

**SCI College of Scholars
Career Choices and Advice**

28th April 2014

by

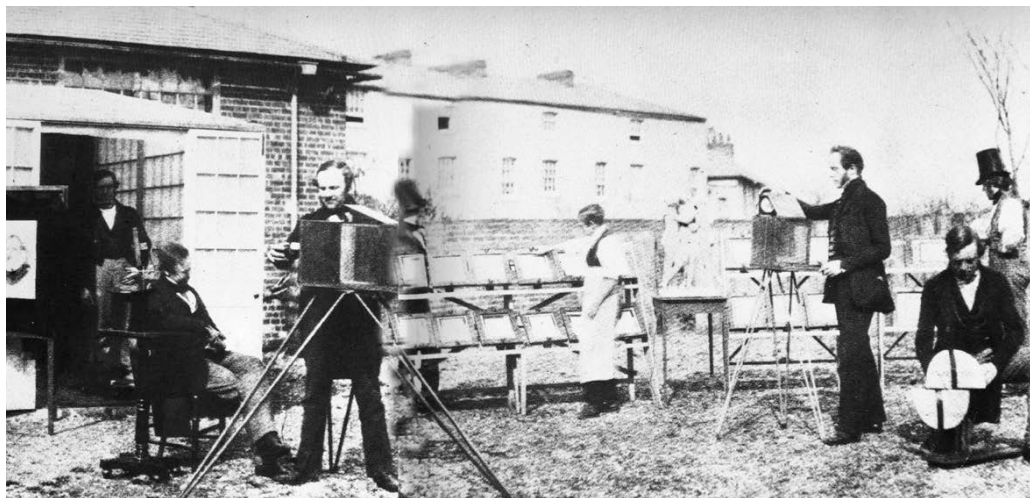
Dr Trevor Rhodes

PHILIP PANKOV PHOTOGRAPHY
WWW.PHILIPANKOV.COM

Content

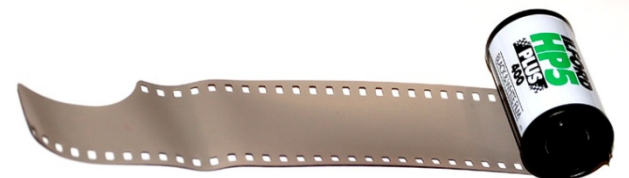
To SME or not to SME ?

1. Career history and choices
2. What are SMEs?
3. What does it mean to work for an SME
4. My advice to people applying to an SME
5. My advice when facing an interview at an SME



1. Career history and choices

- BSc Chemistry/Maths (Leeds University) 3 yrs
- British Steel (Middlesbrough) 1 yr
- PhD Radiation Chemistry (Leeds University) 3 yrs
- Atomic Energy Authority 3 yrs
- Ilford Imaging 18 yrs
- HARMAN technology Ltd 9 yrs



ILFORD Imaging

- Research Chemist
- Product Development Scientist
- Section Leader
- Technical Manager
- Quality Manager
- Project Manager (Switzerland)

HARMAN technology Ltd

- Head of Research and Development
- Site Health and Safety Advisor



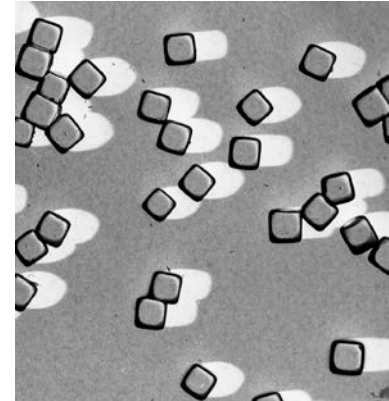
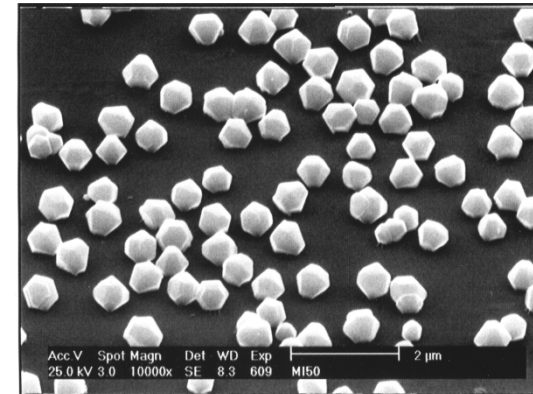
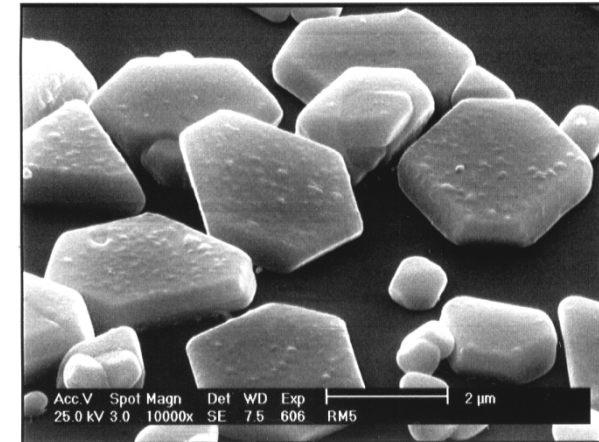
2. What are SMEs ?

5 – 9 staff	turnover	<£1 million
20-50	turnover	£4 million
200-250	turnover	<£30 million

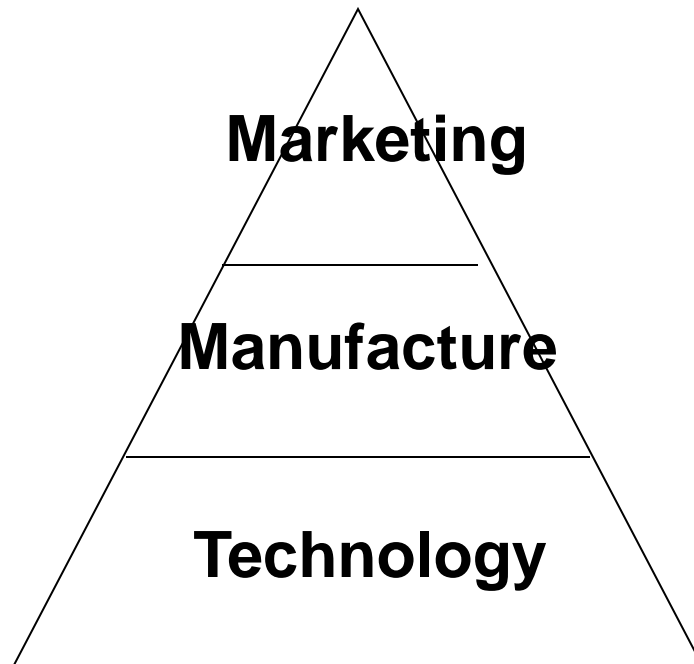
98% of companies are SMEs

Ilford Imaging - 5,000 staff world-wide
HARMAN technology Ltd - 209, UK SME

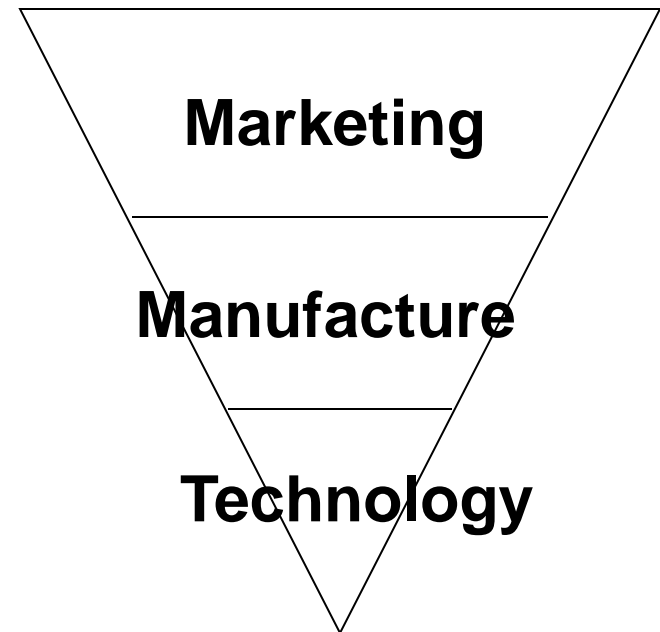
Micro Organisations <5 staff



How do SME's tend to work?



SME



Large Company

How are SME's financed ?

- **Venture Capitalists**
- **Grants**
- **Seed funding**
- **etc.**

How are large companies financed ?

- **Sales of products**
- **Support from large corporation**

3. **What does it mean to work for an SME?**

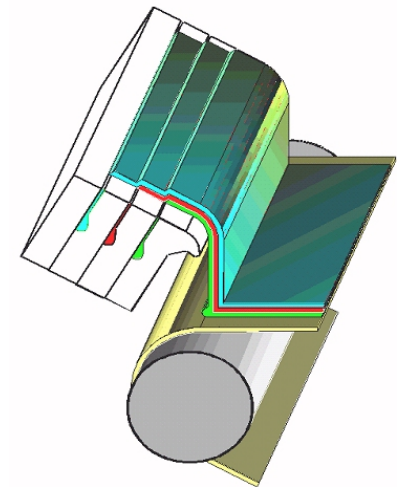
3.1 Positive aspects

- **Expected to do more than one job**
- **Expected to get on with things**
- **Freedom (no bureaucracy)**
- **Chance to travel**
- **No management structure**
- **Varied experiences**



3.2 Negative aspects

- Little training
- Equipment can be limiting
- Career opportunities limiting
- Funding of the company can be an issue
 - Forever chasing the next grant
 - Little job security
 - Must hit targets to release more funding
- Can be few of your own age
- Company is reliant on few experts



3.3 Neutral aspects

- HSE and HR not as well controlled
- No pay structures

3.4 Types of people SMEs look for

- Competent people
- Team workers
- Problem solvers
- Specific skills



4. My advice to people applying to an SME

- How is the company financed?
 - What is the ethos of the company?
 - How is the technology going to be exploited?
 - What exactly will your role be?
 - Who owns the company?
-
- Join a Union

PHOTO: © ROGER BAMBER

5. My advice when facing an interview at an SME

- **You will experience good and bad interviews**
- **Make sure you tell them what you want them to hear.**
- **Ask questions, to understand the job and the company.**
- **Ask to be shown round**
- **Make sure the job is what you want (you need to enjoy work).**
- **Do your homework on the company**