Industry Careers in Biotechnology for the Toxicologist

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The Journey: Don’t worry, it’s not always a straight path

- BS degree in Wildlife Biology@ U of Idaho
- MS degree in Wildlife Toxicology@ W Wash U
- PhD in Pharmacology/Toxicology@ Wash State U
- Post-Doc in Immunopharmacology @ Temple U
- Toxicologist in Biotech Industry
  - Genentech
  - Immunex
  - Amgen
Attributes necessary to succeed in the biotechnology industry

• “Jack of all trades, master of none” (Not as bad as it sounds!)

• Communication, communication, communication (written and oral)

• Soft skills
  – Influencing
  – Collaborating/interacting
  – Organization/prioritization
Likes/dislikes about job role

• Likes:
  – Never been bored! Every project is different with something new about it.
  – Get to do a lot of different things, don’t have to write grants
  – Make a difference in patients lives

• Dislikes:
  – Politics (every place has it!)
  – Have to move away from a project if it fails
Advice on how to break into the field

• Post-doc is helpful in learning independence and collaborations (and publications so written and oral communication skills): could be in academia or industry
• Start at a CRO and learn toxicology studies, GLPs, etc. (but don’t stay too long!)
• Become involved in the industry (SOT committees, BioSafe, ACT, etc.), present at meetings as much as possible
Tips from a hiring manager

• Looking for evidence of collaborations; able to influence others to get work done, able to ask questions and track down answers, independence

• Oral communication skills; 1:1 and in a seminar (how do you present and how well do you answer questions)

• Written communication skills; publications