Opportunities for a Career in Chemistry and How to get Hired

Julie McLachlan, Director Laboratory Services
GreenCentre Canada
Agenda

• My Background
• Criteria for a Career – not a job
• Opportunities for Chemists/Chemical Engineers based on Attributes
• Interviewing Tips
• Questions
Julie McLachlan
B. Sc. Engineering Chemistry

- Interprovincial Pipeline
- Amoco
- Dow Chemical
Domino Sugar
Process Engineer
New Orleans, LA

Owens Corning
Research Engineer
Guelph, ON

M. Eng. Chemical Engineering 1997
GreenCentre Canada
Director Laboratory Services
Kingston, ON

changing chemistry, changing the world
Criteria for a Career not just a Job

- Green Chemistry – passion to make a difference
- How are you going to apply your technical knowledge to help the company?
- Problem solver vs routine tasks
- What sort of environment do you desire – highly structured vs. start up
- Being strong technically is not enough
- Fit your skillset to the job
- Expect to direct your own career
Does this describe you?

- Creative & curious, not happy with status quo & likes to find a better way
- Good team player
- Good systemic thinker
- Ability to develop alternatives
- Not too risk-averse
- Flexible – open to looking at multiple ways of doing things
- Longer term results horizon but understands meeting short term milestones
Product Developers
Does this describe you?

- Competitive, likes being measured and having a goal
- Likes negotiating with others
- Good at building a wide network of contacts, like working with people and as part of a team
- Good listener
- Likes to be rewarded for results
- Can understand the financial impact of a technology
Sales/ Technical Service
Does this describe you?

- Meticulous with getting details correct
- Interested in learning about leading-edge discoveries
- Willing to do long hours at high pay
- Not scared by paperwork
- Comfortable with deadlines
- Meticulous with getting the details correct
Patent Agent or Lawyer
Does this describe you?

• Interested in a wide range of technologies but not necessarily getting in-depth on each one
• Likes negotiating
• Good at building a wide network of contacts
• Understands both academic and business culture
• Works well with lawyers
Does this describe you?

• Data-driven, seeks better ways to measure what is happening in a process and continuously improve it
• Chart shown below would give you sleepless nights until you understood the variations and had corrected them
Quality Management
Does this describe you?

• Interest in the impact of chemistry on the environment
• Systemic thinker
• Clear communicator
• Able to think through the use of chemistry from cradle-to-cradle
• Able to understand impacts of regulations from multiple perspectives
Safety, Health and Environment Management
Does this describe you?

- Competitive, likes being measured and having a goal
- Likes negotiating with others
- Good at building a wide network of contacts, like working with people and as part of a team
- Good listener
- Likes to be rewarded for results
- Can understand the financial impact of a technology
Entrepreneur
Interviewing Tips

• Know as much as you can about the company, including culture.
• Employers want high impact people, with the knowledge, skills and work habits to be productive. Show this through examples.
• Communication skills, including listening are critical and will differentiate you.
• Versatility and Flexibility – need to be able to flow to the work.
• Be prepared to talk about your science.
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