How To Juggle

Chemistry, Computers, and Business Interests: Perspectives on the Career Transition from Information Buyer to Information Supplier

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American Chemical Society Meeting
Chicago, IL  August 29, 2001
Agenda

• Map Out Career and Career Changes
• What I Learned
• What I Did as a Result of What I Learned
(1) Grinnell College – Grinnell, IA
B.A. Chemistry / Computer Science
What I Learned

• I like chemistry
• I like computers
(1) Grinnell College – Grinnell, IA
B.A. Chemistry / Computer Science
(2) Northwestern University – Evanston, IL
Ph.D. Bio-Organic Chemistry / Lecturer
What I Learned

• I was a good chemist, but…
• I didn’t care for working in the lab
• I liked teaching
• I still liked chemistry
• I still liked computers
• I wanted to pursue a career that linked computers and chemistry
What I Did

• I contacted Dr. Yvonne Martin at Abbott Laboratories about a job in her Computer Assisted Molecular Design (CAMD) Group

• Yvonne passed my name on to Steve Schmidt in the PPD R&D Information Group
(2) Northwestern University – Evanston, IL
Ph.D. Bio-Organic Chemistry / Lecturer
Career Map

(3) Abbott Laboratories – North Chicago, IL
Scientific Information Manager, PPD R&D
What I Learned

- Networking works!
- I really liked managing chemical information
- Because you spend lots of money with them, cheminformatics vendors treat you very well
- I became interested in business through conversations with a colleague who got an MBA after receiving his BA in chemistry
What I Did

• I started in the MBA program at the University of Chicago
• I was bitten by the marketing bug
• I applied for positions outside Abbott that would transition my career from an information buyer to information supplier
(3) Abbott Laboratories – North Chicago, IL
Scientific Information Manager, PPD R&D
Career Map

(4) ISI – Philadelphia, PA
New Product Mgr., Chem. Info. Products
What I Learned

• Combining a chemistry degree with business school training makes you an attractive candidate to cheminformatics companies

• Cheminformatics vendors don’t treat you as nicely when you are not buying things from them

• I really liked developing new chemical information products

• Things don’t stay the same…
What I Did

• I contacted my network of friends and colleagues and got more companies interested than I had made contacts

• Ultimately, I followed the management exodus from ISI
(4) ISI – Philadelphia, PA
New Product Mgr., Chem. Info. Products
Career Map

(5) UMI – Ann Arbor, MI
Director, Marketing & Product Mgmt.
What I Learned

- Focusing on non-chemical business information products can be fun and rewarding
- Downsizings happen
- There are no cheminformatics companies in the Detroit area
- If you interview for a marketing position at a company not in the cheminformatics market, they say “You have a Ph.D. in chemistry, and you’re doing marketing?”
What I Did

• I contacted my network of friends and colleagues
• I found a job on the Internet for a position as Director, Business Development at MSI (now Accelrys)
(5) UMI – Ann Arbor, MI
Director, Marketing & Product Mgmt.
Career Map

(6) MSI – San Diego, CA
Director, Business Development
What I Learned

• When you interview for a marketing position at a company in the cheminformatics market, they say “You have a Ph.D. in chemistry, and you’re doing marketing!”, i.e.,
• Combining chemistry, informatics, and business experience is valuable and appreciated far more in cheminformatics than elsewhere
• The chemical information community is like family
What I Did

• After working at ISI, UMI, and MSI, I seemed destined to work next at MCI, FBI, or any other organization with a three-letter acronym that ended in “I”, but…

• After a year at MSI, I was contacted by an executive recruiter about a position as the General Manager of the Sadtler Division of Bio-Rad Laboratories
(6) MSI – San Diego, CA
Director, Business Development
(7) Bio-Rad Laboratories – Philadelphia, PA
General Manager, Sadtler / Informatics Division
About Bio-Rad and Sadtler

• The Sadtler business has been in existence for over 125 years, specializing in analytical chemistry, spectral information and informatics software

• The Sadtler business has been part of Bio-Rad Laboratories since 1979

• Through focusing on quality, Sadtler has remained the world leading brand in analytical informatics
You are here…

… now you can go anywhere

IR has been a focus for Sadtler

KnowItAll™ Analytical System

IR

Third Party

UV/Vis

GC

MS

NMR

BIO-RAD Informatics Division
KnowItAll™ lets you draw a structure… transfer it easily to another plug-in… and get results fast!
Informatics Division

KnowItAll™
Analytical System

Multiple Analytical Techniques

BIO-RAD
Informatics Division

KnowItAll™
Analytical System

NMR
IR
MS
GC
UV/Vis

Third Party

Bio-Rad made me a KnowItAll
What I Learned

• You can sneak a commercial for a product into a formal ACS presentation if you are subtle
• The head of the Bio-Rad Informatics Division’s Software Development Team is a black belt juggler
• It is possible to link juggling and business:
  “Bio-Rad helps you juggle analytical information”
What I Learned (Really)

- Combining chemistry, informatics, and business experience leads to a very rewarding career
- Networking is critical
- Bridging from buyer to supplier helps you to be a better supplier
- The ACS CINF is a great place to network
- You all have been very patient
Thank you