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Dual career and job sharing - two careers or half a career?

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One option for a dual career that is often considered is job sharing. After 20 years of job sharing during the most competitive years of our careers we would like to share a few thoughts on some of the problems we came across. The typical job sharing situation is one of a young couple about to found a family. However, this need not be the case, many alternative models are thinkable, few are actually liveable.

The list of problems we came across includes:

1 - The hiring age for professors keeps dropping.

This adds extra stress to the competitive post doc time

2 - Postdoc positions are not designed for dual career.

... and much less for job sharing.

3 - The higher the academic position the less likely it is offered for job sharing.

- because it is claimed that leadership and responsibility cannot be shared.

- because two half positions do indeed cost more than one whole (what hiring institutions fail to see is that they get two instead of one fully qualified scientists in return)

- because they are difficult to plan: what happens if one partner leaves the department?

4 - Age difference of dual career partners

Partners of different age have different qualifications and experiences. Usually the career of the more advanced partners is promoted more, the career of the second partner falls behind.