you want to achieve and go for it. That's it, nothing else works. Set goals and make them happen.

You might face misfortunes and hurdles on your way. To tell you the truth, I retook my English exam several times and it freaked me out. It's like you're doing everything you can but still fail. It happens quite often but it doesn't mean that you should give it up and say it's not your scene. That's not the case. If you've taken something up, keep on trying. What helped me most was the team I got into. Besides, I try to learn something totally new every 2-3 years.

For instance, I took up gardening and it helped me puzzle out microcontrollers. That's a weird link, isn't it? I couldn't grow anything because all the plants kept dying. I was too lazy to water them so I decided to build an automatic watering system. I'm currently attending the course held jointly with the Yandex data analysis school. The course is fantastic but very tough, not everyone can do it.

I also believe one needs to be lucky, I was lucky when I entered MEPhI, when I graduated, when I was taken on by «Eleron», when I worked for «Rosatom» and did amazing projects.

Maksim KUZIN

Hometown: Moscow
Graduation year: 2005
Faculty: Cybernetics and Information Security
Name of current employer:
BPC Banking Technologies

21 rules of prosperity

Tough 2000's

I entered MEPhI in 2000, after Lyceum №1511 which is close to MEPhI. To my mind, it's the best MEPhI lyceum and I can surely say that two years I spent there were the most intensive in my life.

I've never done anything more complex since then – neither at university, nor at work. That's just my opinion, though. The rest was easier. By the third year at MEPhI I'd realized – just like anyone who studied in 2000's – that I needed to start working. I didn't even have enough money to cover my basic needs, so I had to find a job. It was incredibly hard.

Now there are dozens of Rosatom offers displayed in the main building, various websites and applications. When I was trying to find a job I didn't't have the Internet. I only had «From hand to hand»newspaper, so it was extremely hard to find a job, especially for a student with no experience.
I managed to get into France Informatique & Technologie as a programmer. This company was involved with cash desk solutions for stores and retail networks. The job was out of my degree field because I was at the Faculty of Cybernetics and Information Security, and I probably had to look for a job in this field, but there were practically no companies engaged in this activity in Russia, so I had to start with something different. Some of my friends worked as system administrators or programmers, others worked as bartenders. We just needed to earn money and gain experience.

I changed the job after graduation, but I stayed in the cash operations field and it was fun.

How to combine work with study

I think it's great that we were involved in pre-graduation internship for six months. It was the right thing to do, because we passed state exams in spring and had to report on the internship only in November, and defended our graduation work several months later. We could work a little, gain some expertise even without experience. It's quite hard to do some abstract research without knowing the practical aspects. I wouldn't recommend that. That is why I started working full-time and was hired for the lowest position of a first-category specialist at "Gasprombank" even before graduation. The newbies always got the donkey work. It was my first significant work and I worked on my graduation research at the same time.

Another crucial point is that it's advisable to choose the graduation thesis topic that is interesting for you and it's even better if it coincides with what you do at work, because it's rather hard to work all day and then come home and do something completely unlike.

The employer often realizes that you work hard at the university, that you are young and energetic and can stay up all night. Now, it is quite hard for me personally. If you spend part of your working time on your graduation thesis, your employer understands that he might benefit from that. If your employer is not thick-headed, he'll be receptive and supportive to your initiative.

In our company we've got MEPhI students who work in the morning and then go to the university. And it's alright, because if the person is interested it what he's doing, if he performs well, one shouldn't place limits on him or tie him to workplace from 9 am to 6 pm.

To my mind, it's the worst thing to do. When I was seeking employment at the bank, they looked through my diploma and paid special attention to the fact that it was MEPhI diploma. MEPhI is a brand. In our company, MEPhI is the first line of candidates' selection. As a rule, we don't search any further. Of course, HR department is looking for someone else, but we usually hire MEPhI graduates.

Scientific activity and teaching

I worked on my PhD at the Faculty of Cybernetics and Information Security, and then I taught at department 44 (cyber security in banking). In 2009 I defended my PhD, in 2011 won the MEPhI «Young Teacher» competition.

Since 2013 I've been working at BPC Banking Technologies as the chief software architect and the head of suspicious activity monitoring group. In total, I've written about 15 articles and scientific works. Postgraduate students most write scientific articles.
The articles are useful not only for your scientific work but mainly as a source and means of expression of you point of view. Public speaking experience is also very welcome. When I set exams, I always wondered why students swallowed their tongues upon while answering. They could say «yes» or «no», but were incapable of giving a detailed answer. One should work on that, it's an exciting experience.

When I was teaching and supervising diploma students (I had 25 of them), most of them got A's for their graduation theses, which is truly amazing. Most of them are now engaged with something other than cybersecurity, I don't know if it's good or bad, but they all are happy about what they're doing, and that's the only thing that matters.

How does one achieve his goals?

Everything's possible, even if the obstacles seem insurmountable. My major achievement so far is a fraud transaction-monitoring system developed and implemented entirely by myself. I guess, when you first get into the bank you feel like on a totally different planet. Everybody's full-dressed, wearing ties. Then, you begin to understand that this is just an image and these people may be on the same level as I was before, they just look good. You start to understand how inefficient the system really is.

It's a huge organization with an incredible amount of challenging tasks, many of which are not done because nobody cares about them, because there're millions of excuses for not doing them. The first thing I encountered was when we were copying serial numbers of people entering the bank. It was quite laughable to hear foreign partners say nobody had copied anything at the Presidential Administration the day before, and here's some bank asking to copy their laptops' MAC address, etc. As a result, I managed to make this system automated. We first made a database, so of the person has already visited us, his or her laptop is asserted into the database and there's no need to copy it again. It's easier to keep records this way, and there' no need to do all that in handwriting, which is ridiculous in the 21st century.

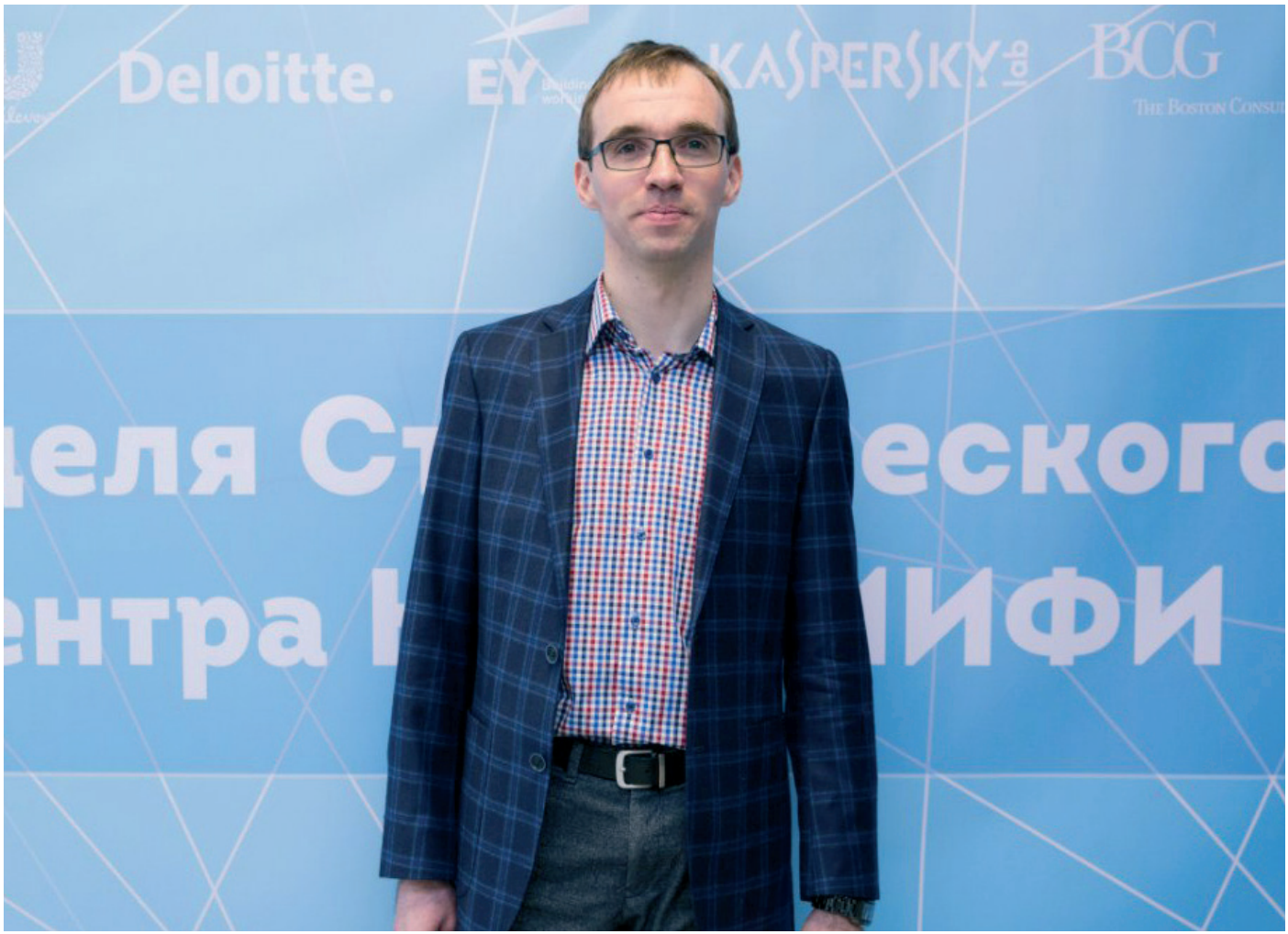
Success components

The first one is personal development. In my opinion, it is the key component. For instance, one guy in our company was sent on a business trip to Warsaw. He said «Wow, Warsaw? Cool, I've never been to Czech Republic». That's is, the person has finished school, graduated from the university and does not know names of European capital cities. It may not look as a big deal to some, but to me it is some sort of ignorance. When I go abroad on business and talk to foreign partners I notice some narrow-mindedness in them, too. For example, Bulgarians tried to persuade me that Serbia is far away from Bulgaria, even though they are neighbours. Such things generate numerous myths in terms of politics and culture. First of all, one should do critical thinking and possess some cultural knowledge at the same time. A person shall not be a savage, he should have at least some vague idea of humanity's achievements over the last 300 years.

Expertise is a must. If you do not have any sway or special status at the university, all you can give your enthusiasm and willingness to learn the ropes. The nest component is rather debatable, I'd call it freedom and independence. It's more of a test criterion for your performance. If you cannot move beyond your tasks, it's not great. If your work comprises constant repetition and no creativity, I recommend you to find another job.

The next aspect is learning and improvement. If you find something inefficient, boring or inconvenient – change it! Here you might think, «Why would I do this, if someone else would benefit from the results of my work? Why should I work overtime to do something like that?» Well, if you don't do that, you are unlikely to achieve anything. If you see some imperfection, try to fix it. In my opinion, that's the way it should be, otherwise we never budge an inch. Change whatever yo can change.

The next component, is understanding the point and the importance of what you do. Obviously, if you have no idea what you do certain things for, you're in trouble. It refers to everything including hobbies, sports, work, etc. The eternal question «Why?» will always haunt you. It still haunts me sometimes.



«Why do I need all that?» Apart from material assets, one should get something else, like drive, satisfaction, communication with people. This component is essential. You shouldn't bear a job you hate just to get paid. It's like a curse to me. One should try to get out of that.

And, finally, good will and honesty. I guess, business sharks would kill me for such statement! Because honesty has nothing to do with business, but we should consider it, too. Good will always works. Due to the nature of my work, I've dealt with people of different cultures. Kindness makes difference in any case. However, when you smile to people in Europe or Africa their response is the same, while in Vietnam the citizens show no emotions at all. I once gave one and the same presentation in the Philippines and Vietnam, and the Filipinos were very sympathetic and open-hearted, while the Vietnamese sat completely still. That is, more than a hundred people sat there and did nothing. They didn't talk, or stare at their cellphones, or take notes. There was a complete silence. They didn't respond to jokes or enter into a dialogue. As I found out later, having discussed it with my colleagues, this is the peculiarity of culture. While I'm performing everyone is listening attentively, and the discussion starts after I finish. But, good will matters anyway. It's an integral part of success.

Victoria GLEBOVA

Hometown: Moscow
Graduation year: 2015
Faculty: Management and Economics of High Technologies
Name of current employer: Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation

The secret of achieving goals

Hi, Victoria! Tell us a little about yourself and your studies.

My name is Victoria Glebova, I am 23 years old. In 2015, I graduated from MEPhI, the Faculty of Management and Economics of High Technologies, the Institute of International Relations. Before that, I had spent a year on an internship in the People's Republic of China, Guangzhou (中国,广州). I studied at the Guangdong University of Foreign Studies (广东外语外贸大学). We were the last students on the specialist program, so after our arrival we had only a few weeks to prepare for State Exams and the defense of our graduation works. And we did it!

I entered MEPhI in 2010 and, to be honest, I hadn't planned to enter this university at the first place. I prepared to enter theater institutes, I went through many trials and competitions to fulfil my childhood dream. Finally, I managed to pass some extremely tough trials at the Gerasimov Institute of Cinematography «VGIK», but at some point I decided that I had to get a basic education first. I've always liked learning languages, I studied English and German at school. Therefore, another life goal was to get education associated with foreign languages and international relations. Of course, I also had to consider exact sciences, which helped me cope with challenges during my university days, and then at work.

Why did you choose MEPhI?

To tell you the truth, I came across it by accident. It was the last university I applied to, but I decided to enter it because it is the only Moscow university offering a combination of linguistics (that is, English, plus the second and even the third language) and technical studies (such as nuclear physics, mathematical analysis, etc.). Actually, I've never been good at exact sciences, I even promised my school teachers I'd never engage myself with Physics! (Laughs) But then I entered MEPhI.

At first, it was rather hard. Like any other student, I stayed up all night trying to see into numerous formulas, solve problems and acquire the basics.

But I managed to do all that thanks to N.K. Kivrina A.B. Koldobsky, V.V Samedov., A.B. Kostin, D.S. Tkachenko and other teachers. They actually managed to give us the knowledge and I'm very grateful for that! I'd like to seize the chance and thank our beloved teachers!

Did you something apart from studying?

Of course I did! I'm often asked «Vicky, how do you do all that?». The answer is simple «I don't!» At some point you realize that there are so many things to do at once and there's so much to see and learn in life that you just cannot sit still, you want to move forward, achieve your goals. As students' we constantly worked part-time and did internships.

Before I went to China, in my 2-3 year I did an internship at «UNIDO» (United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the Center for International Industrial Cooperation under the aegis on the UN), and this invaluable experience encouraged me to learn languages and nuclear physics, because I had to do loads of nuclear-related translation from English into

Russian and from Russian into English, and we knew nothing about the matter yet. When nuclear physics course started in our 4th year, it was easier for me to understand it as I had already had sufficient experience by then.

I once had a great chance to do the internship at IBM (Industrial Business Machines) where I spoke foreign languages and gained knowledge on computer technologies. Like many other students, I had hard time making myself to go to work after classes but it was great at the same time. After graduation, all the knowledge I gained within and beyond the walls of my alma mater proved very useful.

So yes, I never had to for anything but I always moved forward. You know what they say, «Where there's a will, there's a way».

If you had a chance to choose the university again, which one would it be?

I wouldn't change a thing. I would choose the Institute of International Relations and I'd study for 5 more years. I miss my university a lot. I miss the IIR nights that bring together the teachers, the students and the graduates of our institute. Everybody does turns, some dance, others sing. Everyone enjoy themselves, exchange experince and ideas. It's a great opportunity to talk to graduates that have already achieved something after graduation.

The topic of my graduation thesis was «Non-nuclear power industries of the People's Republic of China». On our arrival from China my groupmates and I had an annotation in Chinese and English. We were given very little time to get ready for the State Exams and the defense of our graduations theses. After you spend a year abroad, everything looks different, your outlook, your habits and your attitude change.

Our university days were over before we knew it. You used to think that two days aren't enough for anything, and now you say «I have one night, why don't I write an article or read a hundred pages, whatever the language» (laughs). Nothing is impossible to a willing heart!

Tell us about your job.

I work for the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, at the Department for Science and Technology, at the Office for research and development programs and projects. Over the past 18 months at the Ministry I've learnt a lot and I've gained unforgettable experience. At the moment, according to the allocation of responsibilities I'm engaged in the development of bilateral cooperation of states (namely, European countries and Japan), I am also in charge of "Cooperation with Russian scientific community". Another major focus area is the implementation of the Federal target Program "Research and Development in Priority Areas of Development of the Russian Scientific and Technological Complex for 2014-2020". My duties include coordination of public contracts conclusion as part of open competitive tenders for the Ministry of Education and Science. Sometimes we receive foreign delegations and I make arrangements for the events (introductory speeches, agenda items, protocol drafts, oral and written translation). My job is challenging but what really matters to me is that I constantly learn something new, gain work and life experience".

What are your hobbies?

I'm a many-sided person, I can do anything if I have the time. I love travelling most of all. For example, in spring I'm flying back to China to relax and see my friends. Who knows, maybe one day I'll decide to do master's degree in China.

What inspirational message do you have for the MEPhI students?

As L.N. Tolstoy once said, «Have a goal for your whole life, a goal for one section of your life, a goal for a shorter period and a goal for the year; a goal for every month, a goal for every week, a goal for every day, a goal for every hour and for every minute, and sacrifice the lesser goal to the greater».

I fully agree with him, because everyone can achieve his goal if he doesn't sit still, if he tries his best and goes for his dreams.

Anna NESTEROVA

Hometown: Orel
Graduation year: 2015
Faculty:
Cybernetics and Information Security
Name of current employer:
Sberbank Technologies

About MEPhI studies and work at Sberbank Central Head Office

Hello, Anya! Tell us about yourself.

Hi! I was born in Orel, «the city of the first salute». I am very proud of my small motherland. I have graduated from MEPhI, Cybernetics and Security Department. Currently I am studying at HSE Graduate Institute and working at Sberbank as a senior engineer.

Why did you choose MEPhI?

Firstly, MEPhI is one of the strongest technical universities in Russia, secondly well-developed infrastructure and excellent student accommodation played a crucial role. I decided to try my luck. Fortune smiled upon me.

What did you do at the University apart from studying?

I played sports in particular I went to the section of table tennis. Our team took part in the competitions, played on behalf of the University. Section gave me a lot! New friends, emotions, interesting pastime in addition to learning. So everything is standard. I read books and drew a little bit.

Let's imagine we have a time machine. If you have a chance to turn back time, would you go to another University?

I think I wouldn't. There is a certain atmosphere in MEPhI, warm relations even between strangers – MEPhI students like a family! At my work, for example, some our members who also graduated from MEPhI started to work earlier than I even entered at MEPhI and some while I was studying. I threat them differently. I understand they had the same emotions, impressions, and the same examination atmosphere.
All of this unites us.

Can you tell us please a little bit about your job?

Before Sberbank Technology I have worked in the Central Head Office of Sberbank. My professional duties included the administration of the banking credit system, implementation of updating, as well as working within second-line support. In addition to the knowledge gained in MEPhI, work at bank gave me an insight into the inner banking system, its inner processes. Second-line support job allowed to communicate with a client of IT block , as well as client managers, users of the system, as they say, «Veterans» of the bank :). It helped me to understand that on the other side of the window is sitting a man and on the other side of his window are still people, and that working with glands and releases are not soulless, it's for people just like you.

How long have you been working there?

I have been working for more than a year. I have graduated from MEPhI in 2015, and got a job in October 2014.

Did work interfere with writing a diploma?

It made advances to me. Managers understood the situation. They let me go in order to prepare for exams and diploma.
Today, I'm working in a subsidiary of the Sberbank - Sberbank Technologies. The reason for leaving was a great interest in integration design.

What do you think about the quality of MEPhI education? Do you have to learn more for your work?

Yes, I do. However, MEPhI gives the basis.

Without this, nothing can be clear. For example, if you open a programming textbook, nothing would be understandable, because there would not be technical background. Certainly, you need to read specialized literature, but studying at MEPhI gave the most important thing – the ability to work, to seek and use information found.

Was there any key subject of the entire studying that helps to implement your work?

There were many good courses, really good. At first, they seemed to be unnecessary, useless, I think, many students understand me. I guess, I am talking like an old man (laughs), then later realize that many subjects are really helpful at work. For instance, we had course called TPCS ("Theory of programming cyber systems"). Our batch didn't like this course due to the fact, that it required a lot of time and efforts. However, later we understand that it actually helps in work, all we have learned.

You have entered the master's course at HSE. Why this choice, why didn't you stay in MEPhI?

One of the goals that I have pursued is new connections and communications with new people. I like meeting different people, finding some new conversation subjects. I got what I wanted. My group comprises people from different universities such as MEPhI, HSE, MIPT, MSU, and this is interesting environment for communication and development. Thus, I am happy with my choice.

Can you compare education in MEPhI and HSE?

No, I cannot compare due to the difference in the educational programs. Bachelor's and master's programs are two components of the current system of education, these are different things, even if we take one specialization. By the way, I went to the HSE to another specialization, contiguous, but still another, and knowledge received from MEPhI helps me: some things that we are learning at HSE, I have already known thanks to MEPhI.

It's great that MEPhI really give such a strong basis. And now a little bit of privacy: is there a person who greatly influenced you?

Sure, there are people at which you are looking and you want to develop, grow, to wake up early and start your day with something new, you want to develop your activity and work better. And I was lucky – with me they have always been. There are several people, with whom we have travelled this thorny way (laughs) from the 1st to the 4th year.

Is there any act of which you regret?

I think it is unlikely that such will be found. Because everything that happens happens for the best. I am happy with my life. If I am offered something to relive, something to remake, I would refuse.

What books do you consider most useful?

Nowadays I read different books, it is needed to read some books related to my work and study in English and Russian. I believe that is not pulp fiction, everything is helpful, because even the smallest news can teach something new.

Do you speak English fluently?

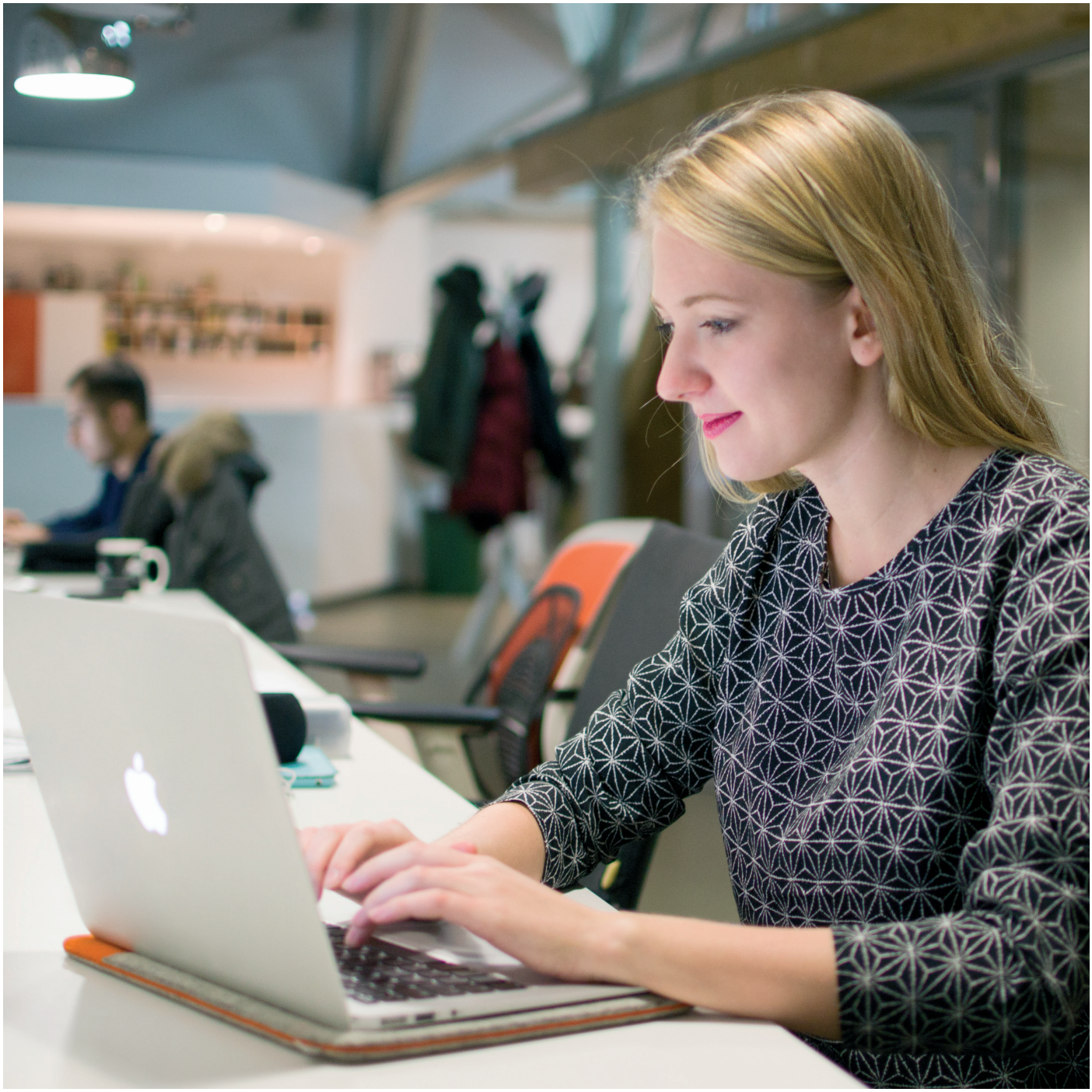
I have passed an international exam in order to enter HSE. I guess it is not bad.

Do you have any rules you stick to or you try to elaborate for the purpose of personal development?

Previously I had a problem with punctuality. And even now I've been a little bit late for an interview. Currently I try to get rid of it. Sometimes a little delay can cause big problems. I try not to spend time on serials, idle talks and read more.

And finally, what would you like to advise current MEPhI students?

Don't waste your time. Read more. Read the literature that will help you in the future. Develop yourself. Learn a language, it will exactly be come in handy. Don't be afraid to assert yourself, try something new, and make mistakes.



Daniil PONOMARENKO

Hometown: Vladivostok
Graduation year: 2015
Faculty: Experimental and theoretical physics
Name of present employer: CERN, Switzerland

How MEPhI alumni get to CERN

Daniil, can you tell us about yourself, please: what year did you graduate from MEPhI, what faculty did you study at and what is your current occupation?

In 2013 I obtained a bachelor's degree and in 2015 I completed a master's one. At the moment I'm a postgraduate of the fortieth chair and I also work in Switzerland, in CERN where the greatest research in the world is conducted.

Have you always wanted to enter MEPhI?

I got to MEPhI absolutely by chance. One family friend told me about it literally a few weeks before the end of the application to the university. I even had time to apply to FENU in Vladivostok to the information security. I also applied to MSU, MIPT and VVSU. However, when I received a call from MEPhI and they asked me to join the «T» faculty, I didn't hesitate. And after a day I arrived to Moscow.

Have the years you spent at university had any influence on your further life and, in particular, your career?

Of course! Environment shapes people. In MEPhI I'm surrounded by a great number of interesting and open people fascinated by what they do. It's catching. Besides, I got invaluable experience when I started to take interest in public life of the university. The membership in Student Council showed the difficulties of working in a big team and also gave some experience in direct cooperation with the university administration and some other organizations. In addition, I worked on the improvement of the dormitory gym. And we greatly updated the equipment there. All this and many other things gave me lots of necessary skills and it's impossible to conduct some huge projects without them.

Is there any person who had a strong impact on your life?

Kachura Lyudmila Fyodorovna – my school teacher of physics. She could see some interest I had in studying the environment and she was able to raise love to physics inside me and thus helped to find my vocation. After that there were a lot of other people I had a privilege to be taught by. Most of them were wonderful mentors, but still Lyudmila Fyodorovna was the first one.

If you had an opportunity to choose university and your specialty once again, what would you do? And why?

I think I would choose the path I went through. I don't like thinking of «what might have been if», and at that time there were many reasons to apply to MEPhI. Even then this university already had some noticeable advantages in fundamental research comparing to other universities. At the moment MEPhI provides an excellent base in various spheres, in particular, in particle physics.

How did you get to CERN?

Since its foundation in 1991 my Chair was an active participant of the ATLAS project. Its workers developed, constructed, built and have still take part in support of TRT, one of the most significant part of the whole experiment. Over the years the Chair of particle physics gained

more contacts, many new science groups were attracted and the field of scientific interests extended as well. The year I had to choose a topic for my bachelor's thesis I went to ALICE experiment group to Vladislav Ivanovich Manko. First I was modeling electromagnetic calorimeter in Geant4, and then I spent two years studying correlation effects in the quark-gluon matter. And thanks to collaboration with Vladislav Ivanovich and his colleagues I came to CERN at the first time as a summer trainee. During this traineeship, besides opening the mind, I also saw world-class research. After getting my master's degree I decided to change my course and went to ATLAS research group. They offered me a position of DAQ expert of TRT which means plenty of work to do both with software and hardware. And the nice benefit is long business trips to CERN.

What do you do there?

In ALICE experiment group I had only one task whereas in ATLAS collaboration I have three tasks at the same time. Now being a part of MEPhI physic group I'm doing data analysis, namely I'm searching for multi-charged elementary long-lived particles which are the candidates for being dark matter. If we manage to find them, it will be like Higgs boson discovery. If we don't, we'll close a few theories and help theorists to focus on more relevant theories.

Besides, I have two qualification works which can help me in future to be one of the experiment's authors and publish my articles on behalf of the collaboration. The first task is to check and tune special soft measuring ionization loss of particles in the tracker when the detector is high-loaded, i.e. when there are more particles than usual flying through the detector so that they are hard to identify. The second task is to launch the full-size test stand of the detector in one of the CERN laboratories. It will allow us to debug the software and check all the components of the detector before they are sent on the underground accelerator ring where they can be rarely accessed. It will also reduce detector downtime and expenses.

Have your expectations of working in CERN been justified?

Before and during studying in MEPhI I had an opportunity to work in «Vladivistok International Airport» JSC, company group DiHouse and MediaMarkt. Working at these places basically I didn't have any interest to main activity of the company but I gained sales experience, communicative skills and I also had some more money. The last two years of studying I worked at «Data center» Ltd. The income I got there being a student was quite good as well as a convenient schedule, and what's more, it was an IT-industry.

But my work in CERN is no compare to the mentioned jobs. Everything here is fixed on people being less concerned about everyday problems to make them dedicate more time to science: electronic document management, corporative car-sharing, an excellent library, comfortable workplaces and many other things which greatly simplify employees' lives.

I hope one day MEPhI does the same, at least in document management. For most physicists CERN is like Mecca because here there are the cleverest scientists, here advanced prototypes based on the latest technologies are created, and this all is for moving the terra-incognito border in basic research sphere. By the way, the WWW protocol we can't imagine the modern Internet without was also created here. Just imagine a place where you can ski, ride a bike, go to the mountains and do whatever you like. Imagine that you can work with something incredible, like LHC. Imagine you have a chance to work on the biggest prototype ever made in the world.

How is it great for you? Are you seriously interested in your job?

It's so absorbing that sometimes I have to pull myself away from research and try to do something else. But how not to be absorbed if you learn a lot of great things about our world during your work or studies. As a simple example, Neil deGrasse Tyson, a famous popularizer of science, gives an amazing fact – he tells us where we all came from. If we look at the Universe history after the Big Bang, we see that until a particular moment there were only light elements: oxygen and hydrogen. All the other elements which were heavier, including carbon we are made from, were formed as a result of star explosions. So we can make a conclusion that we all are star dust. As for me, I can't stay indifferent after learning such things.

How can you rate the quality of education you got in MEPhI?

I work with people from MEPhI, MSU, MIT, Oxford, University of Indiana and many other research institutions and I must say the knowledge base obtained in MEPhI is no worse than others. In my opinion, the main skill the graduates have after leaving MEPhI is an ability to learn and to sort out the problems on your own. Once there was a joke in MEPhI about the Chinese language exam and a MEPhI student where he needed only a few minutes to prepare – to smoke a cigarette – and a handbook. Of course, it's a joke but this is not far from the truth.

Which books do you consider the most useful ones?

While being a student, it's important to learn some essential skills and things which become a stable foundation for you in future. It's not only about technical literature and books connected with your profession but also some works on philosophy, psychology, and some fiction. Many books have to be read at some particular age or these ideas can just pass you by.

Do you think it is true that the best way to know a person is to know about their free time? What do you personally do at your leisure time?

Of course, it's true! There are so many exciting things in the world apart from work. I prefer active way of life: working out in the gym, travelling, meeting friends, doing some extreme sports. Last winter I finally learnt snowboarding in Moscow. Then I even had a trip to Sochi, and this year I've opened the season with my colleagues in the Alps. Now I'm also fond of carting, but, unfortunately, I can do it only in Moscow. Usually I take a camera wherever I go and try to amuse my friends with our adventurous videos a few years per year.

Are there any habits you are trying to develop for self-improvement?

I wouldn't say so. I just have a simple rule – to develop yourself all the time. For this you have to cope with your fear of something new, fear of failure. It removes the borders and helps to see much more things in different situations.

What advice could you give to the present MEPhI students?

The precise indicator telling you whether you are on the right path or not is a question «Are you happy?». If the answer is no, then you should change something. Do what you really enjoy. Love your work, concentrate your efforts and resources around it, but do not lock on something. It's necessary to stay a researcher because our life is so diverse. Besides, you can find something in other spheres for your basic occupation. Just be happy.


Я
Елена
Левицкая
Яндекс

Elena LEVITSKAYA

Hometown: Moscow
Graduation year: 2014
Faculty: Cybernetics and information security
Name of current employer: «Yandex»

6 interviews at «Yandex», 3 tips and success!

Hello, Lena! Can you tell us why did you choose MEPhI? Had you always wanted to enter that university or it was a spontaneous decision?

Hi! My aunt had studied in MEPhI and my grandfather had been teaching there for some time, though he'd taught post-graduates on «T» Faculty. So my family have always respected MEPhI. And when I said that I had no idea what university to choose, they told me: «MEPhI ought to be your choice, go ahead!». And thanks to my tutor my physics was good. I passed my exams and went to MEPhI.

Did MEPhI have any influence on you during your studies?

MEPhI taught me to survive, I couldn't say better: search for information wherever you can, make arrangements, learn all night, solve endless problems - even if you don't know how you have to find the way. So that's the main thing MEPhI taught me.

Comparing to the wishes and ideas you had at the university; do you have the same ones at the moment, after graduating a few years ago?

Honestly, when I came to MEPhI I had no idea that it would be so much programming there. I thought there would be more theory and work with numbers. I understood it wasn't my cup of tea and I understood it quiet quickly. Nevertheless, there were always some subjects which attracted me a lot, and I think it structures your mind and helps to realize what's going on, where you have to move, how to process the information optimally. At the moment I might use not all the 100% of this knowledge but it helps me in many things. By the way, there's one funny fact: everyone in my department believes I'm a guru of mathematics, of macro and Excel, because everyone knows I've graduated from MEPhI. In spite of the fact that they also know there's another girl from MEPhI, they still think that it's me who is the guru. It's funny because macro is the simplest thing ever after MEPhI courses.

Was it difficult to find a job right after graduating?

What I did after getting my degree? At that time I had been working for half a year in SAP company, it's connected with the Internet and advertising, there are championat.com, quto.ru, redigo.ru. Then this holding merged with Afisha-Rambler, and I worked there as well. Basically, there was no real difficulties. It appeared I combined my work with the studies, and I had a full-time job, just sometimes was absent to go to the university.

Just… sometimes?

Well, we had almost no classes because we were writing our graduating work, so… (laughs)

And how did you get on your first job?

Like everyone else, just posted my CV on hh.ru and then had a telephone call when they asked me to come for an interview which I had not expected. And then I realized I had been too impudent because I'd been offered a few positions and in the end I became an assistant of the commercial director whish was quite cool for the first job. I'd also been offered some other simpler positions but I said that I want a particular salary and then they asked

me: «Why do you want exactly this sum?» so I answered that I was tutoring math with pupils and had pretty the same wages. And if I was going to work there I wasn't able to be tutoring anymore so I wanted that amount of money. They answered «Ok, it sounds reasonable» and offered me the position where I could earn these money. Then I learnt that it was higher than the positions they had offered me before.

And how did you come to «Yandex»?

I was trying to get there many times. Once I wanted to «Yandex». Then I gave up and damned everything in the world. It's funny but when I was offered a job I was thinking of refusing because I was so tired of this ambiguity. I was interviewed to «Yandex» 6 times: for a position of the assistant at the department I now work at (department of relations with advertising agencies), now I'm a manager but the first time they asked me to be an assistant. I replied that I don't want to be an assistant again. After some time they called me one more time and invited to another interview. There is an interesting point in «Yandex»: even if you had an interview and you were unsuitable for that job for some reasons, your CV remains in their data base and if they have a vacancy they can call you again. The second time they offered me a position in the client departure. I was glad to come and then they asked me this question during the interview: «And are you ready to speak on the phone?». I was bewildered – of course, I can. But when I knew I had to call from 15 to 200 people per day, I refused. The other three interviews I had for a position in the department of industrial clients. One of them took place on the roof so I was quite wrought-up. It was very informal and for me it was stressful. I was turned down and I was concerned about it pretty long. After some time they asked me again but that time it was the department of relations with agencies and literally the next day they called me and said that I got the job. So I had been trying to get there for three months and I finally did it! And I'm very excited.

So what advice can you give to graduates who would like to go to Yandex after having so much experience?

Don't give up, guys! Because «Yandex» is the place where you really have to be willing to get there. They can ignore the fact that a person doesn't know something or can't control his emotions properly if they have to be working with people in future. The most important thing is motivation. Sometimes they search for particular «Yandex-format». It's difficult to explain and to understand but Yandex has a set staff with a set character and they are looking for someone who is similar to them. I don't think it's bad. They select highly motivated people who are easier to train. But it's clear that it's silly to apply for a position if an IT-programmer without having relevant knowledge. Some ignorance will be forgiven and some will not

And do you meet many MEPhI graduates in the company?

Generally there are 113 people from MEPhI working in the company, and there are many department heads and team leaders.

Do you keep in touch with your ex-groupmates?

Yes, I do. We have a conversation in «Vkontakte» where we always have sort of flood, and from time to time we meet together somewhere out.

And has somebody been as successful as you?

Tyoma Kazantsev – my dearest and sweetest friend. We call him Kazan. He worked in SAP quite a long time but then he decided to study again and went to Skolkovo Economic School. As for others, almost everybody works according to their specialty, someone works with data base, someone with documents.

What advice could you give to the students?

The main advice: to find what you really want to do. You have lots of time, don't waste it because if you study hard and realize that you don't really like it, I don't think you will be happy. So look for what you'd love to do as you have to put all the effort in that. That's the first piece of advice.

The second one: put yourself together and start doing something.
Because in average, you need 5 years to succeed. Even if you've just realized that you've been doing the wrong thing, if you start right now you'll be cool in your sphere after 5 years. So don't give up. That's the third piece of advice. If you really want something you will do it.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About unity and career in Hewlett Packard Enterprise

Hello, Vadim! Please, tell us about yourself.

I graduated from MEPhI in 2009, now I am an IT-architect in the international company Hewlett Packard Enterprise in the unit HPE Software.

Did you always want to enter MEPhI?

In my tenth form I realized that I wanted to study there. I was always fond of physics and math, and in my hometown Protvino MEPhI was popular as there were many physicists including those who graduated from that university. So the choice was obvious for me.

You graduated from MEPhI quite a long time ago. How can you measure the quality of education in the university?

The quality of education is so high that after finishing the 31th chair I still remember physics and maths. I think they became a part of me. The thing I appreciate the most is that MEPhI taught me to learn, to immerse myself quickly in new spheres of knowledge, to orientate among them and to use them in future while solving some new problems. Till the second year my average mark at the university was about 4.8. I remember I had two sessions with excellent marks on the third year, then I started working and had more worse marks. During the whole period of studies I had no «threes».

> Even though I was quite a good student, sometimes I had problems with understanding the material. And it made me upset because it happened that we covered a topic, wrote a test and I got a "three". And right after the test I started to understand the topic. It was like you knew the material but your test had been written poorly. But then I prepared hard for sessions so there were no problems in the end.

What have you started your career from?

On the fourth year I decided to start working. My specialty is Applied Mathematics and Computer Science. I wanted to be a programmer. My first working experience was as an automatic testing engineer in the company Parallels. After a year I decided to move forwards and got to a company connected with MTS which specialized in IT-processes automation. We had to implant HP software that had very few documents, so my workmate (also from MEPhI) and me surfed the Internet all day long, studied the product just at random and after some time the process went on. I liked the fact that besides programming the job demanded constant communication with clients. It definitely made our work diverse.

How did you get to HPE?

My pals from MEPhI who had already worked there asked me to join them as a specialist. Our world is small so everybody knows everyone. I had a few interviews and got to the team.

What do you do in HPE?

It's not easy to describe the work of an IT-architect with a few words because it's very diverse. I can say that 50% goes to software setting (programming, data base tuning and other problems) and coordination of work inside the project group; 40% goes to communication with clients (clarifications of the requirements, demonstration of the intermediate results and training the client's employees after finishing the project); the

other 10% goes to finding and «selling» new products. In average per year each employee manages to work in a couple of projects, it doesn't make us annoyed and brings us a lot of many nice acquaintances.

Do you keep in touch with your ex-groupmates?

Groupmates and roommates have become a big part of my life since I was studying in MEPhI, so more than 7 years have passed since my graduating. We socialize together at least once per year (our monitor is responsible for that), and with many of them we are very close, some of them are my workmates as well. Quite often I can see some of them among my clients and there are also many MEPhI graduates working in my company (they say we're few but we're everywhere).

Can you remember the most bright story from your university years?

I can say that every birthday, the end of the session or «equator» had its own bright story but I'm afraid it's not for publishing (laughs).

On the meeting with MEPhI students you told that the atmosphere in HPE is very friendly. Is it as friendly as in MEPhI?

Yes. I remember my group very well, and I remember the feeling of unity and support when you know exactly that you won't be alone and if there is a difficulty everybody will help you. May be it's the thing I value in people most and not only in the university but also at work.

What problems did you face when you just got to HPE?

Most problems were connected with the particularity of the job. As I studied at T faculty, we had a lot of math and physics but few classes of programming. And my job demanded such applied stuff as data bases, programming, network, security. On our chair there are few classes in these spheres but thanks to the basic knowledge I learnt quickly.

Do you think it's true that hobby shows what the person is like? What do you do in your free time?

Yes, I completely agree with this statement. I go in for sports because it's good at diverting you from daily routine and blows the cobwebs away. I like crossfit and everything connected with stamina and overcoming difficulties.

What's your credo?

I think you have to believe the best. Believe that everything will be great and stay positive. Bad time passes and good one comes so it's necessary to do something to make it come as soon as possible.

What advice would you give to the students?

It would be trivial to wish them good studies. University is not a place where you finish your studies, it's a place where you only start doing it, and first of all you do it for yourself. I want to advise them not to study for marks but for self-development and for learning how to know something new on their own. And the most important thing is to do what you really like to do, and the rest will come. By the way, one practical «bad» piece of advice for undergraduates: try yourselves on a real job while being a student. It will help you to orient yourself in the career choice and give you an advantage after graduating.


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2016