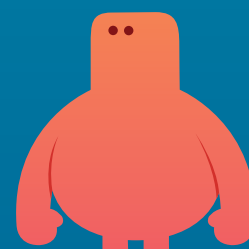




Bonjour!
Je m'appelle David and I'm a physics professor. I speak French and have been able to study in France as a result.



What did you study?

French, initially to GCSE level at school, then a refresher course when I was at university.

What inspired you to learn the languages you speak?

Initially interest and subsequently the opportunity to work abroad.

How has this affected/informed your career choice?

Being able to speak French meant I had the confidence to study in France. I won a prestigious studentship to work at the Institute Laue Langevin in Grenoble where I worked on one of the most famous and longstanding physics experiments in the world.

This enabled me to work alongside some of the most famous physicists in the world (including several Nobel prize winners) and set me on the road to a long term career in science. Being able to speak French meant I could work efficiently within the Institute (e.g. with technicians and in the workshops) and was able to make the most of the opportunity.

How useful is it to have another language in your daily life?

Being able to speak French has been helpful during my career, enabling me to participate in national events in France, to examine French academic work, to travel and operate easily in Brussels when on EU business etc.

What skills do you use in your job?

My scientific/engineering training, as well as management and interpersonal skills I have picked up over the years.

What is the best aspect about your job?

Being able to pursue my interests and goals and working with similarly motivated people. It has also enabled me to travel the world.

One piece of advice...

Go for it - it is fun and can open opportunities in later life. Moreover, once you have mastered one foreign language, a second is easier.

