



# Derek Shank

## Senior Consulting Analyst

### Degree(s):

BA Classical Studies: Language Specialization, and English Literature,  
University of Waterloo

MA English, University of Western Ontario

PhD English, University of Western Ontario

**Current Position:** Senior Consulting Analyst, Info-Tech Research Group

### Crucial and useful skill(s) learned through your studies:

- How to conduct effective self-directed research on unfamiliar topics
- How to establish a view point based on an assessment of disparate evidence, and craft that evidence into a compelling narrative
- How to juggle competing priorities, while managing multiple projects to meet deadlines and deliver quality
- How to write
- How to cite

### Career advice for a younger self:

Don't feel limited by geography for your employment prospects. Seek out interesting part-time work for clients online. Step out of your comfort zone socially. Be less concerned about others' opinions of you. Research various career options. Conduct 2-4 informational interviews per month with local professionals. Realize that there are many interesting, challenging, and fulfilling opportunities for work in the private sector.

### Personal Thoughts:

I fell in love with learning at the University of Waterloo, and the Classics department was an exceptional academic and social environment to nurture my development. My experiences at Waterloo led me to graduate school, where I distinguished myself by combining big-picture, theoretical thinking with a facility for languages and attention to textual detail. About half way through my PhD, I decided not to pursue an academic career.

I thought that I could better achieve my personal and professional goals with a career in the private sector. As I approached graduation, I developed an interest in personal finance, encouraged by the popular blog Mr. Money Mustache.

After finishing my PhD, I completed my mutual fund and life insurance licensing exams, and spent a little over a year self-employed as a financial advisor with Investors Group. I loved working with clients and helping them achieve their financial goals, but ultimately had to fire myself for not meeting my own business development targets. My experience at Investors Group was valuable, and helped set me up for my next job, as a Consulting Analyst at Info-Tech Research Group, where I work today. I write research to help our clients improve their IT departments, and advise clients directly on our best-practice methodologies. I enjoy the freedom I have for shaping the direction of my research, as well as managing my own professional development.