From lab chemist to patent searcher? Why, what, and how?

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Introduction

- My audience
  - Lab chemists
- Why would one want to become a patent searcher? Fit?
- What do patent searchers do?
- How one might become a patent searcher.
Why?

- Information Field “friendlier”
- Patent searching in specific
  - Like the hunt
  - Sticklers for accuracy/detail
  - Intellectual rigor
  - Learn when to quit
  - Work alone
  - Learn continuously
Why . . . . (cont.)

- Doable by intelligent chemists
- Average pay better
  - (especially for technical BS)
- Freedom, autonomy, & responsibility
- Downside – Rodney Dangerfield?
- Variety in skills
What

- Kinds of searches
  - Freedom to operate
  - Patentability
  - Validity

- Typical day in the life of . . .

- “more with less” versus human limitations
What . . . . (cont.)

- Will often work alone
  - But teamwork skills still important

- Analysis
  - No “perfect search”
  - Weeding, culling
  - Acquired skill
What . . . . (cont.)

- $$$ riding on search, but . . .
- 2000 Stephen Adams article in EContent
How

- Pattern seemed to emerge
  - lab several years → searcher several years → patent searcher

- Varied backgrounds
  - BS, Ph.D., MLS, MS
How . . . (cont.)

My story
- 12 years in lab with BS
- Even a couple graduate chem. courses
- Wasn’t sold on getting Ph.D.
- Attracted to information field. The more I saw, the more I liked it.
- networked
- Started on MLS
- Given job in corporate library
- Switched to patent searching
How . . . (cont.)

- Patience
  - Can be long journey
- Graduate degree can be helpful
- More than one path
- Find a mentor
Avoid fear and inertia

- Instead (suggestions)
  - Strive for confidence
  - Make incremental advances
  - Training/education can help to show dedication to field
  - Perform well in current position
Find what you like to do.
- Not just “pie in the sky”
  - i.e. Strong Campbell
    - Interest inventory
  - Myers Briggs
- Get out of bed every morning
- Motivated to excel
Conclusion

- Do you feel limited in the lab?
- Do you like “the hunt”, detail oriented, like the literature?
- Patent searchers are specialists
  - can be rewarding fit
- Strive for confidence & make incremental efforts
- You are in control